

# Adult SS - Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet-4

**Introduction:** We have seen that Jonah was given a command to go to Nineveh and “cry against it” for their wickedness was great. Jonah in receiving this instruction fled from the presence of the Lord, resulting in a chain of terrific circumstances.

**Text: Jonah 1:1-7**

**A. The Word of the LORD Came v1,2**

**B. The Prophet Rose Up To Flee v3-7**

According to **verse number 3**, what was Jonah trying to accomplish?

v3 *“But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went **down** to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so **he paid the fare** thereof, and went **down** into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.”*

The word that is translated in the text as ‘presence’ signifies **‘face’**. Here, Jonah was fleeing from the **Lord’s face**.

**Illustration:** We might use the expression today to see someone ‘eye to eye’ or ‘face to face.’

Notice in **verse number 3**, two very interesting words/phrases that are used to denote this departure from the Lord and consequently from doing what is right and just.

- The first is the word ‘down.’

The Bible says that Jonah **went down to Joppa**, and **he went down into the ship**.



- 1:3 “down to Joppa...”

- 1:3 “down into it [the ship]”

- 1:5 “down in the sides of the ship”

**Down...down...down...** Jonah went in disobedience to the Lord.

- Secondly, I want you to notice the expression, “**he paid the fare thereof...**”

Immediately, again we can understand the application that it cost Jonah much to disobey the Lord.

Not only did **he go down** and **he paid the fare**, but the Bible says, “*he went with them...*”

**Who is the ‘them’ in our text?**

The ‘them’ is the \_\_\_\_\_

**Many believe that if all the doors of opportunity (providence) open before them that it must be the will of God.**

After all -

- (1) He found a boat that was headed in the right direction he wanted to go.
- (2) He had the money to pay for the fare.
- (3) Apparently the weather was commodious for them to travel.
- (4) The mariners obviously didn’t question Jonah much as to where he was going and why.
- (5) Nothing happened to him when he stepped on to the boat.

“He trudged the sixty miles from Gath-Hepher to the port of Joppa. And God let him go. There he found a ship heading for the far west. What a marvelous providence! Just what he needed! He paid the fare, boarded the ship and, as it sailed away, he found a quiet corner below deck and fell into a sound sleep. He was away. And God had let him go. His escape had succeeded. So far, so good.” - Keddie, G. J. (1986). *Preacher on the Run: The Meaning of Jonah* (p. 26). Darlington, England: Evangelical Press.

**But what is the problem with this reasoning considering this situation?**

So, what takes place next?

### 1. The Mighty Tempest v4

The Bible says, “**But the LORD** sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.”

Jonah is not going to be rejoicing about this statement in our text (at least not at this point in his life), but you and I as we look throughout the Word of God ought to remind ourselves and rejoice for those simple words, ‘But the LORD.’

There are many statements similar to this in the Word of God, but here are just a few:

**Old Testament Examples** - Genesis 20:3, Genesis 31:7, Genesis 40:5 and 50:20, Exodus 13:18, Judges 15:19, I Samuel 23:14, II Chronicles 20:1

**New Testament Examples** - Acts 10:28, I Corinthians 1:27, I Corinthians 2:10, I Corinthians 3:6, I Corinthians 10:13, Ephesians 2:4

Behind each one of these few references there is a precious event or statement that God has given us concerning His involvement in our lives.

The text indicates for us that this tempest arose suddenly. **Just when Jonah perhaps felt as if he obtained His purpose** we find the change in the scene signified by this word “But.”

You've probably heard it said before by others or even yourself, "I can do what I want." And certainly, Jonah had liberty to make the choice he made, but the result was not what He expected.

Matthew Henry rightly said this commenting on this situation, "Sin brings storms and tempests into the soul, into the family, into churches and nations; it is a disquieting, disturbing thing." Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary ([Jon 1:4](#))

And we will see in just a moment this very thing, how that **disobedience has a terrifying effect on those around us.**

Notice with **the action** and **the result** in this text:

*vs 4 ----> the LORD sent out a great wind----(therefore) there was a mighty tempest...*

I reminded of how our Lord Jesus Christ exercised His power over the weather in **Mark chapter 4:**

**Mark 4:39-41** *"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, **What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?**"*

Here we find that the Lord hurls His wind into the sea and instantly there is a tempest. Can you imagine it for a moment?

Strong's Concordance defines this word 'tempest' as coming from a root word that signifies a hurricane. (**Jeremiah 23:19** translates this same word as a whirlwind...)

We are told that this tempest was so great, that the *"...ship was like to be broken."*

**Well, what is to be done in the midst of this situation?**

**Maybe we should ask the question of ourselves what will we do if we find ourselves in opposition to God and His Holy Word?**