

# Behold Our God

## [Jonah 1](#)

“Our Great God Who Saves”– November 12, 2023



### Introduction

In this text, we see all kinds of “opposites” in Jonah. God says arise and go and speak out on behalf of truth. Jonah does the opposite.

### Sermon Outline

1. Our great God reveals His plan. Vs. 1-3
2. Our great God reveals His presence. Vs. 4-16
3. Our great God reveals His saving grace. Vs. 17

### Read & Discuss

#### 1. Read vs. 1 - 3

God spoke to Jonah directly, calling him to go to Ninevah and preach the gospel, destruction, and that God was holy. The Assyrians were in charge in Ninevah. (Modern day Iraq) They were evil, ruthless, people who tortured others. God wanted them an opportunity to repent. Jonah had other ideas.

Jonah went down to Joppa to go to Tarshish. He was neglecting his responsibility as a prophet. He wasn't just neglecting his job, but he is obstructing God's plan for people to worship Him. Jonah would have known about the call of Abraham whose offspring would be a blessing to the nations. ([Genesis 12](#)) God saves people to worship Him.

Jonah would have known about [Ps. 139](#) - God would be with Jonah everywhere. Jonah knew that if he went to Ninevah, God would use him to save those wicked people - his enemy. Jonah was invested in doing the opposite of what God was calling them to do.

How does God use a church to reach out? The church shines a light to the world. Members of a healthy church strive for unity in the bond of peace ([Ephesians 4:3](#)), care for, watch over, encourage one another ([1 Thessalonians 5:11](#)), regularly meet together ([Hebrews 10:25](#)), rejoice in others' happiness and bear each other's burdens ([Romans 12:15-18](#)) give to the church for the furtherance of the gospel ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#)), fight your own sin ([Colossians 3:5](#)). When was the last time you encouraged another brother or sister in the Lord? Have you considered that fighting sin not only helps you grow in holiness but is also a witness to the world? We are called to go to a lost world. ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)) All of these things come together to grow the gospel community in health and unity to be a witness to the world.

Are you doing the opposite of what God has called you to do? You have been saved for a purpose - for His glory to bring people in. If you are running away, God will find you.

#### 2. Read vs. 4 - 16

Jonah went **down** to Joppa and got in a boat going **down** to Tarshish. He went **down** to the bottom of the ship and lay **down**, falling fast asleep. The storm came and the sailors were afraid because of the severity of the storm. The captain goes down to get Jonah and used the same terminology that God used in vs. 2 to get Jonah on deck.

When the lot fell on Jonah, he didn't reveal that he was a prophet, but he tells them that he is a Hebrew. Then he tells them about his God. Jonah told them that this was his doing because he disobeyed the call of God. When the sailors understood that Jonah was fleeing THE God of the universe, they became even more afraid.

Can you imagine what these sailors went through? It is fearful to fall into the hands of an angry God. The sailors tried all the harder to get to shore by rowing harder to save themselves. You cannot save yourself. Only Jesus - no other works - can save you. Doing the right thing may not be the easiest, but it brings peace between God and man. Are you running away from God? Are you experiencing the storm? Are you trying to save yourself? Don't trust yourself. Trust Jesus.

When the storm stopped, the sailors were led to worship. They saw God's presence in the storm. They heard the word of God from Jonah. Then, they began to worship. The right fear drove the revelation, the confession, the conversion, then worship. God saves people for His glory. Do you have the right fear of God? Do you see God as One who just punishes people? Or do you see God drawing you to Himself for worship? Who do you think of when you think of God? Think about that. Who is God to you?

### **3. Read vs. 17**

Jonah sacrificed himself. Not only did God save the sailors, but He also sent a great fish to save disobedient Jonah. Even though he did the opposite of what God called him to do, God saved him to go and get back on the mission to which he was called. God is merciful and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Do you think that you have done anything so bad that God will not offer you saving grace? No one is out of the reach of God's mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

Many people think that this story is about the fish. It is not. It is about the great God who saves. God saved the sailors through Jonah's sacrifice. God saved Jonah with the fish. Looking forward, Jesus did exactly what God called Him to do. Jesus' actions were the opposite of Jonah's. His sacrifice will save you. Only God can save spiritually and for eternity.

God showed Jonah grace by miraculously saving him and preserving his life. This was a signpost pointing to Jesus and the good news of the Gospel. Jonah would go to Ninevah, and they would repent. Jesus came so that we could be reconciled to God, repent and be saved. Jesus came to preach the same message to the Pharisees. They didn't believe. They rejected Christ's message.

Hearing about God giving instructions, saving the sailors, saving Jonah, and that Jesus is God and the only Savior, will you repent of your sin and turn to Him? Will you follow God's instruction? God will find you. Will you acknowledge God's presence?

#### **Prayer of Response**

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at [fbcum.org](http://fbcum.org)

<b>Next week's sermon text:</b> we turn to <a href="#">Genesis 48:1-22</a> <b>"He Will Hold You Fast"</b>
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