

Jonah: He Who Hesitates is Lost

Jonah 1

The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: ² “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”

³ But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.

⁴ Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. ⁵ All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship.

But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. ⁶ The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.”

⁷ Then the sailors said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸ So they asked him, “Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?”

⁹ He answered, “I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”

¹⁰ This terrified them and they asked, “What have you done?” (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.)

¹¹ The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?”

¹² “Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.”

¹³ Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. ¹⁴ Then they cried out to the LORD, “Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased.” ¹⁵ Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. - Jonah 1:1-15

Therefore consider carefully how you listen. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they think they have will be taken from them.” - Luke 8:18

He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Dead Sea,[a] in accordance with the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hepher. - 2 Kings 14:25

But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.” - James 2:18-19

Hesitance appears when we are presented with a difficult mission.

Hesitance starts a tail spin into self-absorption.

APPLICATION

1. What is your Nineveh?
2. What is your next step?
3. What does it mean/look like to hesitate?
4. Explain a time in your life when you had a difficult opportunity. What did you do?
5. By not obeying God, what was Jonah doing?
6. Can a believer disobey God? Can a believer who disobeys God maintain a close relationship with Him? (Jonah 1:3 & 10)
7. Compare the difference between Jonah’s confession of faith (vs. 9) and the actions of the pagan sailors.
8. What is the relationship between words and deeds in James 2:18-19 and Matthew 21:28-32. What can you do to match your actions with what you say?

GETTING PERSONAL

1. What is your own personal Nineveh? What is an easy “first step” for you to obey God with your Nineveh?
2. Ask others to pray for courage as you move from “no” to “yes” in your responses to Jesus calls in your life.
3. Who are the people God wants you to “get up and go to?” Pray for those people that God brings to mind and for your action this week to minister the Word to them.

MEMORY VERSE

“He answered, ‘I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made this sea and the land.’” - Jonah 1:9