

Jonah 1

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[0 : 00] Now, as I mentioned earlier, we'll begin, Lord willing, this evening a short series through this short book, the book of Jonah, the story of which will be familiar to all of us.

But we would make a mistake if we think that Jonah's pure significance lies simply in this little wee short book tucked away in the midst of the minor prophets here.

Jonah is very probably the earliest of the minor prophets, and we'll come to that in just a wee minute. But we read that it's the word of the Lord that came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh.

Now, we know of Jonah only one other place in the Old Testament, and that is in 2 Kings, chapter 14, when at verse 25, when we read of the great strides and conquest that Jeroboam II, the king of northern Israel, had made.

It says, he restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Amath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai.

[1 : 08] And again, you cross her up into Jonah, chapter 1, then you see in verse 1, Jonah, the son of Amittai. It's the same individual, the prophet, which was of Gath-Hefer. Now, Gath-Hefer, probably your Bibles won't have it marked.

You might need a bigger or an Atlas Bible to have it marked on it. But Gath-Hefer is basically about 20 miles, just under 20 miles west of the southern part of the Sea of Galilee.

So in other words, it's in the northern part of the Holy Land. It's in, we could say, greater Galilee itself. Now, this alone would give the lie to what the scribes and Pharisees said to Nicodemus when he says, you know, does our law judge any man before it here?

And what he knoweth. In John 7, verse 52, they say, the answer then said to him, art thou also of Galilee? Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

Now, of course, that is clearly not true. If Jonah, the son of Amittai, is from Gath-Hefer, then that is in Galilee. But 20 miles or so west of the Sea of Galilee, you might say, well, that doesn't actually prove it's Galilee proper.

[2 : 19] But it's the area of Galilee. If we're in any doubt, we think of the prophet Nahum, for example. Nahum is described as being an Elkoshite.

If we just find his book, the name of the Galilee, Nahum. Now, he's described as being an Elkoshite. That means that he is from the village of Elkosh or Elkeseti, which is Nahum chapter 1, verse 1.

The Elkoshite, Elkosh was the remains or the ancient remains of a township or a village purporting to be Elkosh, were pointed out, supposedly, to St. Jerome in the 4th century when he was in Palestine.

And he pointed out these ruins and said that that was Elkosh or Elkeseti, as it's sometimes put into the Greek or later on. And this was where Nahum had come from.

He was born. But clearly, he subsequently settled on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Whence the village, Capernaum, taking its name, the village of Nahum, then grew up from it.

[3 : 26] We would know it better by its more Greek name, Capernaum. Now, clearly, if Capernaum and Elkosh are in Galilee, just an Elkosh would be just west of the Sea of Galilee, then at least two prophets come out of Galilee.

So the scribes and Pharisees are, you know, they are clearly not versed in their own scriptures or else they're misrepresenting them. Jonah himself, then, is the one who gave this prophecy about the restoring of Israel's bounds.

If we go to 2 Kings chapter 14, we see that it says, Now, you might think that means, oh, well, then that means that Jonah is prophesying in the days of Jeroboam.

No, no. It's that the prophecy that Jonah uttered comes true in the days of Jeroboam. Because the days of Jeroboam II were days of political success, of enlargement, of prosperity, 41-year reign, great political stability, long time, and great expansion in Israel.

They clawed back some of the cities they had lost to the Syrians. But in his father's reign, things were at quite a low point. Josh, Jeroboam, the son of Josh, Josh was the king at the time when Elisha, the prophet, died.

[5 : 08] So, if you go back to 2 Kings 13, you see that on Elisha's deathbed, that Josh is there. He's the one that Elisha makes the prophecy to and says, You'll beat the Syrians three times and then you'll get back some of the cities that you had lost, and so on.

So, in Jewish's day, things are at a low point. And it is likely that it's in that circumstance that Jonah made this prophecy because the Lord saw the affliction of Israel.

That applies, the affliction of Israel applies to a time when things are bad, when things are poor, when they are oppressed, whether by the Syrians or whoever. It wouldn't apply in the days of Jeroboam.

So, what we see is that Jonah is clearly not making his prophecy in the prosperous good days of Jeroboam. It's that it comes to pass in the days of Jeroboam.

So, he must have been making his prophecy in the days of Josh, his father. And we say, well, why wouldn't it be even earlier than that? Because if it was earlier than that, we would have him recorded at the time of Elisha and of Elijah.

[6 : 12] But we don't. So, he must have come after the prophet Elisha. And indeed, he's mentioned a couple of chapters further on. Chapter 14. And Elisha, of course, dies in the middle of chapter 13.

So, he comes shortly after or overlapping slightly with Elisha, who, of course, overlaps with Elijah. And it's from then on that you have the time of the prophets.

Which means that Jonah is a very, very early prophet. You don't have major prophets before Elijah in northern Israel, certainly. And so, Elijah, Elisha, and then you've got Jonah.

Which means that he comes before all the other ones that are listed in the minor prophets there.

So, that's quite a significant point that Jonah is an early prophet. And it is at the time when he's given this task to go to Nineveh.

Nineveh is not yet a threat to Israel. It's a great city, yes, but it's far away. And some Jewish scholars have questioned, well, why on earth is the book of Jonah in the Bible at all?

[7 : 18] Because it's not God speaking to his people. It's not a message for Jonah to the children of Israel. It's a message for Jonah to the Ninevites. You know, the Assyrians. Edens.

Hundreds. Thousands of miles. Well, hundreds of miles away, anyway. You could say, why is this even in the Bible at all? One reason that is in the Bible, as we subsequently learn, is that our Lord himself cites Jonah as an authority.

And gives the repentance of the Ninevites as a shaming to Israel itself. And, you know, they said, well, that's certainly why it was included in the Old Testament Scriptures.

It is to shame Israel. But this is how this heathen people respond. They quickly repent at the word of one measly prophet that the Lord sends to them.

And yet the children of Israel, who are meant to be God's own holy people, he sends prophet after prophet rising up and sending them. And they kill some. And they stone others.

[8 : 18] And they chuck others in prison. And they reject what they have to say. But Jesus says, when the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign of thee.

This is Matthew chapter 12, from verse 38. He answered him, Son of them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. And there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

But as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, because they repented of the preaching of Jonas.

And behold, a greater than Jonas is here. Jesus mentions it again a couple of chapters further on. In chapter 16 of Matthew, at verse 4. A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

And he left them and departed. So we have these two instances in Matthew's account of the Gospel when Jesus makes reference to Jonah and to his prophecy and to what happens to him.

[9 : 24] Now this tends also to give the lie to some who would say, to heathen scholars and those who think that all religions are the same, and say, oh yeah, but other pagan religions, they've got legends about somebody being swallowed by a sea monster or riding to shore on the back of a dolphin or some hero going down to the jaws of a big sea monster or whatever.

So really this is just the Hebrew version of it. But given that this is greater and more original in antiquity, almost certainly the heathen ones are a corruption of the original.

And so they sort of embellish their own kind of legends and they twist and turn it around. The Phoenicians, who are those from Tyre and Sidon, who are up the coast from Joppa, clearly had heard then the account of Jonah and begun to twist it to their own legends and so on.

Just as when we looked at Genesis, if you remember, we said that every native culture, however aboriginal, however primitive, however far flung around the world, has an ancient legend story account of a massive flood, including the Australian Aboliginies, who live in pretty much, you know, dry desert situation.

Now, where would they get this from? And, you know, the humanists will say, well, that just proves all these different legends. They've all got this flood legend. This is just a Hebrew one. No. If all these nations under heaven have an account of a worldwide flood, a massive flood that destroys everything except a few people, then it ties in exactly with these peoples all being descended from those who have experienced it, just as the Bible says.

[11 : 08] So this original account of Jonah being swallowed by the fish or the great whale or whatever, and then surviving and then coming back again, this would be the original.

Jesus himself testifies to the fact of Jonah as a historical personality, because he cites him, to his prophetic status, because he says the prophet Jonas, and it's just with an S because it's the New Testament from the Greek, as opposed to Ah, which is A-H, which is the Hebrew in the Old Testament.

So he cites him as a prophet, and he specifically mentions his enduring his time in the belly of the whale or the fish, whichever we understand it to be, and of coming back from that.

So Jesus cites it, just like Jesus cites Adam and Eve. And you might say, oh, well, maybe these prophets, they were just people of their time, and maybe they didn't know everything we're talking about. But Jesus is God the Son.

He knows whether something is true or not. He knows whether something is accurate or not. And Jesus cites this authority. Therefore, we know without question, it is the truth.

[12 : 17] Now, the name Jonah means dove. It is the Hebrew for dove. We also know, of course, that Simon Peter's father, from John 21, we know, you know, Simon, son of Jonah, lovest thou thee more than all these.

So it means that Jonah is also the name of Simon Peter and Andrew's father. So another uncommon name in the Hebrew word. It means dove. We remember, of course, that the dove that Noah sent out, it came back once with nothing, came back a second time with an olive twig in its beak, third time it didn't come back at all, because it had found land.

And we could liken this to some extent to the one who's named after the dove. Then initially, he doesn't want anything to do with the Lord. He runs away. Then he comes to the stage of sort of beginning repentance and so on.

And then eventually he does the Lord's will. He finds his place with the Lord. Jonah, the son of Amittai. Amittai means truth, which is appropriate that a prophet should be a son of truth.

Now Jonah himself is something of a strange paradox. He is a prophet of God, and yet he is a runaway from God. He is a man drowned and yet alive.

[13 : 33] He's a preacher of repentance, and yet one that moans and groans when people actually show repentance, and so repentance takes place. But he is saved from the jaws of death himself upon his own repentance.

And so he is singularly well fitted to go and take a message of repentance to the Ninevites, because he's been through it. He's had to repent himself from his own wickedness, and he has endured a sort of death and come back again from it.

And Jesus himself likens and prophesies his own situation, three days in the bowels of the earth, three days and three nights, and like Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish. It must have been a horrendous experience for Jonah, but all of that in chapter two in due course. So we have Jonah then being given this message, arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry

against it, for their wickedness is come up before me.

Remember, he is of Gath-Heppar. He's from Galilee. So he's not naturally a seaman. He's not one of the seagoing tribes. So he goes down to, he turns against this message, and he goes from the presence of the Lord, went down to Joppa, found a ship going to Tarshish.

[14:50] Now, I'm sure most of you will be aware, Tarshish is the eastern coast of Spain. So in other words, it's the entire length of the Mediterranean. It's as far away as it is possible to sail in the known world at that time.

He is going as far away from what he sees as the Lord's presence in the Lord's holy land as he can possibly get, because he doesn't want this message. And we're given a hint in chapter four as to why he doesn't want this message, because he suspects that God being a God of mercy, that when he gives his message, maybe the people will drown, maybe they will repent, and God won't destroy them after all.

So he'll look like a false prophet. But, however, we'll come to that in due course. He flees from the Lord, and he found the ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare thereof. Now, that must have cost a lot of money, because it's a, it's a massive voyage.

It's as extensive, as long, as far, a voyage as anyone could make at that time. So this must have been a lot of money. He must have virtually spent everything he had on this fare.

Gave the fare, went down into it to go with him on the Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord. But, of course, that's, that's not going to work, is it? We know it's not going to work, because the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so the ship was like to be broken.

[16:14] It's not just getting, you know, pitching backwards and forwards, it's about to be destroyed. And that is in the eyes of these experienced sailors. People who, if they're sailing to Tarshish, they're not doing it for the first time, they've done it before, and they've plied these seas.

They would, what they would do is, they would, of course, they would hug the coast, going round, around the coast of the Mediterranean. They wouldn't just take a straight line through the middle of the sea. That would be too long a voyage, they'd run out of supplies, and so on.

And nobody wants to be in the middle of the sea if they could hug the coast. So they've hugged the northern coast of the Mediterranean as far as possible. And this probably also explains why we see, that it says, when they couldn't bring it to the land, they rolled hard, verse 30, to bring it to the land. Now, you don't try and bring a ship to land if it's out in the vast middle of the ocean. You can only roll hard to bring a ship to land if land is in sight. And you hope you can try and get near enough to land so that you don't have to throw this man overboard.

Land is clearly in sight. And it's not too far away. And yet, tantalizingly, so they cannot get to land safely. They are like to be destroyed by the storm.

[17:27] The men of the earth were afraid, cried every man unto his God, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down to the side of the ship, and he lay and was fast asleep.

Now you think, how in the world can he sleep through the midst of a storm? Well, in some ways, we can only speculate on that. But I would suggest to you one thing, is that he knows he is in rebellion against the Lord.

He is therefore probably miserable about it, because we never feel right when we're against the Lord. And adversity or misery has a very draining effect.

It has an exhausting effect. And here he is, fast asleep down in the sides of the ship, down below the decks. He was fast asleep.

So the shipmaster came to him and said, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God. If so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. Now, it's given a capital G here in verse 6, in the translation.

[18:30] What is perhaps, if I can suggest it to you reverently, more likely, is that because everybody's calling upon their own gods, and you know, it's more like a hit or a miss, we'll all pray to our own gods, maybe one of them will be the right one, maybe one of them will be able to save us.

If so be, that God will think upon us. You know, you call on yours, we call on ours, and we call on their own gods, maybe that God will save us. That's one possible way of interpreting it.

However, it's got a capital G in the translation, maybe that God will think upon us, that we perish not. They said, every one to his fellow, come, let us cast lots. Now, this is a way commonly used, in

the Old Testament, and in the New, that God seems to, not only allow, but use, to direct his people, as to what the truth is.

We think of when they drew lots, to find out, who was the guilty party, after the fall of Jericho, and they identified Achan. We think of the lots they cast, to find the king, Saul, in the fullness of time. We think of the disciples, casting lots, to find out, who should be the successor, for Judas, and the lot fell, upon Matthias, and so on. So the Lord appears, to sanction, the use of lots, in this way. [19 : 44] The lot fell upon Jonah. So God is directing. Like Proverbs says, you know, the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof, is of the Lord. He said, tell us, we pray, for whose cause, this evil is upon us.

What is that occupation? Whence comest thou? What is thy country, to what people are out there? They want to know, how did you come to be here? And it just shows you beforehand, that, you know, to them, business was business.

They didn't ask any of these things, about Jonah before. They didn't know who he was. They didn't care. He paid his money. That meant he was good enough, as a passenger. He pays your money, takes your choice, in you go.

That's fine. Thanks very much. They didn't care who he was before, but now they care. Now they want to know, because this is bringing potential death, upon them all. I am a Hebrew.

And this is how the other nations, would recognize, or describe the Israelites, as Hebrews. It's what the Philistines called them. It's what the Egyptians called them. It's what the other nations, round about called them.

[20 : 42] They refer to themselves, as the children of Israel, of the Israelites. But, he identifies himself, to them, as a Hebrew. I fear the Lord. Strange way of showing it.

But, you know, the God I normally worship, is the God of heaven, which hath made the sea, and the dry land. Notice the way he describes it. He doesn't say, hey, the heavens made the earth, made everything.

No, their main focus just now, is the sea. This is the God who made the sea. He's in control of the sea. He's got it all, under his power. Then were the men, exceedingly afraid. He said, I don't know, why hast thou done this?

And I knew that he fled, from the presence of the Lord, because they had told him. Now, they could say, yeah, what's the reason you've done it? But really, what they mean is, how can we stop this, from happening, where the sea wrought, and was tempestuous?

What shall we do, until the sea may be countless? How do we placate, this God of yours, that you have so offended, and we are caught up now, with the sin, that you've committed?

[21 : 40] Now, small point here, in brackets, doesn't do any harm, to undermine. When we sin against the Lord, it's never just us, that it affects.

There are always, other people, dragged into the vortex, with us. Always other people, are affected, by what we do. In this instance, it's the rest of the sailors, who stand to lose their lives, and their shit, because Jonah is in it.

And the days of Achan, the whole of the Israelite nation, stood to be defeated. Lots of people, lost their lives, in the battle they lost, because, Achan was in the midst of them, and Israel had sinned, against the Lord.

Until they took the sinner out, the whole nation, stood guilty. Likewise, the Lord doesn't delight, in sending any soul, to hell, but he's going to send, sin to hell.

He's going to punish, and destroy sin. If we keep the sin, within us, if we hold fast, to the sin, then all of our body, and soul, will likewise, go down with it.

[22 : 42] What we do, what any sinner, or soul does, has a far, wider effect, than most of us, ever acknowledge. It is never just about me, and what I do.

It always, affects others, as well. And he said unto them, take me up, and cast me forth, into the sea. So shall the sea, be calm, unto you.

For I know that, for my sake, this great tempest, is upon you. In other words, make a separation, between the one, who is guilty, and those who are simply, innocently, caught up into it.

Because the judgment, of the Lord, is not upon these, particular sailors. The judgment, of the Lord, is upon Jonah. This punishment, is upon Jonah. You get Jonah, out of the picture, and the sea, and the ship, and all the rest of it, will be comparatively safe.

The judgment, will follow Jonah. So you've got to, separate, between the guilty party, and the wider picture. Likewise, again, with our own sins, what we have to be, able to do, is find a way, of getting this sin, out of us.

[23 : 50] So the sin, can be punished, the sin, can be put to death, and we go free. Now the only way, that can be accomplished, is through Christ. Who has taken, our sin, upon himself.

He has, if you like, extracted the sin, from our soul. He has sucked, out the poison, and taken it, upon himself. And as he, dies upon the cross, the sin, dies there, with him.

The sin, is separated. From the sinner. Just as Jonah, is separated, from the ship, and from these, poor sailors, who know nothing, about what's going on here.

Nevertheless, despite knowing, that they could save their lives, if they chuck them overboard, and say, right, okay, quick, let's do it right away. They are fearful, of the God of heaven, and earth, knowing that if they, take innocent life, they themselves, may stand under judgment.

They rode hard, to bring it to land, but they could not, for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous, against them. As long as they, hold on to Jonah, they are going to share, in his judgment.

[24 : 55] As long as they, refuse to be separated, from the sinner, in this instance, they will share, his fate. So this, this storm, is going to go, against them, this ridge of the sea, is always going to be, against them, for such time, as Jonah is still there.

Likewise, the judgment of God, the wrath of God, will abide upon us, for as long, and until such time, as we are able, to separate, between ourselves, and our sin.

I know I've cited it, often in the past, if you think about, the last verse, in John chapter 3, John the Baptist speaking, he that believeth, on the son, hath everlasting life, and he that believeth, not the son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God, abideth on him.

It remains on him, it was on him before, and it will stay on him, until such time, as he be separated, from his sin, which only Christ, is able to do.

So this then, is Jonah's situation, cast out of the boat, reluctantly, he cried to the Lord, we beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish, for this man's life, lay not upon us, innocent blood, for thou, O Lord, hast done as it, please stay.

[26 : 07] In other words, Lord, you sent the storm, you're the Lord of heaven and earth, you made the sea, and the dry land, you've sent the storm, you've put us in this situation, you've given the lot, to show that it's Jonah, you're the one, he's running away from, you're the one, who has the issue with him, we don't want, to be mixed up in this, we don't want, to take innocent blood, but this is what, we've been told to do, it's the only thing, we can do, we've tried everything else, O Lord, thou hast done as it, pleased thee, they took up Jonah, cast them forth, into the sea, and the sea ceased, from her raging, and no doubt, there have been part of him, that would have hoped, well, he cast them overboard, but, oh, no, it's still as stormy, as it ever was, so, so much for that God, at least we don't have to worry about him, but we do have to still worry, about the ship, you know, there's part of them, I'm sure, that wished and hoped, that this wouldn't be the solution, because, then they don't have to fear, then they don't have to worry, about this God, it's just a coincidence, it's just a storm, that happened to grow up, we don't have to, we don't have to fear this God, but no, as soon as he's in the water, the storm ceases, the wind stops, the sea calms down, and that is terrifying to them, because it means, that they have been, up until that moment, in the grip, in the hand, of a God, who literally controls, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the dry land, it is a terrifying experience,

Hebrews says, you know, it is a fearful thing, to fall into the hands, of a living God, and it's not because, people don't know, about the existence, of the Lord, it's just a, part of them thinks, you know, well I suppose, that's okay, we don't really think, about it much, you know, and then you're suddenly, brought face to face, with it's reality, and you recognize, my God, my God, not why is thou forsaken me, but my Lord, and my God, it was always true, everything we heard, was actually true, he was actually there, he was actually seeing, everything in my life, oh my goodness, he's seen everything, I've done, he's heard every word, I've ever uttered, he's been there, in secret, he's heard the lies, I may have told, he sees what's in my heart, oh this is absolutely terrifying, when we realize, everything the Lord, knows about us, and how much power, he has over us, that you bring us, to our knees, if not flatten our face, beforehand, the men feared, the Lord, exceedingly, and offered, a sacrifice, unto the Lord, and made vows, now it doesn't say, it's a burnt offering, it wouldn't be very wise, to light a fire, a fire wooden ship, in that situation, but whatever it is, they offered up, whatever it was, they had left, that they didn't chuckle, or bore, they made an offering,

they offered, a sacrifice, unto the Lord, and made vows, we're not told, the content, or the nature, of those vows, that, because the vow, is made, to the Lord, that's the difference, between an oath, and a vow, an oath, is made, in the name of the Lord, to somebody else, a vow, is made, explicitly, to the Lord, so if they're, making vows, to the Lord, then offering, sacrifice, to the Lord, God, Jehovah, the God of heaven, and earth, the God of Israel, and what is that, saying about it, what the very, very least, these sailors, these heathen sailors, are recognizing, the power, and the love, and the mercy, of the living God, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who knows, that it may have been, precisely for this reason, that the Lord, allows Jonah, to get as far as Joppa, why doesn't he just, stop him with an angel, with a drawn sword, as he's going down the road, to the coast, why doesn't he stop him there, why doesn't he prevent him, getting in the ship, no he lets him, get on the ship, lets him get on the ship, lets him get out to sea, sends the storm, lets him be drawn, in the lot, lets him explain it all, lets him be in that situation, lets the storm, calm when he's jumped overboard, why, I would suggest to you, this is exactly why, for the lives, for the souls, of these sailors, who the Lord, in his mercy, intended, to save, or at the very least, to bring into relationship, with them, because at the end, of this chapter, they are in a relationship, of worship, of this great God, whom they did not worship, at the beginning, of the chapter, whom they did not acknowledge, as the living God, who made the sea, and the dry land, at the beginning, of the chapter, but now they do, because they have been brought, face to face, with the prospect, of their own death, they have been brought, face to face, with a God, who controls the sea, on which they make, their livelihood, they have been brought, face to face, with his prophet, and they have been brought, to see that even a prophet, of this living God, if he defies, that God, will be brought, under punishment, what chance, do they stand, so they humble themselves, before the Lord, they make an offering, to the Lord, offer a sacrifice, they made vows, they turn themselves, to the God, of heaven and earth, we don't know, how many sailors, there were in this ship, we don't know, what state, their souls, continue to be in, but we do know, that by the end, of this chapter, they are at least, outwardly, reconciled to, and worshipping, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, when they were not before, whatever God does, with Jonah, from here on, these souls lives, have been touched, God does nothing, in the way, no storm, no difficulty, no obstacle, no suffering, is ever for nothing, because just as our sin, likewise, always touches, other people, not just ourselves, not just our lives, so likewise, God's intervention, is never just about, one person, but the ripples, of grace, spread out, to encompass others, and even, disobedient Jonah, here, the Lord, had prepared, a great fish, to swallow up Jonah, and Jonah, was in the belly, of the fish, three days, and three nights, we don't know, exactly the type of fish, described in the New Testament, as a whale, now there's some sort of, translational difficulties, there, a whale technically, is not a fish, as you know, it's a mammal, but there's also difficulties, about a whale's gullet, is meant to be too narrow, to swallow a whole man, but no doubt, there's different varieties, of whales, in different situations, and whether it's a whale, or whether it's a fish, we don't know precisely, we don't know, the breed, or the species, or whatever, all we are told, is that the Lord, had brought this, massive, great fish, into the vicinity, for this precise purpose, of swallowing up Jonah, and he was in the belly, of the fish, three days, and three nights, how he was able, to continue breathing, is a miracle, it's meant to be a miracle,

Jesus describes it, as a miracle, as Jonah was, three days, and three nights, in the belly of the fish, where their ear was inhaled, or the fish surfaced, or whatever, we don't know, all the means, or the reasons, by which it was done, we are only told, by God's infallible word, that it happened, and when we look, at chapter two, we'll be able to look, no doubt, at instances, that are recorded, rightly or wrongly, from history, where people have, been inside, sea creatures, and great fish, and have survived, and the Lord, is able to do, anything, he's able to do this, with Jonah, he's able to do this, with the sailors, and he does it all, for his purposes, and for his own glory, because at the end, of this, Jonah is reconciled, and humbled, before the Lord, in a way, that he was not, before, and you might think, to yourself, well, why does God bother, you know, why doesn't he just, zap Jonah, with a bolt of lightning, and say, right, I'll get somebody else, I'll get a more, faithful prophet, I'll get somebody, who will do, as I say, rather than you,

[34 : 05] Jonah, why should I bother, with you, if you're going to be disobedient, because the Lord, is a merciful God, the Lord loves sinners, the Lord takes time, with sinners, he orders his providence, in such a way, that all that he puts them through, ends up not only, to his own glory, but to the blessing, of the multitudes, Jonah's disobedience, even, proves to be, the blessing to these sailors, proves to be a means, of his own, yes, discipline, but also instruction, the means, by which

God, brings him back, to himself, as we see in chapter 2, and then, because he is spared, through that repentance, the means, of saving, countless lives, in the city of Nineveh, God, does nothing, in vain, and why, he should take, the time, and the patience, and the mercy, that he does, with us, we can truthfully, say, only the Lord, knows that, and the only reason, he could possibly do it, is because he loves us, let us pray.