

AGAPE 2 LESSON 3

THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF JONAH

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[Jonah1v1—17] Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, (2) “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.” (3) But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

The storm at the sea:

(4) But the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up. (5) Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down onto the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep. (6) So the mariners came to him, and said to him, “What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.” (7) And they said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause, this has come upon us.” So, the lot fell on Jonah. (8) Then they said unto him, “Please tell us, for whose cause is this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” (9) So, He, said to them, “I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”

Jonah thrown into the sea:

*(10) Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, “Why have you done this?” For the men knew that He fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. (11) And they said to him, “What shall we do to you that the sea may calm for us?”—for the sea was growing more tempestuous. (12) And he said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will be calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.” (13) Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to return to the land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them. (14) Therefore, they cried out to the LORD, and said, “We pray. O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man’s life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; **for You, O LORD have done as it pleased You.**” (15) So, they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. (16) Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows. (17) Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*

Jonah = dove – wine (as fermented); by implication -- intoxication.

Amittai = my truth

Nineveh = abode of Ninus – (capital of Assyria)

Tarshish = yellow jasper (precious stone)

Joppa = beautiful

[Matthew12v38] Then some of the Scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”

[Luke11v29—32] And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “This is an evil generation, it seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. (30) For as Jonah became **a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.** (31) The Queen of the South will rise up in judgement with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed, a greater than Solomon is here. (32) The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgement with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed, a greater than Jonah is here.

When Jesus came to the scene in Israel, they were dead in trespasses, and they needed a Saviour; and He came as **a sign to deal with sin.** Jonah who was sent as prophet to Northern kingdom (2Kings14v25) represented sinful Israel, **as a sign** to the Ninevites, **and he carried a message of repentance.** Israel resisted Jesus’ ministry and rejected Him refusing to believe that He was the **Messiah.** They demanded a sign from Him that He, indeed was the Messiah that was to come to them.

Sending Jonah to Nineveh was God’s attempt to provoke the Nation of Israel to jealousy, so they would return to their God in repentance and righteousness. Assyria was an instrument in God’s hand to punish Israel. History reveals that Assyria was a pain to Israel and therefore Jonah did not want Nineveh to experience the mercy of God. All of Israel had this **spirit of exclusiveness, thinking Jehovah only belonged to Israel.** Today’s church has that same Jonah (Israel) spirit of exclusiveness. Very few would dare to witness to any from Islam. During Covid-19 pandemic, many from Islam and Hinduism turned to the Lord Jesus. For me, the LORD Himself preached to those masses.

[Isaiah59v14—20] Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off, for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. (15) So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no justice. (16) He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore, His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him. (17) For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garment of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

Those masses out there, right now, need the church to disciple them. They are frantically looking for answers and the church is busy spectating; hiding behind whole-night prayer meetings to no avail.

[Mark16v15—16] And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every **creature.** (16) He who believes and is baptized, will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

If **even creatures** must hear the good news; how much more Islam, Sangomas and Hindus? Are they not human?

[John3v16] God so loved the **world** that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever** believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

World = everything created. God is interested in the whole cosmos.

Whoever = includes Islam and Hindus, Sangomas and whoever else.

[Romans8v19—22] For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. (20) For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; (21) because the creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (22) For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now.

[Matthew 28:18–20] And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

(v3) But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish – he went down to Joppa.

The expression -- **he went down** speaks of humility.

Jesus **went down** to the Jordan to be baptised by John. For Jesus this was a sign of humility – He humbled Himself.

On the contrary – Jonah’s going down was false humility = Pharisaical. He dared to challenge the sovereignty of the Lord. At this time, he had no clue about the sovereignty of the Lord.

[Psalm 139:7–12] Where can I flee from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? (8) If I ascend into heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. (9) If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, (10) even there You will lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. (11) If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,” even the night shall be light around me; (12) Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.

(Jonah 1:4) But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken.

Even the winds know how to obey God better than humans. [Mark 4:39] Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” [Psalm 148:7–8] Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all depths; (8) fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word.

In my early days walking with God – I loved going down to the beach to preach to the creatures in the sea. My furniture in the house was all saved. [Mark 16:15] Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

The east wind from the Almighty God shook the church vigorously during Covid-19 pandemic that the ship (the church) lost a lot of cargo; and some churches actually closed down. The Jonahs who thought that **Jehovah is only for themselves** are full in the church. Everyone was turning to their gods and praying. The real Jonah (the church) was sleeping arguing that their church buildings must be opened. Some defied the warning not to meet, and to keep distance. The church lost a lot of cargo; many died in defiance. The false prophets revealed their true colours, busy, prophesying lies about the pandemic. Those who play gimmicks of healing and deliverance went on leave. They were nowhere to be found.

*[2 Chronicles 7:14] If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, **and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.***

One of the church’s wicked ways is **sectarianism and exclusivism**. Most will shun meeting and fellowshiping with other church leaders and churches. The “My church attitude” makes some believers to be suspicious of believers from other churches to the point of avoiding them.

Right now, the church is hiding behind whole-night prayer meetings, to no avail.

(v6) The sleeper (the church) was called to rise and call on the True God.

Jonah was called upon to hear from the Lord on behalf of those on board with him. They seemed to understand that he had all the answers.

(v9—10) So he said to them, “I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” (10) Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, “Why have you done this?” For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. (11) Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?” –for the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. (12) And he said to them, ‘Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.’

The men here were working with Jonah to find the solution.

(v13) Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.

The men were still trying to save Jonah to no avail.

(v14—16) Therefore, they cried out to the LORD and said, “We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man’s life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased you.” (15) So, they picked up Jonah and through them into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. (16) Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and took vows.

Jonah’s church learned to:

- Pray.
- Fear the Lord.
- Offer sacrifices to the LORD and to
- Take vows.
- They now understood that God is sovereign (*‘For you LORD have done as it pleased You.’*)

(v17) Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

*The LORD here was dealing with **Jonah’s pride and self**. This was the real humbling experience for Jonah. God in His mercy gave him a chance to repent so his preaching to Nineveh would be more experiential.*

*Jonah2v10 The LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto the land. = **This was born-again experience for Jonah; his spirit was now regenerated.** He personally repented before going to preach repentance to Nineveh.*