

Ready for the Storm?

Jonah has been considered a reluctant missionary. He had reason to be reluctant. Nineveh was one of the largest Assyrian cities.

1. The Assyrians impaled bodies on stakes as a warning not to make trouble.
2. They had already defeated Israel. (The kings of Israel were paying tribute to them.)
3. Imagine the difficulty in participating in sparing a nation that would eventually destroy his own.

BUT: The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh,"

We are familiar with the account and know how Jonah responded.

The 1st. key to understanding the story of Jonah is found in verse 4.

But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the seas, causing a violent storm...

The 2nd. Key to understanding the story of Jonah is found in verses 15-17.

Now the Lord had arranged for a great fish to swallow Jonah.

Now fast forward approximately 800 years.

We pick up with the ministry of Jesus in Mark chapter 4. **Mark 4:35-41**

In spite of answering his call and witnessing numerous miracles

He still had to ask them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

In John we read that after Jesus sent His disciples into the storm He had to say to them,

"don't be afraid. I am here!" **John 6:15-21**

He will come when the hour is darkest when the danger is greatest.

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW THE STORMS WE MUST GO THROUGH?

I. HE ALLOWS STORMS TO GIVE US NEW DIRECTION. **Psalm 107:23-30**

The Lord allows storms to cause us to come to our wits' end.

In times of pride and pomposity we tend to think, ***I'm captain of my ship and master of my fate.***

When a storm suddenly and savagely comes into our life.

Then we find ourselves calling out to the Lord.

Sometimes the Lord may have to put us in a difficult situation to get our attention.

He's more concerned about our eternal state than He is about our present comfort.

II. HE ALLOWS STORMS TO GIVE US NECESSARY CORRECTION. **Jonah 2:2, 3**

God wanted to use Jonah in Nineveh.

But Jonah found a ship going in the opposite direction.

Any time we choose to go against God's will, there is a consequence to the choice.

III. HE ALLOWS STORMS TO GIVE US NEEDED PROTECTION. **Matthew 14: 21, 22**

The people had been fed miraculously, now they wanted Jesus to rule them politically.

a. This sounded like the moment His disciples had been waiting for.

b. This would seem like the fulfillment of their dreams,

Jesus sent them away for their own protection.

IV. HE ALLOWS STORM TO NURTURE PERFECTION **Matthew 14: 23**

After sending His disciples into a storm, He went up into the hills.

He was preparing them for what was to come.

The storm they went through for a couple of hours on the Sea of Galilee was simply preparation for what would happen in the storm of persecution that would follow. **Acts 4:1-4**

We should follow the example of the disciples, embrace the storm, and stay the course,
knowing Jesus will appear to us at exactly the right moment, saying,

"It is I; be not afraid."