

# Sign of the Prophet Jonah

by Dr. A.E. Wilder-Smith

---

*Dr. A.E. Wilder-Smith's sermon explores the themes of obedience, repentance, and God's design as illustrated through the story of Jonah and the anatomy of whales.*

**Duration:** 52:03

**Scripture:** Jonah 1:1-3, Jonah 2:6, Jonah 2:10 - 3:2, Jonah 3:5, Jonah 4:1-2

**Topics:** "Jonah"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Jonah from the Bible. Jonah was a Hebrew who feared the Lord and was called by God to go to the city of Nineveh and preach against its wickedness. However, Jonah chose to flee from God's presence and boarded a ship to Tarshish. As a result, a great storm arose, and the sailors cast lots to determine who was responsible for the calamity. The lot fell on Jonah, and he confessed to fleeing from God. Eventually, Jonah was thrown into the sea and swallowed by a great fish. After three days and nights, Jonah repented and prayed to God, and the fish vomited him onto dry land. The preacher emphasizes the importance of staying in the presence of God and not using diversions to avoid fulfilling God's calling.

---

## Transcript

The Sign of the Prophet Jonah. And I'm going to read to you from the Book of Jonah, the first 30 or so verses, two chapters. Now, might I say that during the first service we sold out of every mortal book we had at the bank, that they've gone down to the Word for today to fetch some more.

I'm trusting that they'll be here during the service, so if you see two trucks of books arriving you'll know what it is. Now let's have a look. The Sign of the Prophet Jonah.

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it. Now Nineveh was a rival of the Jews, so he didn't want to go and help them. He was too patriotic, you see.

And he went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare, and he went on board to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord. The funds that the Lord had given him, he used to flee from him.

And you know there are plenty do that today. God's blessed you, in spite of the recession, and some people use the blessing of money to divert themselves, and not to stay in the presence of God. So he paid the fare, and went on board to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up. Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his guard. And they threw the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them.

But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship, and had lain down, and was fast asleep. So the captain came, and said to him, what do you mean you sleep on? Arise, call upon your God. Perhaps the God will give a thought to us, that we do not perish.

And they said one to another, come let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then they said to him, tell us, on whose account this evil has come upon us.

What is your occupation? And whence do you come? What is your country? And of what people are you? It's like going to the police department, isn't it? And he said to them, I am an Hebrew, and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land. Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, what is this that you have done? For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord. You know, if you just seek entertainment and diversion with the funds the Lord's given you, you're fleeing from the presence of God, or you can be.

Then they said to him, what shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us? For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. And he said to them, take me up and throw me into the sea, then the sea will be quiet down for you. For I know that it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you.

Nevertheless, the men rode hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them. Therefore they cried to the Lord, we beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood. For thou, O Lord, has done as it pleased thee.

So they took up Jonah, and one, two, three, they threw him into the sea. And the sea ceased from its raging, and then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and made vows. You think how much that must have, that must have hit them, right in the middle of this storm, to offer a sacrifice to God, and make vows.

They forgot the storm in the service of God. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord, his God, from the belly of the fish. Now the word used there, translated fish, it should be, if it were fish, ichthys, but it isn't, it's ketos, and ketos means a sea monster, a huge animal of the sea, nothing more.

And he prayed from the belly of the sea monster, saying, I called to the Lord out of my distress, and he answered me, out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and thou didst hear my voice, and thou didst cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood was round about me, all thy waves and thy billows passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out from thy presence. That's just what he was fleeing from, the presence of God.

I am cast out from thy presence, how shall I look again upon thy holy temple? The waters closed in over me, the deep was round about me, weeds were wrapped about my head, at the roots of the mountains I

went down to the land, whose bars closed upon me forever. He finished with life, you see, he thought that was the end. Yet thou didst bring up my life from the pit, O Lord my God.

When my soul fainted within me, then I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came to thee, into thy holy temple. Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their true loyalty, but I with a voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to thee what I have vowed I will pay. Deliverance belongs to the Lord, right in the midst of that awful belly of the monster.

And the Lord spoke to the monster, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. Now before I forget it, after the first, second service, we sold out all the books that I brought. They may come in while we're speaking, I hope they will, so don't miss it, they're at the back in the hall there, in the foyer.

Now I want to talk about the sign of the prophet Jonah this morning, and we shall have to look into the anatomy of some sea monsters first. And it's quite an interesting subject, provided you don't have the tendency to throw up or vomit. But if you do, only listen with half an ear, and then you'll have half the trouble.

Right, now let's have a look then at this subject. Now there are two types of whale which are sea monsters, huge animals. The first are the mystaloceti, m-y-s-t-a-l-o-c-e-t-i, and it means the whales with the filtering beard, by which they filter out the krill in the arctic waters to feed on.

And they're little crabs and shrimps and things like that, which get caught up in the beard of the whale, and he then licks them off with his tongue, blue whale anyway, licks them off and swallows them. His tongue is as big and heavy as an elephant. It's an enormous tongue, and his liver is as big as an ox, and his kidney is also the size of an elephant.

He is huge. Now I want you to get some ideas of this, because it's important to understand the sign of Jonah. Then the other type of whales, there are in the total about 80 species of whales, but the two main types are those with the beard to filter the small fry which they live on, and those with the teeth.

The teeth are called the odontoceti, o-d-o-n-t-o-c-e-t-i, and they're the teeth, they're the whales, like the pot whale, which have a jaw and ever so many teeth on the lower jaw, but in the upper jaw there are holes which exactly fit the teeth. You see, these whales hold their prey in their mouth, but they don't tear their prey apart, because the teeth are not made like the teeth of a lion for ripping things apart, they're made just to hold until you can swallow them. So the two types are possible when you look at these animals, either those that feed on krill or those that feed on the bigger fishes.

Now I want to mention first of all the type of whale which you people here know probably more than I do, the grey whales, you know, and they come from the Arctic where they feed, and down through the Bering Strait, and then down the Pacific coast of the United States, and they come in schools of about 40 animals, and you can see them from the coast when they blow their, take their number of breath and blow off their gas in the lung. Let's have a look at these animals. They're all of them mammals, that is, they suckle, they're young, and they are monogamous too, that is, they pair for life.

They come down through the Bering Straits, and then right down the coast here, and they migrate 20,000 kilometers in the year, and they migrate right from the Bering Straits right down to Mexico, San Ignacio, where they have their babies, and most grey whales have the same birthday, because they're all born at that time, about the end of January, down in the shallow warm waters of Mexico. Now why do they do

that? They don't go down there to feed for the simple reason there isn't much to eat there, so they come down really to find a suitable nursery for the babies that are on the way. The babies, when they get there about the end of January, all born about the same time, the babies are one and a four and a half, four and a half, one and a half tons heavy when they're born, and they're about two or three meters long when they're born.

Now there's one other important thing to mention about them. They, when they're born, they're born in the breech position, that is, tail first. You see, they don't have any midwives to help them, although the rest of the whales do help one another under such circumstances, but if there were complications turned up during the birth process, and the head were to come out normal, as it is in most mammals, the baby would drown during birth, because his head would be held there, and the placenta would be detached, and it would only need two or three breaths of water, and the job would be done, the baby would be dead.

So they're all born in the breech position. Now the mother whales are always accompanied by the fathers, they're monogamous, they stick together, they pair together all their life, and the mothers have to suckle those young ones in shallow water, not by the babe sucking at teeth, because if you were to try and do that, you'd certainly drown the baby to try and suckle underwater, you couldn't do. So what the mother does is her teeth are covered up by a flap, which is perfectly streamlined, and she opens that, and she squirts into the mouth of the baby a fountain of milk, which if it does hit the surface, goes up two yards, an enormous pressure.

And so the small one will double its birth weight in eight days, living on that milk. Now a human needs about 180 days to double its weight, and you see we feed on this awful stuff you buy in superstores here, two percent milk, two percent fat, you see. The fat in the whale's milk, the gray whale milk, is 45 percent by weight in fat, and it's 13 percent by weight in protein.

Now you think what that compares with cow's milk or even human milk. So it's no wonder that when she feeds the babe, she feeds it 200 liters at a time, and that's 50 gallons. So you can see the little fellow sort of swells out a bit quickly, you see, fed on fed on a diet like that.

But think of this. Now you ladies know, we've had four children, so we know too, that when a mother nurses the child, it does take it out of the mother, and she needs to drink a lot of milk to put her electrolytes right, and the fact that she's losing put it right, otherwise she goes downhill pretty quickly. But this whale has come 10,000 kilometers fasting.

It hasn't eaten at all. And it feeds the babes down there off the Mexican coast, it feeds them for two months on this amount of milk, and it takes 70 tons of this milk to put on 60 tons of weight onto the little baby. And so she looks after them there, and the purpose of the whale coming this long distance is not for food, but to have a nursery.

A mother knows what's good for the babe, doesn't she? And she finds the place. Her husband comes with her to protect her on the way, because she's pretty far gone pregnant, you see, to protect her from killer whales, which attack them very easily, killer whales, you know, the white and black speckled ones, and they bite chunks of flesh out of the whale's body. So the male whales stand there and protect them on the journey.

They do 165 or 170, 180 kilometers a day, and they swim at 28 kilometers an hour. And the power on their fluke, which is the fin at the back, the flat horizontal fin, absorbs a thousand horsepower. And therefore, if

they're put to it and attacked by killer whales, they can go up to 50 miles an hour, these whales, and you think how heavy they are.

A blue whale, that's much heavier than a gray whale, but a blue whale goes up to 196,000 kilograms. Now, if you use the same sort of tons as we use in Europe, that's about 200 tons of fish going through the water at 50 miles an hour. You can think how much fuel that'll need to develop a thousand horsepower.

They're enormously complex animals. Now, when we were going over once to Europe with our whole family, we took a 500 ton freighter to get over to Europe again. And when we were right out in the Atlantic, we saw what looked like an island in the Atlantic, because the birds were sitting on it, the seagulls, right out far away from anybody.

And I asked the captain, he said, will you look at it, put your glasses on, have a look at it carefully. Do you know what it was? A huge blue whale. And the birds were sitting on it and pecking at the blubber, getting something to eat that way.

But it was dead, because you could see the harpoon with which they'd harpooned it still sticking into its belly in the water. Now, that's what they look like, the blue whales. Anyway, you've seen the gray whales here, I expect most people have.

Now, let's just have a little bit look at this. How do they navigate? Who told the whales up in the Arctic Ocean where a suitable nursery was for the babies that are to come? Because nobody's, no whale has been that way before, when it's, if it's a young whale and come back, it's been that way before. But it knows the way.

How does it know the way? Well, it has a compass in it. And the compass works, of course, on the Earth's magnetic field. And the dip angle will not only give you the North Pole, the magnetic North Pole, but it'll also give you an idea of your latitude.

You see, the angle of dip will do that. Now, you think of the whale developing from one sperm the size of a pin, and one egg the size of a pinhead, having all the instructions written down in code form to make a super compass like that. Goes all down the coast using this super compass.

Now, if the magnetic field shows a wrong line, some whales beach themselves then, because they're following the magnetic line. And if there's been an earthquake or the contours have changed, then they do get beached, because there's no, not enough water there for them to swim in. But they're following the magnetic lines.

Now, if you tell me, ladies and gentlemen, that chance mutations made a compass like that, we shall navigate them certainly for 10,000 kilometers down and 10,000 kilometers back, then I say go and tell it to the Marines, because I can't believe that. An instrument is always teleonomic, that is, it's designed. So the designer knew how to make a compass out of fish krill and things like that, things that they eat.

But think of one other technical problem. As I said, they're hugely heavy, these animals, and they have therefore a huge stomach. Their stomachs are big enough to take a ton of food.

And that's krill, which they wipe off the beard with their huge tongues. Now, think of the other technical problems that need to be thought through. You know what a pot whale is, don't you? He's the master diver amongst the tooth whales.

He doesn't live on krill. He goes down and he dives to 3,000 yards, 3,000 meters. Now, you think of that.

A blue whale will go down to 200 meters, but not much more. But the pot whale will go down at six to eight kilometers an hour, vertically, straight down. Now, what does he do that for? He goes there for his food.

And his food, the things that he likes best of all, are giant octopuses. And they're only in the very, very deep ocean, you know, the giant octopuses. They're often eight yards in diameter, these animals.

And their tentacles are 15 yards, up to 15 yards long. Think of that. And he goes straight down where it's pitch black.

He can't see anything. He locates them with echolocation. And he swallows them whole.

They caught one pot whale. And when they opened his stomach, they found that he'd got 28,000 octopuses in his stomach. Now, they weren't all such big ones as that.

But 28,000, you know, even of these little cheery little fellows, so big, you know, they're quite a big volume to get down into the stomach. Now, when they swallow these big octopuses, they hold them in their peg-like teeth, with the holes on the top slots to fit into. And there's a fight of the giants, as the giant pot whale tries to get outside the giant octopus.

And the octopuses, you see, are quite strong. With all these tentacles, you know, with the suction pads on them, they can do quite a lot of damage. And they have inside them quite a beak, which can inflict damage.

Now, when they've done that, they come horizontally, they come vertically upwards, after they've had their meal, and swallowed the giant octopuses. Now, they come up quite quickly, six, eight miles, eight kilometers an hour. You think what would happen to us, not if we'd eaten any octopuses, but if we'd, if we rose that quickly from such a huge pressure? You see, at a thousand meters deep, there is pressure on the body for every fingernail worth of square centimeters.

There's the weight of one 200 kilogram man, for every square centimeter on the body, at a thousand meters. And of course, it goes down in atmosphere each, so many meters down you go. Now, how can they do it? Because if we send a diver down, and he comes up too quickly, you know he suffers from caissons disease.

You know what that is, diver's disease. What happens is that the gases in the blood, they bubble out when the pressure is reduced. If you take a bottle of pop, and put it in the trunk of your car, and the car really, you know, does drive as the people do drive here, a bit fast, and goes around the corners a bit quickly.

If you open it, you know, the whole bottle of content lands on the ceiling, and it puffs all out, because the gas comes out of solution, because you lower the pressure by opening the stopper, and out it all comes. Now, the same thing happens if a human goes down, or a whale goes down deep in the water, and comes up suddenly. Now, I shouldn't say the same thing happens to the whale, it happens with a human, because it doesn't happen with a whale.

A whale can go down to 3,000 meters, straight down, and straight up, and he doesn't have to have compression chambers, such as we do. The people at Shell, you know, who do this sea prospecting, and have to use divers a lot, would give their right arm, or their right eye, how to know, to know how a whale

can do that. Because the master diver, the pot whale, can.

Now, what does he have in his body? He has in his body what's called the Rete, R-E-T-E, Mirabile, and that's a network of fine vessels in his blood's arterial circulation, and somehow, we don't know how, that Rete Mirabile, that wonder network, stops the gases bubbling out of his blood as he comes up, and so he can live. He can do it. Now look, ladies and gentlemen, a little instrument like that, the Rete Mirabile, needs designing, and it needs somebody who understands the gas laws, Henry's law, and Boyle's law, and all those sorts of things, to do it.

And they're still trying to find out how it does it, and haven't yet found out. It's so complex. Now, if you tell me that an instrument like that happened by chance, well, I wouldn't tell somebody else, don't tell me, because I shan't listen.

It's just simply nonsense to think of an animal that knows where the nursery is, and will go 10,000 kilometers down, and 10,000 kilometers back, right through the Benning Straits, just to find that nursery. Who told the whale first? I think God must have put it there, probably written down in his genes. And if you write a thing down, say I speak in one language, sometimes I do, and then in another, you know you have to translate it.

But I found out this, that if you translate one language into another, it's only then that you really know that you understand it. Otherwise, you can read over a sentence, and not understand it. But you try putting it into another language, and you will, and you'll appreciate it.

Now, you think of God designing the whale with the compass to work out the dip angle, as well as the north magnetic north pole, and to put in the Rete Mirabile in that animal, so that he can dive straight down, and straight up, without any diver's disease. And you think of giving the whale mother milk, while she's fasting, so that the baby will double its weight at birth within eight days. That nutrient milk is just fitted for the circumstances, and if something is fitted for the circumstances, I say it's designed, you know.

You think of the person who did that. Jesus said that Jehovah, the father, made all things through him. So the person who worked all this out is none other than the Lord Jesus, the great designer.

Now you think, if you take a uneducated and very dumb person, you don't like to see them misused, even though they are dumb. But if you take a very worthy old man, who's spent his life in intellectual pursuits, to see him spat upon, we rebel against it, don't we? But he endured the contradiction of sinners, and drank the cup to the dregs, it said, to save us. Now I think this, you know, he made us and our brain much more highly designed than even the parts of a whale that I've described.

You think of the outward covering of the blue whale. It's all in little, little tiny furrows, right the length of the whole body, little tiny depressions, lines, ridges. And those lines, ridges, on the blue whale are there to prevent turbulent flow.

Now you all know what turbulent flow is, don't you? It's what they try to avoid on cars, by making them streamlined shape, so they don't waste the energy of the motor on producing turbulence in the air. So they make them, and polish them, make the shape right, so that you don't make much turbulence. And that saves energy.

Now you think of the whale, coming 10,000 kilometers right down the coast to find a nursery. You're not surprised to find that the friction between the whale and the water is at an absolute minimum. They're

trying to imitate it today for our submarines and things like that, so they don't waste so much energy on stirring up the dust, the turbulence in water.

That's what they're trying to do. But it shows the most supreme form of design you can ever think of. Well that would be enough for the blue whale and for the grey whales.

Now let's have a look a little bit further. Now Jonah, he didn't like the presence of God, because God asked him to do something, and he defended his patriotism, to go and preach to Nineveh, because he said he was going to destroy it. He ought to have rubbed his hands, you see, as a patriotic Jew, and say, oh so much the better, do the job.

But he said he wasn't going to do it. So when God asked him to do the job, he says he took his funds and bought a ticket to Tarshish, to flee from the presence of the Lord. Now when he got that, the Lord stopped him.

And the Lord often does, you know, when we use diversions of all sorts of things to prevent us doing what he's told us to do. He tells us to go and bear much fruit. One of the fruits he wants is the fruit of our lips, which are praised to our God.

Have you praised him today? My wife and myself, we've been married 44 years just on, and we've had four children, and we've moved house 26 times. Now you think what that means. Three meals a day is a rule.

We've been very careful to have our meals regularly, because at the mealtime we sit down together, and we read God's Word, and thank him for what he's done in giving us the food, and for looking after us this day. Now I would say this, if you're going to serve God, discipline in the family is the first thing you need. If you don't read together the Bible, just a short verse or a chapter every day, when are you going to do it with your wife? She's got her hands full with the kids, maybe.

And if you don't discipline yourself to do it, we've done it for 40 years, over 40 years, so we know. You know, you don't get around to doing it at all, and that's fleeing from the presence of the Lord. So do think it's worth taking the trouble to have a proper set meal at which you can thank the Lord for what he's done, all the great things he's done for you.

And while you're doing that, it teaches your children who listen to it, the Word of God. Our children, when they went to boarding school in England, because we had sent them to England to boarding school, the Swiss schools were so bad we couldn't risk it, and we sent them there. Now they have a general knowledge test in the British schools, and they don't ask you how old you are, but they will give you an examination to see what you know.

And they examined our third child, a boy, Clive, they examined him at school when he got there, and they asked him the names of David's wives. That was in a general test. Clive sits down, and he writes down the names immediately.

So I never taught him the names, but I told him the stories, you see, the biblical stories. Every night before they went to bed, they had a biblical story, and he wrote down the wives' names, and the minister who was testing him said to him, Clive, I've known your father for years, but did he teach you to cheat? So Clive said, no. He was surprised.

Well, he said, how did you know the names of David's wives then? You must have cheated to find those out. So he said, oh, when did I learn that? He said, I don't know, sir, but I've always known them. You see, it's like going the road home.

If you do it regularly, you know the way home. And that's what saved him in that examination. He got full marks for his examination.

But it's very important to know these things, and let's get back to the sign of Jonah. Jonah was flying, was fleeing from the face of the Lord, from the presence of the Lord, and he said, if you want the storm to stop, that storm is to prevent me from avoiding doing God's will. That's what it is, and he was right.

So the mariner said to him, well, what should we do? He said, throw me into the water. Let me perish in my own disobedience. So they took him up, one, two, three, and threw him into the water.

And he says, God prepared a great sea monster. I think it might have been, you know, a pot whale, because they swallow things whole, and they don't bite them. It might have been that.

Now, imagine Jonah coming head first, not killed, not in any way wounded, head first into the stomach of that animal with all the octopuses there. You think of that. How would you like that? Head first into that soup.

Ladies and gentlemen, we're too civilized, you know, and therefore we miss half of life. You must remember, most people have only eaten a fish which has been cleaned at the superstore. Have you ever cleaned a fish's stomach out? Have you ever done it? Have you ever cleaned a rabbit's stomach out? I'll tell you one thing, if you clean a fish's stomach out, it doesn't smell like eau de cologne.

It's a stench. Okay? And if you try it the same with chicken, or depends what they've been fed on, of course, you'll find the same sort of thing. Now, the animals that go down this esophagus are not dead.

How do they get killed? Well, they get killed by the digestive juices. And the digestive juices will digest anything that's in them that's soft, digest the soft parts of the body. So Jonah will have landed down, perhaps into the arms of a giant octopus.

See, she's lovely, all yielding and rubbery, and with nice little suckers all down the arms, you know, to fix himself to your skin. Now, how would you like to land there, ladies and gentlemen, and in a stench like that, and completely dark? He couldn't see anything. He could only feel those rubbery walls, and the slimy walls, as he landed there, head first.

No wonder he called it the pit of Sheol, the pit of hell. No wonder he did that. Well now, he came to himself under circumstances like that, and God often puts us into awkward situations, that he learns that we come to our, teaches us to come to ourselves.

So he came to himself in the pit of Sheol, in that awful stomach, and he cried to the Lord. He said, I will keep my vows now. I will do thy will.

And he said, God heard him in his holy temple. Now you think of his ears in that digestive juice. That's just the thing that digestive juices are made for, you know, to dissolve out the ears, and the lips, and the cheeks, the soft parts of the body.

And when he cried to the Lord, those were certainly half digested. So Jonah looked parboiled. He wasn't dead, but every part of his body, the soft parts, had all been etched by the digestive juices of this monster.

Now he tried, no doubt, to get out. Now if he tried to climb up the esophagus, you know, all that, all that rubbery, slimy stuff, you can't get a hold of anything there. But if he tried to climb out, you think what that would have done if he did get anywhere.

If he got to the place where the reflexes for the swallowing reflexes start, there would have been an immediate swallow of the fish, and he'd be shoved back again. Think of this, if you've ever thrown up lately, you see, one of the things about throwing up and vomiting, is you start to swallow, don't you? If you've eaten a lot of raw garlic, or anything like that, I hope you don't. But if you do, the first sign that you're going to be sick, and throw up, is you start to swallow, don't you? That's the first warning, you must swallow, is to keep the stuff down in the stomach.

And I think that Jonah, being very much alive, and knowing where he was, tried perhaps to get out. And that would have made the fish want to throw up. You see, get to certain places, and the reflexes start, and down you go.

And it says that the Lord spoke to the monster, and the monster threw him up onto dry land. Now you think of Jonah coming out of that fish, that one of the fish, that huge monster, you know, he will have been covered with bits and pieces of octopus. Ever so nasty.

And he'll have, he'd have been in a stench. Well you know what a stomach smells like, don't you? And when he got out in that awful state, his eyelids half dissolved away, and the skin of his face parboiled, and perhaps his ears gone, the outward lobes of his ears gone. When he landed then on dry land, what would he have done? What would you have done? Well he'd have washed himself, he'd have taken a shower, wouldn't he? Quick, to try and get this awful stuff off him, and get the stink, the stench gone.

So he started to wash himself, and you know, coming out into the light from the darkness of that belly, and hearing the seagulls calling again, and the wind blowing again. What difference will that have been from the stink of the stomach, the fresh wind blowing again? Now the holy scripture says that in that state he went in to Nineveh, a day's journey, and there he preached. Said, gave his testimony, sure.

And he preached, he preached, and it got straight to the king. There's somebody special here. Well he was parboiled.

You could see being in the place of death. The stink of death was upon him. And so the king of Nineveh said, come to me, and he got sacked, sackcloth and ashes on, because he was taken by the message of Jonah.

Well you see, the world normally doesn't listen to the average preacher. They don't. They don't want theological philosophy, you know.

But if they see the marks of death on you, perhaps they'll listen. And that's what happened to Jonah. They saw that his testimony was true.

His body, his appearance, bore out his message. And in 40 days God will judge the city. And they repented in sackcloth and ashes.

And God saved the city as a result. Now you know, the nations of the West have seen how a grand empire, the Russian Soviet one, collapsed. Irrevocably, because they couldn't do their sums.

They couldn't spend what they had, but had to spend double what they had. And the result was finances catch up with you. If you're a father of a household, and you're reading, say, \$200 an hour, and you spend \$400 an hour, it won't be long before there's a heavy hand of the bank manager on your shoulder to say, my boy, this must stop.

You live within your means, or you bankrupt the nation. Now it wants Christians to stand up, and with the marks of death, the death to self, the death to self upon you, then your message is confirmed. And the man who came back from the depths of death was Jonah, who gave that message.

If you don't repent, you'll all likewise perish, said Jesus. Now that's what we want today. You don't want Christians with great oratory.

They don't listen to that. But if you've got the marks that I died in Christ on you, and when Christ was crucified, I was crucified with him. If they can see that you crucified yourself with Jesus, you know they'll listen.

You won't say snide remarks then. You won't, I thought, simply try to make an impression on people. You'll warn people in love that God loves us so much as to die for us.

And I died with him. And if you're in the same state of mind as Jesus, who for love to us died the death of the cross, they'll listen. But they want to see the signs.

And the sign was Jonah was obviously a man who'd been as good as dead, because he'd been in the belly of that fish, and they could see it. Ears, eyes, nose, soft parts gone, parboiled. They could see it.

Now if they can see that in us, that we don't try to be clever Alex, but that we do try to crucify ourselves for Christ's sake, because he was crucified for us, and take that. You know, even the king of Nineveh will listen to that. Think about it.

When we were baptized, we were baptized into the death of the Lord Jesus, so that as we came out of the baptismal waters, we rose again into newness of life, having left the old life behind us. That's like Jonah coming out of the whale. But it must be credible.

And if our testimony is not credible, it's better not to give it. It wants to be absolutely credible. Everything that Jonah said has got to be borne out by what we are.

And the first thing that I need in that case, personally, is repentance. I know what I am. I know who I am.

And if God has got you in your family life, like Jonah in the animal, to spit you out, we'll pray together. We ask thee, Lord Jesus, that thou mightest give us the love which thou hast for us, that all men can see that we love them, and give ourselves for them. So bless this congregation.

Bless the pastor. Bless all the pastors here who work to this end. Watch over us and bless us this day.

We thank thee for the short time together. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0548.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dr-ae-wilder-smith/sign-of-the-prophet-jonah/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**