

Jonah and the Great Whale

1:17 to 2:10

By focusing on **the sailors** in 1:16, we lose sight of **Yonah**. As far as **they** are concerned there can be no hope of **his** surviving the raging sea (1:14). **ADONAI**, however, has not yet finished with **the reluctant prophet**. And by means of a **great whale** in **scene three** God snatches **him** from a watery grave.

Many Bible scholars say that the word in the Greek New Testament translated **whale** (Greek: *ketos*) could be just as accurately translated simply huge fish or sea monster. However, in defending **God's Word**, it is not really necessary to rule out the possibility that this Greek word which may mean **whale** actually does mean **whale**. There are two reasons for this: 1) Some research scholars tell us there is a species of whale which not only has a mouth large enough for a man to get in, but also has a throat large enough for the whale to swallow the man. 2) Even if there is no species of whale today with a throat large enough for a man to pass through, **God** could have certainly **prepared a whale** with a mouth and throat large enough for **Jonah** to go right on down to **the whale's** stomach, because the Bible tells us that **the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah (Jonah 1:17)**. Thus, we should realize that it was a greater miracle for **God** to resurrect **Jonah** than it was for **Him** to create or appoint a **whale**, which could swallow **the runaway prophet**. For with **God nothing shall be impossible (Luke 1:37)**. Therefore, **the great fish** of **Jonah** was probably a **sperm whale** (*Catodon Macrocephalus*).

In a rather blunt statement from J. Vernon McGee, he states that the miracle in the book of **Jonah** does not pertain to a man living for three days inside of a whale. Rather, it is a miracle where **God** raises up a man from the dead. If the miracle of the resurrection daunts you, then you are going to have difficulty with the resurrection of Christ from the dead. If **God** raised up **Jesus** from the dead, then **He** could raise **Jonah** from the dead. If **God** could not raise **Jonah** from the dead, then **He** would not be able to raise **Jesus** from the dead. If you do not believe that **God** could raise **Jonah** and did raise **Jesus** from the dead, then you cannot be a believer. Your trouble is not with a whale story, but with the Gospel story. Your trouble is not intellectual, but due to the fact that you are in the flesh, a stranger from the grace of **God**, because **the person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit (First Corinthians 2:14)**. The trouble is not with **Jonah** but with yourself. You need to have a generous portion of eye salve to open your eyes to the truth of the Gospel.

In conclusion, **the whale** here is not the hero of the story, neither is it its villain. The book is not even about a **whale**. **The whale** is among the props and does not occupy the star's dressing room. Let us distinguish between the essentials and the incidentals. Incidentals are **the whale, the plant, the east wind, the ship, and Nineveh**. The essentials are **ADONAI and Jonah . . . God and man**.