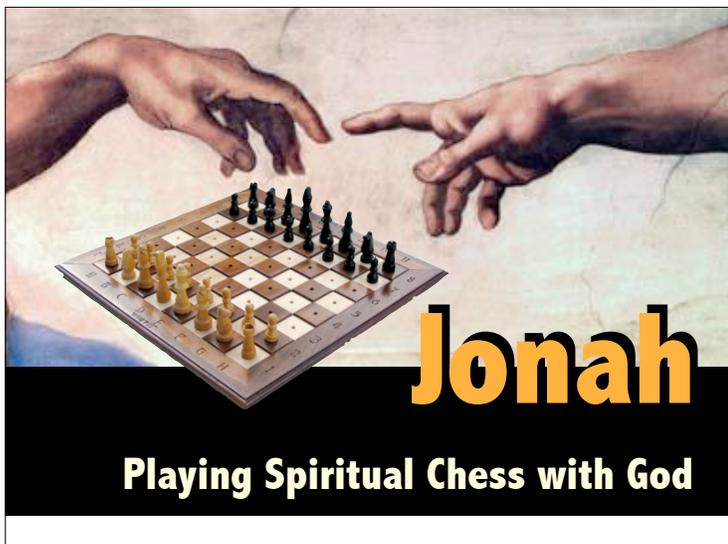




“4 The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up. 5 Then the sailors become afraid and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep. 6 So the captain approached him and said, “How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish.” 7 Each man said to his mate, “Come, let us cast lots so we may learn on whose account this calamity has struck us.” So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.”

“8 Then they said to him, “Tell us, now! On whose account has this calamity struck us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?” 9 He said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.” 10 Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, “How could you do this?” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. 11 So they said to him, “What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?” - for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy. 12 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 on account of me this great storm has come upon you.””

“13 However, the men rowed desperately to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming even stormier against them. 14 Then they called on the LORD and said, “We earnestly pray, O LORD, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, O LORD, have done as You have pleased.” 15 So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. 16 Then the men feared the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows. 17 And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.”



Round #1

The Word



“1 The word of the LORD came to Jonah”

“3 But Jonah rose up to flee from the presence of the LORD.”

Round #2

The Wind



“4 The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up.

5 . . . But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep.”

Round #3

The Water



“15 So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea,

and the sea stopped its raging. 16 Then the men feared the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.”

Round #4

The Whale



“17 And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah,

and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.”

Four stages in Jonah’s life and ours.

1. **The Word.** - Declaring independence
2. **The Wind.** - Feeling secure
3. **The Water.** - Sensing trouble
4. **The Whale.** - Turning to God

Lessons from playing chess with God

1. **Most of us are in the game at some level.**

- God is involved in life even when we can’t see it.
- God speaks through several different means.
- Not every voice (or event) is from God.

2. **God’s goal is not to beat us but to teach us.**

- The great fish was sent to save Jonah.
- Jonah is not being judged nor is he discarded.
- God’s plans for Jonah start with restoration.

3. **Don’t get overconfident.**

- “Freedom from God” offers a fragile peace.
- You may feel good until God makes His move.
- Nineveh looked scary but God was moving there.
- Tarshish looked safe but Jaws was waiting.

4. **As we feel the heat, look for the light.**

- Going the wrong direction will bring the heat.
- The water left Jonah with nowhere to go but up.
- Things that are a normal part of real change:
 - a. **Insight** - We can’t change what we don’t acknowledge.
 - b. We gain insight from **teaching, empathy, pain and grace.**