

# SOVEREIGNTY VS OMNIPOTENCE



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**THE POWER OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF JONAH**  
**LET'S SEE HOW GOD'S CHOICE AND POWER**  
**SHAPE EVERY DETAIL OF JONAH'S JOURNEY—**  
**AND OURS.**

# Why Jonah

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- Jonah: a story of running, rescuing, and repentance.
- We want to see two themes: God's right to choose (sovereignty) and His ability to do anything (omnipotence).
- The God who ruled Jonah's life is the same God ruling ours. Let's get the lesson.
- Can we respond better than Jonah did?

# Defining the Topic

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- **Sovereignty:** God has the absolute right and authority to rule over all creation, directing all things according to His own will and purpose. God never asks permission; His purposes always stand. He has the right to choose.
- **Omnipotence:** He has all power to do whatever He wants. Nothing can stop what God decides—no force or failure.
- In Jonah, we clearly see these work together—sometimes for discipline, sometimes for mercy.

# God's Call to Jonah

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*“Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.” (Jonah 1:1–2, KJV)*

- God's sovereignty: He chooses messenger, audience, the timing.... And the message.
- God's power: He can execute mercy or judgment on anyone at any time.



# Jonah's Response—Flee

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*“But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.” (Jonah 1:3, KJV)*

- Even prophets run; rebellion is real.
- Our resistance never limits God—He knows where we are.

# Jonah's Response—Flee

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- **Sovereignty:**

- God has the right to command Jonah (“Arise, go to Nineveh...”), but Jonah exercises his own will and chooses to flee.
- Jonah thinks he can escape “from the presence of the LORD,” as if God’s authority is bound by geography.
- Even in Jonah’s rebellion, God’s sovereign plan is not threatened. God allows Jonah’s flight as part of a larger plan.
- Human disobedience never cancels God’s right to rule.

# Jonah's Response—Flee

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- **Omnipotence:**

- God has the power to intervene at any moment—He could have stopped Jonah from boarding the ship, but He allows Jonah to go.
- God's omnipotence means Jonah is never truly out of His reach, no matter how far he sails.
- What looks like human “freedom” is actually unfolding within boundaries set by God's power & choice.
- God will later display His omnipotence by sending the storm and the fish, proving that no one can outrun His power.

# You Can't Outrun God

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- Tarshish: Jonah's farthest imagined escape.
- God's sovereignty has no borders; His reach is infinite.
- What we try to escape, God still controls.
- Let's choose to trust Him, His Word and His servant



# God Sends a Storm

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*“But the **LORD** sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.” (Jonah 1:4, KJV)*

- “But the LORD sent...” —making it clear that the storm was not random or accidental. God Himself initiates the disruption.
- This is divine intervention: God sovereignly uses natural forces to interrupt Jonah’s attempt to flee. He rules over every circumstance, orchestrating events to accomplish His will.
- The storm is both a consequence and a call (to repentance)—God’s authority means He can use adversity to pursue, discipline, and redirect His people.

# No Accident—Every Storm Appointed

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- God's omnipotence is on full display: He commands the wind and the sea, unleashing a tempest that no human strength or skill can withstand.
- The forces of nature obey Him instantly and absolutely. The ship, strong as it may be, is helpless before the power of God.
- The same God who created the sea now stirs it to accomplish His purpose—His power is unlimited, and nothing in creation can resist His command.

# Human Helplessness

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*"Then the **mariners** were afraid, and **cried every man unto his god**, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep."* (Jonah 1:5, KJV).

- God's authority is seen in how He uses the storm to expose the limits of human strength and the futility of false gods. The sailors panic and pray to their own gods, but no answer comes—because only the LORD rules the sea.
- The mariners' desperate actions—throwing cargo overboard—illustrate how human plans are overturned when God intervenes. No matter how skilled or prepared we are, God's purposes stand above our own.
- Even Jonah's location and posture ("gone down into the sides of the ship...fast asleep") are under God's sovereign direction. Jonah cannot hide from God's reach or escape His plan, even in sleep.

# Human Helplessness

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*"Then the **mariners** were afraid, and **cried every man unto his god**, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep."* (Jonah 1:5, KJV).

- The raging storm is a visible, undeniable display of God's power. No human action—no prayer to false gods or sacrifice of valuable cargo—can calm the sea. Only the one true God commands nature.
- The sailors' fear underscores their realization that they are dealing with a force far beyond their experience and ability. They are helpless before God's power, and all their resources are exhausted.
- Jonah's sleep in the midst of chaos is striking: even when we're unaware or indifferent, God's omnipotent hand is still moving, undeterred by human weakness or avoidance.

# God's Sovereignty in the Smallest Details

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*"So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, **What meanest thou, O sleeper?** arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." (Jonah 1:6, KJV).*

- God uses pagans to confront His prophet. Shouldn't Jonah be the first one to pray?
- God orchestrates circumstances and conversations to move His purposes forward—even when His servant is unwilling.

# Casting Lots—Chance in God’s Hands

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*“And they said every one to his fellow, **Come, and let us cast lots,** that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.” (Jonah 1:7, KJV)*

- What seems random is directed by God’s hand.
- God’s authority is evident as He directs even seemingly random events—like the casting of lots—to reveal His will.
- No decision or outcome happens by chance; God rules over every detail, including human attempts at “chance.”

# Jonah's Confession of Sovereignty

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*“And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, **the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.**” (Jonah 1:9, KJV)*

- God owns land and sea—no escape.
- Total sovereignty; undeniable power.
- God's sovereignty gives Him the right to command—and His omnipotence means He has the power to enforce His will over all creation, land and sea alike.

# Realizing Who God Is

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*“Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, **Why hast thou done this?** For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.” (Jonah 1:10, KJV)*

- Encountering the real God unsettles.
- His sovereignty demands reverence.
- Jonah’s admission that he’s fleeing “from the presence of the LORD” reveals an attempt to resist God’s sovereign authority, but also the futility of such resistance.

# Jonah's Solution—Surrender to God's Will

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*“And he said unto them, **Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.**” (Jonah 1:12, KJV)*

- Only surrender brings peace.
- God's power judges and rescues.

# Pagan Prayer—God's Sovereignty Over All People

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*Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, **let us not perish for this man's life**, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee.(Jonah 1:14, KJV).*

- Outsiders call on the true God when faced with His power.
- Sovereignty not limited by nation or background.
- Recognizing God's sovereignty leads to humble prayer, and trusting in His omnipotence is the only hope for deliverance—He alone does as He pleases, and He alone can save.

# The Sea Obeys Instantly

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*So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. (Jonah 1:15, KJV).*

- The men obeyed!
- Creation obeys—even when the prophet doesn't.
- When God's sovereign will is obeyed, His omnipotent power brings instant and unmistakable results—the sea calms, showing that He alone rules both judgment and mercy.

# 4 Jonah Swallowed by the Fish



# God Appoints the Fish

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*“Now the LORD **had prepared** a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.” (Jonah 1:17, KJV)*

- God’s sovereignty is seen in the detail: “the LORD had prepared a great fish.” God can use anything—even a fish.
- Before Jonah ever fled, God had already ordained the means of his rescue, discipline & redirection.
- Nothing is accidental; God orchestrates discipline not to destroy, but to restore and redirect His servant.

# God's Preparation—Nothing Surprises Him

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- God's omnipotence is evident in His command over the animal kingdom. He not only creates but directs the movements and actions of the great fish—something no human could ever do.
- The timing, the creature, and the outcome are all demonstrations of God's limitless might—He can save in ways far beyond our imagination.
- What looks like disaster is actually deliverance by God's design.

# Jonah in the Deep—God's Reach

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*Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. **And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.** (Jonah 1:17, KJV).*

- No place too deep for God's presence.
- Preserving Jonah alive for three days and nights in the belly of a fish is a miracle that defies natural explanation. Only God has power over life, death, and the forces of nature.



# Prayer in the Depths - Sovereignty

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*“Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,” (Jonah 2:1, KJV)*

- God’s authority placed Jonah exactly where he needed to be—not as punishment only, but as preparation for repentance and prayer.
- Even in the depths of the sea, God remains in control of Jonah’s circumstances, using them to draw Jonah’s heart back to Himself.
- Jonah’s prayer shows that God sovereignly ordains both the trial and the opportunity for restoration.

# Prayer in the Depths - Omnipotence

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*“Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,” (Jonah 2:1, KJV)*

- Only God has the power to sustain Jonah in the belly of the fish—He preserves life where it should be impossible.
- God’s omnipotence means no place is too dark, too deep, or too desperate for Him to hear and respond to prayer.
- The miracle of Jonah’s survival and ability to pray demonstrates God’s absolute power over life, death, and every circumstance.

# Jonah's Desperation and God's Deliverance

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*“When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD:  
and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.”  
(Jonah 2:7, KJV)*

- **God brings low to bring back.**
- **Sovereignty disciplines; omnipotence delivers.**

# Jonah's Confession—Salvation Belongs to God

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*“But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. **Salvation is of the LORD.**”  
(Jonah 2:9, KJV)*

- Only God can save - He chooses means and moment.
- Salvation - both the right to grant it and the power to accomplish it - belongs to God alone. His sovereignty determines who is saved, and His omnipotence ensures that salvation is complete... even from the belly of a fish!



# Vomited onto Dry Land - Sovereignty

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*“And the **LORD spake** unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.” (Jonah 2:10, KJV)*

- God alone decides when Jonah’s ordeal ends. The timing, the place, and even the fish’s obedience are all under God’s authority.
- By commanding the fish, God demonstrates that all creation is subject to His will—He rules the sea, the land, and every creature in between.
- Jonah’s deliverance comes not by chance or by his own effort, but by the sovereign word of the LORD.

# Vomited onto Dry Land - Omnipotence

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*“And the LORD spake unto the fish, **and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.**” (Jonah 2:10, KJV)*

- *Only God has the power to make a great fish swallow a man and then deliver him alive and unharmed.*
- *The same divine might that sent the fish now commands it to release Jonah—God’s power controls both the problem and the rescue.*
- *Nothing in creation can resist God’s command; His omnipotence ensures that what He wants, happens.*

# God's Call Comes Again—**Second Chances**

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*“And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,”  
(Jonah 3:1, KJV)*

- God's sovereign purposes are not derailed by human failure; His will prevails, even in spite of our disobedience.
- God's right to recommission Jonah shows us that His call is not dependent on our perfection, but on His unwavering purpose and grace.
- Omnipotence means God can overcome every obstacle—external (the sea, the fish) and internal (Jonah's reluctance, fear, and failure).
- The fact that Jonah is alive, willing, and able to hear God's voice again is itself a miracle of God's sustaining power.



# Jonah Obey—God’s Will Prevails

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*“So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, **according to the word of the LORD**. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.” (Jonah 3:3, KJV)*

- Jonah’s obedience—“according to the word of the LORD”—demonstrates his submission to God’s authority. What God commands, He expects to be done, regardless of personal feeling or past failure.
- God’s power is seen in bringing Jonah safely to Nineveh after everything he endured. Only God could orchestrate such a journey—through storms, seas, and a great fish.

# Nineveh—A Great City, Great Need

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*“So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. **Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city** of three days' journey.” (Jonah 3:3, KJV)*

- God’s sovereignty extends not just to Jonah, but to the city of Nineveh. He determines which nation receives His message and when.
- The fact that Nineveh is described as “an exceeding great city” shows us the scale of God’s concern.

# The Message—God’s Right to Judge - Sovereignty

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*“And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” (Jonah 3:4, KJV)*

- God’s authority is on display as He determines both the message and the timeline: “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” The warning is not Jonah’s idea; it is God’s word.
- God’s rule extends over all nations. Jonah was a Hebrew prophet.

# The Message—God’s Right to Judge - Omnipotence

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*“And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and **Nineveh shall be overthrown.**” (Jonah 3:4, KJV)*

- Even a brief, blunt message from a reluctant prophet has the weight to shake an entire city, because it is backed by the omnipotent God.
- Only God can truly threaten to “overthrow” a city and have both the power and authority to carry it out. The existence of Nineveh is utterly in His hands.
- God’s ability to use Jonah—even after failure and reluctance—shows His power not just to judge, but to restore and work through imperfect vessels.



**The Ninevites Repenting**

# The People Believe and Repent - Sovereignty

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*“So the people of Nineveh **believed God**, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.” (Jonah 3:5, KJV)*

- God’s power softens hearts; no one is beyond reach when He so chooses.
- God’s authority moves the entire city—from the highest leaders to the lowest citizens—to respond in repentance.
- His rule demands a response from all.

# The People Believe and Repent - Omnipotence

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*“So the people of Nineveh **believed God**, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.” (Jonah 3:5, KJV)*

- God’s power is evident in the transformation of an entire city’s heart and behavior. Such widespread repentance is beyond human ability.
- This wide-scale repentance is a testament to God’s omnipotence to overcome hardness of heart.
- When God moves, no one is beyond His reach... even enemy nations!



## 9. The King of Nineveh Humbles Himself

# The King Humbles Himself

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*“For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.” (Jonah 3:6, KJV)*

- The king of Nineveh—ruler of a great empire—does not act on his own authority but responds immediately to the word of the LORD.
- God’s unmatched power melts the heart of a mighty king, compelling him to humble himself in a public act of repentance.
- It is the sovereign work of God, whose omnipotence breaks the pride of rulers and brings even the most powerful to their knees.

# A City Turns from Evil

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*“God saw their works... they turned from their evil way.”  
(Jonah 3:10, KJV)*

- Sovereignty: free to show mercy;
- Omnipotence: grants repentance (withholding destruction).

# God Relents—Mercy by His Choice

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*“And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.” (Jonah 3:10, KJV)*

God decides when judgment stops and mercy starts.

# Jonah's Anger at God's Grace

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*“It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.”  
(Jonah 4:1, KJV)*

- Jonah's anger opposes God's perfect authority and wisdom.
- But, man's feelings do not override God's sovereign decisions.
- Jonah's displeasure highlights how easy it is to resist God's revealed will, but it changes nothing.



# God Prepares the Gourd—Comfort by Design

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*“And the **LORD God prepared a gourd**, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.”  
(Jonah 4:6, KJV)*

- He ordains not only great fish and mighty storms, but also simple comforts and fleeting mercies.
- His omnipotence is displayed in causing a plant to spring up at just the right moment, bringing relief to Jonah’s troubled heart.
- Every comfort, every circumstance, is appointed and empowered by God.



# God Prepares the Worm—Loss by Design

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*“But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.” (Jonah 4:7, KJV)*

- The same God who “prepared a gourd” for Jonah’s comfort also “prepared a worm” to take it away.
- God’s sovereignty is just as present in loss as in blessing.
- Trust the God who rules every detail, giving and taking according to His perfect wisdom.



# God Prepares the Wind—Adversity Appointed

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*“And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that **God prepared a vehement east wind**; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.” (Jonah 4:8, KJV)*

- The God who gives shade is the same God who sends the scorching wind, always working for His perfect purpose.
- Whether comfort or adversity, every circumstance in Jonah’s life was ordered by God’s will and empowered by His hand.

# God's Lesson—What Do You Value?

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*“And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.”  
(Jonah 4:9, KJV)*

- He could learn from Job: “The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD. (Job 1:21)”
- Consider whether we value God's mercy and sovereignty more than our own temporary reliefs.

# God's Heart—Mercy Over Judgment

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*“And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?” (Jonah 4:11, KJV)*

- What should Jonah's response have been?
- Thy Will be done, I am thy servant!

# Sovereignty vs Omnipotence—Final Thoughts

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- God has the right to rule and the power to act.
- Nothing escapes His notice; nothing resists His will.
- God's purposes prevail—through storms, fish, prophets, and kings.

# Lessons for Us

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- Obey His Word! (Respond better than Jonah)
- Every storm, comfort, and trial—appointed and empowered by God.
- Trust His rule in every detail; receive what He gives and takes.
- Are we running—or yielding to His sovereign hand?