

**Daily Office Devotional, Tuesday, October 13, 2020**  
**Proper 23, 5th week of the nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**The Rev. David W. Perkins, Th.D.**

Daily Office Lectionary Readings

AM Psalm 5, 6; PM Psalm 10, 11

Jonah 1:1-17a; Acts 26:24-27:8; Luke 8:40-56

Morning Prayer, Rite 2, page 75, Book of Common Prayer

Evening Prayer, Rite 2, page 115, Book of Common Prayer

Compline (Night Prayer), Page 127, Book of Common Prayer

Daily Office Old Testament Reading, Jonah 1:1-17

1:1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, 2 "Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me." 3 But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD.

4 But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. 5 Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. 6 The captain came and said to him, "What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought so that we do not perish." 7 The sailors said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. 8 Then they said to him, "Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" 9 "I am a Hebrew," he replied. "I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." 10 Then the men were even more 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, because he had told them so.

11 Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. 12 He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you." 13 Nevertheless the men

rowed hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more stormy against them. 14Then they cried out to the LORD, "Please, O LORD, we pray, do not let us perish on account of this man's life. Do not make us guilty of innocent blood; for you, O LORD, have done as it pleased you." 15So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging. 16Then the men feared the LORD even more, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows. 17But the LORD provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah as in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

### David's Reflections

Running from distasteful responsibilities can land you in a passel of trouble. Or, better, sailing from them. Jonah felt a call from God to take God's prophetic word to Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria.. The world quaked at the word Assyria; those fierce warriors were unstoppable, aggressive, and ruthless. You can see in the British Museum stone wall sculptures of their exploits that include the flaying alive of prisoners taken in conquest.

Running from an obvious divine call or demand also puts others at risk. Jonah's sojourn away from God and Assyria put a ship and its crew in peril. To his credit, Jonah was willing to die for their deliverance from the storm. (Jonah's assumptions at work here concerning the storm and how to end it involving understandings of how God works in the world that you and I might well question.)

Resisting God's word might also reveal the strength and importance of our national loyalties. Jonah seemed to have no taste for loving and proclaiming to his enemies. After all, his own nation lived in dread of these people and could easily be devoured by them. To think of our nation's enemies, including terrorists, as people for whom Christ died and as people to whom God's love keeps extending might require a stretching of our spiritual imagination. It did for Jonah.

Resisting God's urgings to action also might reveal just how much we understand about God's nature. In chapter 4, verses 1-3, after Nineveh repents and is spared judgment, Jonah says that he expected God would spare them if they believed Jonah's message and turned to God. Jonah resisted going exactly because he knew something about God's capacity to love, transform, and save. Some of our resistance may well stem from having grasped something of God's nature, realities about God that we ourselves refuse to accept. Our self-made god certainly would act in ways more harmonious with our own outlook and nature.

In what ways have our behaviors resembled Jonah's? In what ways does it resemble his today? Who are we putting at risk other than ourselves? What biases might lie behind our resistance? What aspects of God's being and nature might we be rejecting?

*Collect of the Day: Proper 23, nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, that we may continually be given to good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 234-235)

*A Collect for Peace*

Most holy God, the source of all good desires, all right judgments, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we, being delivered from the fear of all enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior. *Amen.* (BCP, 123)

*Of the Departed*

Eternal Lord God, you hold all souls in life: Give to your whole Church in paradise and on earth your light and your peace; and grant that we, following the good examples of those who have served you here and are now at rest, may at the last enter with them into your unending joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* (BCP, 253)

*In the Order of Worship for Evening*

Almighty, everlasting God, let our prayer in your sight be as incense, the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. Give us grace to behold you, present in your Word and Sacraments, and to recognize you in the lives of those around us. Stir up in us the flame of that love which burned in the heart of your Son as he bore his passion, and let it burn in us to eternal life and to the ages of ages. *Amen.* (BCP, 113)

*A Collect for Mission*

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.* (BCP, 100)