

Jonah and Westminster Shorter Catechism # 3

What Man Is to Believe Concerning God

1. He is a gracious, merciful God (4:2) as evidenced by His sparing of the lives of the sailors (chapter 1), by His sparing of the life of Jonah (chapters 1 and 2), by His coming to Jonah a second time to proclaim His message (3:1), by His sparing of Ninevah (chapter 3), and by His interaction with Jonah (chapter 4).
2. He is omnipresent as evidenced by Jonah's inability to run from God (chapter 1) and by God's hearing Jonah's prayers while in the sea and in the belly of the fish (chapter 2).
3. He is omniscient as evidenced by his sending and calming the storm (chapter 1), by His use of the lot to indict Jonah (chapter 1), by His appointing the big fish to preserve Jonah (1:17), by His keeping Jonah alive for three days and three nights in the big fish (1:17), by His speaking to the fish and having it vomit Jonah out upon the dry land (2:10), and by His appointing a plant, a worm, and an east wind (4:6-8) to teach Jonah about compassion.
4. He answers prayers as evidenced by the preservation of the sailors' lives after they cried out to the Lord (1:14-15), by the preservation of Jonah's life after he cried out to God while in the sea (2:4-6), and by the preservation of Ninevah after its citizens and leaders repented (3:6-10).

What Duty God Requires of Man

1. We should repent – consider Ninevah and Jonah.
2. We should obey God immediately – consider Jonah.
3. We should share God's compassion and long-suffering with sinners – consider Jonah's bad example.
4. We should not pout over God's undesired acts of Providence – consider Jonah 4.
5. We should pray – consider the sailors, Jonah, and Ninevah.

Lessons from Jonah's Prayer(s)

1. We can pray anywhere.
2. God delivers us when we sincerely repent in our prayers, no matter how wicked we have been, or how desperate our circumstances.
3. We ought to thank God for our salvation /deliverance when we pray.
4. It is possible to pray without bringing any requests.
5. Our prayers should be full of Scriptural quotes or references (note the chart below)
 - 2:2 - Psalm 18:4-6, 30:3, 120:1
 - 2:3 – Psalm 42:7
 - 2:4 – Psalm 5:7, 31:22
 - 2:5 - Psalm 18:7, 69:1 and 2
 - 2:6 – Psalm 18:16, 30:3, 103:4
 - 2:7 - Psalm 5:7, 18:6, 43:4, 142:3
 - 2:8 – Psalm 31:6
 - 2:9 – Psalm 42:4, 50:14 and 23, 116:17
6. Our prayers should be worshipful.