

Jonah 1:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

Analysis

So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. The sailors execute Jonah's instruction (1:12) with evident reluctance after prayer (1:14). "They took up Jonah" (vayis'u et-Yonah, וַיַּשְׂאֹל אֶת־יُونָה) uses nasa (אָשָׁא), meaning to lift, bear, or carry—the same verb used for bearing sin (Isaiah 53:4, 12). Though unintentional, the language foreshadows substitutionary atonement: one man dies so others might live.

"And cast him forth into the sea" (vayatilu el-hayam, וַיַּטְלֹל אֶל־הַיָּם) uses tul (טַל), meaning to hurl or throw—the same verb used of God hurling the wind (1:4). What God hurled against them, they now hurl into the depths. The immediate result: "and the sea ceased from her raging" (vaya'amod hayam miza'apo, וַיַּעֲמֹד הַיָּם מִזְעָפָו). The verb amad (עָמַד) means to stand still, stop, or cease. The sea's "raging" (za'apo, זָעָפָו) comes from za'af (זָעָפָה), meaning fury, rage, or wrath.

The instantaneous calming proves supernatural causation—storms don't stop the moment someone drowns. This miracle confirms Yahweh's control and validates Jonah's explanation. It also typologically prefigures Christ calming the storm (Mark 4:39) and ultimately His substitutionary death that reconciles God's wrath: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). Jonah's casting into the sea brought temporary physical calm; Christ's death on the cross brings eternal spiritual peace.

Historical Context

Mediterranean storms could last for days. The immediate cessation the moment Jonah hit the water would have been unmistakable evidence of divine intervention —no natural explanation suffices. Ancient sailors, already religiously inclined, would have recognized this as proof of Yahweh's power. The narrative deliberately parallels Christ's storm-calming (Mark 4:35-41) and especially His substitutionary death—one man dies to bring peace to many.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Jonah being "cast forth" into the sea prefigure Christ's substitutionary atonement?
2. What does the sea's immediate calming reveal about God's sovereign control over creation?
3. In what ways does Christ's sacrifice bring peace (calm) where sin brought storm and chaos?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעֲשֻׂוּ	אֶת	יְהֹוָה	יְמִלֵּחַ	וַיַּעֲשֵׂל	אֶל	תְּמִימָה	וַיַּעֲשֵׂם
So they took up	H853	Jonah	and cast him forth	H413	and the sea	ceased	
H5375		H3124	H2904		H3220	H5975	

תְּמִימָה:	מִצְעָפָה:
and the sea	from her raging
H3220	H2197

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 107:29 (Parallel theme): He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

Luke 8:24 (Parallel theme): And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

Psalms 89:9 (Parallel theme): Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org