

# Jonah 1:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?

## Analysis

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The sailors interrogate Jonah: "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?" They ask five questions seeking to understand this mysterious passenger who caused their crisis. Their approach is reasonable and measured—not violent but inquisitive. Verse 9's response is crucial: "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's confession is theologically sound: he worships Yahweh, Creator of sea and land. The irony: his theology is orthodox, his behavior completely contradicts it. He claims to "fear" (yare') the LORD yet flees His command. This exposes the danger of correct doctrine with disobedient heart—orthodox theology doesn't save apart from genuine submission.

## Historical Context

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Jonah identifies as Hebrew ('Ibri), the ethnic term used when speaking to foreigners. His confession that Yahweh created sea and land directly challenges pagan polytheism—if one God made everything, other gods are false. The sailors' terrified response (v. 10) shows they understand implications: this universal Creator-God is pursuing His prophet, and they're caught in the middle. The scene

demonstrates effective witness requires consistency between profession and practice.

## Related Passages

## **John 15:13 – Greatest form of love**

## 1 John 4:8 — God is love

## Study Questions

1. How do we sometimes claim to fear God while actively disobeying Him?
2. What does it mean that orthodox theology without obedience condemns rather than saves?

## Interlinear Text

לְמַיִּים בְּאֵשׁ רַלְכָּו בְּאֵשׁ וְיִאָמֶר וְ	H4310	אַל יְגִידָה הַגִּידָה	H4994	בְּאֵל נְכוֹן לְ	H0	לְנְכוֹן בְּאֵל	H834	תֹּאֵרְתָּה	H559	תֹּאֵרְתָּה	H413	תֹּאֵרְתָּה
Then said	they unto him	Tell										
	H5046		H2063		H0		H4100					
מָה לְנְכוֹן בְּזַעַם אֶת												
בְּרַעַת הַ												
us we pray thee for whose cause this evil												
	H7451											
מְהַלְאַכְתָּב וְאֵל וּמְאֵין												
is upon us What is thine occupation		and whence										
	H4399		H370		H935		H4100					
אַתָּה: בְּאָרֶץ הַיְיִם מִן הַ												
thou what is thy country												
	H776		H2088		H5971		H859					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Genesis 47:3** (Parallel theme): And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers.

**1 Samuel 30:13** (Parallel theme): And David said unto him, To whom belongeth thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days agone I fell sick.

**Joshua 7:19** (Prayer): And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

**James 5:16** (Prayer): Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

**1 Samuel 14:43** (Parallel theme): Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die.

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