

Scripture Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Those who walk with God will always reach their destination. —Anon.

Actor Tom Cruise is known for the running he does in his movies. Reportedly, he does not permit anyone to run *with* him in his running scenes. One study added up all the running scenes in his movies and discovered that Cruise is running more than 20 minutes in his movies — nothing but running.

In today's reading, we encounter another runner. His name is Jonah. A well-known division of this book in the Bible emphasizes all the running Jonah does.

- In chapter 1, Jonah is running *from* God.
- In chapter 2, Jonah is running *to* God.
- In chapter 3, Jonah is running *with* God.
- In chapter 4, Jonah is running *ahead* of God.

Here is a brief reminder of the plotline for the amazing story of Jonah.

God wants Jonah to go to Nineveh, the capital of Israel's archenemy, Assyria. God wants Jonah to preach judgment.

Jonah says that God has the wrong guy, and he runs. He boards a ship and tries to hide. A storm comes, and Jonah knows that he is to blame, and he is tossed overboard and a big fish swallows him whole, like a smaller fish swallows a minnow. But, the fish doesn't like Jonah in his stomach and hurls him onto a beach.

Now, Jonah is willing to preach, and he is astonished when Nineveh repents. He is more than astonished; he is *angry*. Why? Because God relents and withholds judgment. Jonah hoped that Israel's enemy would be destroyed. He crawls under a gourd bush for shade from the heat, but the bush dies, and Jonah complains.

Then, God gives Jonah the scolding he deserves. God says: "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush? ... You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

Perhaps we're not doing any running of any kind anymore. But today, even if we cannot literally run or walk, let's try to run *to* God and run *with* God in our hearts and minds!

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Loving God, may I keep in step with you today. Amen.

*Blessings,
Lisa & Pastor Ben Motz*

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Job 1-4
- Monday:** Job 5-7
- Tuesday:** Job 8-10
- Wednesday:** Job 11-13
- Thursday:** Job 14-17
- Friday:** Job 18-20
- Saturday:** Psalms 7-9

THE PATIENCE OF JOB

In our readings this week, we begin the story of Job. He was a man who had everything, and then lost everything. Although tempted to abandon his faith in God, he didn't. All the clues in this crossword puzzle come from the book of Job. Some references are provided.

- ACROSS:**
- 2. Ship of the desert
 - 4. He was known as the Shuhite (2:11)
 - 6. Number of sons Job had
 - 7. Beast of burden
 - 9. She told Job to curse God and die
 - 10. Beast of burden
 - 11. Number of Job's daughters
 - 14. What destroyed house of Job's son
 - 15. Snake
 - 17. Large sea creature (41:1)

- DOWN:**
- 1. One who waits upon another
 - 3. Gets permission to test Job
 - 5. He challenged Job (32:2)
 - 6. Woolly farm animal
 - 7. Celestial beings
 - 8. Error
 - 10. Cessation of life
 - 12. Job is confident that he lives (19:25)
 - 13. Often yoked
 - 16. Open sores

- ANSWERS — Across:** 2. camel; 4. Bildad; 6. seven; 7. ass; 9. wife; 10. donkey; 11. three; 14. wind; 15. serpent; 17. Leviathan.
Down: 1. servant; 3. Satan; 5. Elihu; 6. sheep; 7. angels; 8. sin; 10. death; 12. Redeemer; 13. oxen; 16. boils.

JOB IS TESTED

