

# Schooled I PWNED I Sunday Sept. 13, 2009

## 1. Intro

### Leet Haxxor >>

\_\_ Read Jonah 1:7-17.

\_\_ In the world of online gaming, there is a language called "Leet."

\_\_ Video.

\_\_ A phrase: I PWNED you, n00b!

\_\_ PWNED means to own your competitor, but not just own him: to dominate him with style.

\_\_ This is what God did to Jonah. God PWNED Jonah! He disciplined Jonah with style!

### Recap >>

\_\_ When God told Jonah to go to a great Assyrian city called Nineveh, Jonah ran from God like *Lola*.

\_\_ He wanted nothing to do with this pagan city that would one day become Assyria's capital.

\_\_ Assyria was a sinful city, and its evil rose up to God like the smoke rising from the hills of L.A.

\_\_ Jonah was a minor league prophet, but he should have known better than to run. A prophet running from God is ironic, especially in lieu of obedient prophets like Elijah.

\_\_ Jonah is the anti-prophet.

\_\_ He ended up on a boat to Tarshish.

## 2. On the Boat, Off the Boat

### On the Boat >>

\_\_ A booming storm hits the Mediterranean, and the sailors desperately heave cargo and cry out to their gods.

\_\_ Passage emphasizes that these sailors were multi-ethnic and represented many religions. But they are not portrayed as 'bad guys.'

\_\_ Jonah sleeping bears a similarity to Jesus in *Luke 8*. Yet there is great contrast in the outcome: Jesus in his perfection and power calms the storm with a word; Jonah in his guilt and weakness must be thrown overboard.

\_\_ Jonah willingly submits to being thrown in to the sea (he's the emo prophet).

\_\_ When the storm stops, the sailors worship God and commit their lives to him.

### Off the Boat >>

\_\_ What is God saying to us here?

\_\_ Jonah's dismal failure is common to all of us. We've all failed miserably.

\_\_ And God PWNED Jonah in his failure, but it was discipline out of love.  
\_\_ God could have let Jonah go, but he pursued him.  
\_\_ We, too, are God's children, and we, too have failed. We are all sinners whom God has lovingly, if firmly, pursued.  
\_\_ Jesus calms the storm with a word, but we get thrown overboard. Yet because of his success in lieu of our great failure, we can be accepted and used by the Father.  
\_\_ Look at how God used Jonah despite his failure – even as he is thrown overboard, he is witnessing to the sailors of the great power and goodness of God! He is doing mission!  
\_\_ So God will use all of us, even in our failure and sin.

### **3. In the Belly**

#### Evolving Hope >>

\_\_ Now comes the Bible's version of shark week.  
\_\_ Jonah gets PWNED by God, and it's stylish. He gets swallowed by a great fish.  
\_\_ Do you find this whole fish event hard to swallow?  
\_\_ A man surviving three days and nights in a fish's belly seems to be a tall tale – and some would place it on the shelf next to literal 6-day creation, 6,000 years ago.  
\_\_ On this point, consider:  
    ▶ Some Christians do believe in a young earth and literal 6 day creation story.  
    ▶ But some accept an old earth view (4.5 billion years old) and processes like Darwinian adaptation and natural selection.  
    ▶ However, Christians cannot accept Naturalism – that natural processes are the ONLY THING involved in creation.  
    ▶ Rather, regardless of the *how*, GOD is the one behind all those processes!  
\_\_ We must not lose our all-wise, all-powerful Creator-God. If we lose him, we lose morality, meaning, and hope.  
\_\_ We must hold onto the hope that God gives us!

#### The Fish >>

\_\_ An all-powerful and all-wise Creator-God sovereignly appointed and sent this fish to swallow Jonah.  
\_\_ We believe in a God of miracles, a God who bends nature like a spoon, a God who becomes a man in Christ, infinity fitting into finite human flesh.  
\_\_ But it's still fun to identify this fish. Was it a sperm whale? A great white shark?  
\_\_ White sharks are ferocious and toothy, so maybe not; and some think that a sperm whale could easily swallow a man whole and has internal air sacs for breathing. Advantage: whale.  
\_\_ Other possibilities:

- ▶ Fish: Could have been a now-extinct or undiscovered creature of a prehistoric nature (marine biologists continue to discover new species even today).
- ▶ Breathing: Perhaps Jonah died! The mention of “sheol” in ch. 2 might indicate this and would provide striking background for Jesus’ statement in Luke 11. Jonah died in the fish’s belly and was raised after three days. (Just a theory.)

\_\_ In the end, the book of Jonah is about learning something about God and ourselves, not biology.

#### **4. Conclusion: An Illustration of Separation**

\_\_ Zoom out: Jonah was on mission to a city called Nineveh. Nineveh is our Burlington.

\_\_ It’s easy for us to forget our mission, isn’t it?

\_\_ It’s easy to get caught up in ourselves and either

- ▶ Flee the opportunities that God gives us, out of fear or self-righteousness, or
- ▶ Just become absorbed by the world, so that we live the way everyone else does and lose our distinction completely.

\_\_ We need to remember our separateness. In the fish’s belly, Jonah was separated unto God to be realigned with the mission of God.

\_\_ Separate yourselves to God through time in prayer and in the Word; abide in him and in his grace at all times.

\_\_ Then you will go into the mission field empowered to fulfill your purpose.

\_\_ Art Hop slides: We are separated scenesters, on mission in our city, loving our city, engaging people in the love of Jesus.

\_\_ He did not call us out of the world but away from the evil one. We are to engage and yet be separate and distinct.

\_\_ We are separated scenesters: “A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that we might proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light.”

\_\_ This is our mission - to be a culturally relevant yet counter-culture people, to be separate from the destructive way of the world yet to engage the world with the love of Jesus Christ, despising the slightest scent of self-righteousness.

\_\_ We are called to nothing less than counter-culture covenanted community for the sake of the world.

\_\_ Let’s engage our friends, our acquaintances, our coworkers, our family members, those in need, let’s engage the world this week with the love of our PURSUER, Jesus.