

Jonah's Taradiddle
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I am a fully-confessed, not-ashamed logophile. Rooted in two Greek words (logos meaning "speech or word" and philos, meaning "love or affection") a logophile is a lover of words. I'm also a bibliophile, a lover of books. Which means I suffer from abibliophobia, the fear of running out of things to read. Thank goodness for bookstores, e-books, and libraries.

Let's not forget about the Bible, the book of all books. In the bible, you can read about romance, dysfunctional families, murderers, liars, thieves, prophets, prophets who profit, history, wars, wealth, poverty, wisdom, kings and queens, devils and demons, and everything in between. You can learn lessons about anatomy, math, science, psychology, finance, relationships, and social studies from reading the Bible.

Maybe I can make up a word, here. How about Biblicaphile? A lover of the Bible.

A logophile might know the word "tarradiddle," but a Biblicaphile will know that Jonah lived to tell his tarradiddle.

God told Jonah to go to Ninevah and preach there because it was a place of great wickedness. Jonah hopped on a boat to sail away, trying to hide from God. But God sent a violent storm straight to the boat. Sailors started throwing stuff overboard in order to keep the boat afloat. When they threw Jonah overboard, the sea calmed and Jonah was swallowed by some monstrously big fish. Jonah stayed inside the fish for three days and nights! When Jonah cried out his repentance and prayed to God, God heard him and caused the fish to vomit Jonah out on the shore. Jonah promptly got up and went to Ninevah to preach to that town till they repented. Tarradiddle, indeed!

For you non-logophiles, a tarradiddle is a story filled with pretentious exaggeration. Fishermen are extremely guilty of tarradiddling when, with each recounting of the story, the size of the fish they caught grows, adding both inches and weight to the fish. Especially if the fish was thrown back into the water! "Just how big was that fish?" is an open invitation for tarradiddling.

Jonah's tarradiddle might have sounded like this: "Well, you see, I was thrown overboard and just happened to fall into the mouth of a great big fish" or "Yes, I was really in the mouth of a great big huge fish for three full days and you wouldn't believe the stuff I found in there" or "Yes, I survived being swallowed up and burped out of the biggest, scariest fish ever. Seriously, it was the biggest fish I've ever seen!"

Are you living a tarradiddle? You think you can run away from God? You think you can easily disobey God? With no consequences? You think you know a better way to do things than God does? You think Jonah's tarradiddle is not about your own attitude towards God and your own decision to disobey?

If that's what you think, then why not become a Biblicaphile and fall in love with the lessons found in Jonah. Come on, we can do it together. Ready? Set...GO!