



SBC BULLETIN

What is happening at Scarborough Baptist Church?

IN THIS ISSUE
WELCOME

**THINGS HAPPENING
THIS WEEK**

**GOD LISTENS and is
involved in our daily lives**

BIBLE READING

Welcome to Scarborough. Andre is back preaching both on Zoom and in the morning service at Scarborough. As you will gather from the cover picture, we are considering the story of Jonah today. It's good to have Michael leading worship this morning.

Exciting things have been happening in the background of our church life. There have been a few people who have made new commitments to Christ over the last few months who will be getting baptised next Sunday morning. We look forward to sharing in their walk of faith next week.

HAPPENINGS THIS WEEK

SUNDAY

Prayer meeting before church; Sundays @ Six & service tonight

Brighton Kids continuing on every day with its holiday programme

Next week: **Baptismal service** in the Sunday morning service (4 October)

Music Committee meets first Sunday of the month

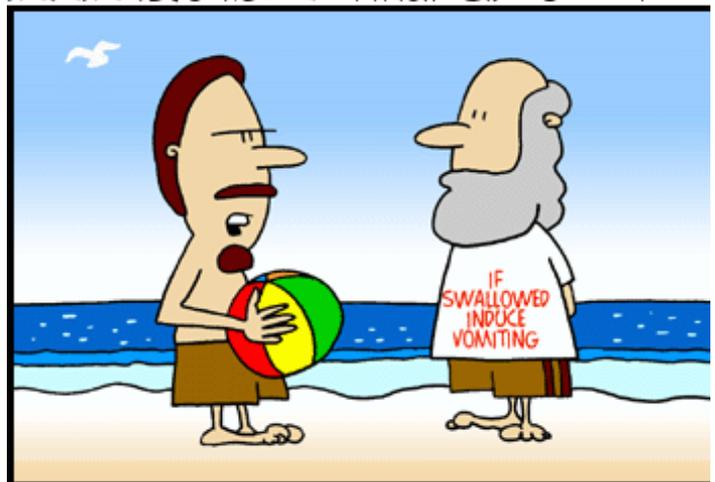
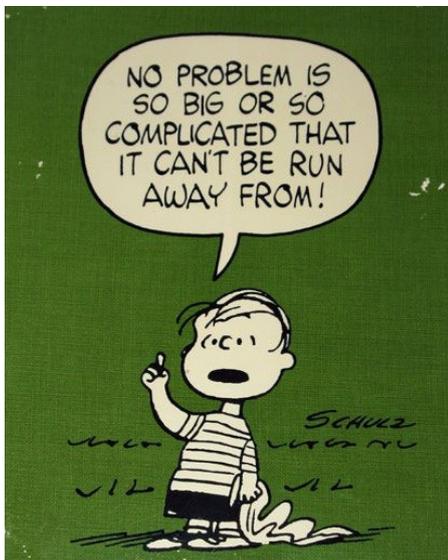
Saturday Prayer Meeting 8am every third Saturday

Finance Meeting - once a month

Management Meeting - once a month

Elders' meeting - once a month

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Thanks to Lloyd Vandenbrink (See Jonah 1-4) 08-25-19!

OH JONAH, PLEASE DON'T TELL ME THAT YOU'RE GOING TO WEAR THAT T-SHIRT ALL DAY AT THE BEACH AGAIN



Many people believe that saying God is in ultimate control of everything means that everything which happens had been predetermined by God. God can never be taken by surprise because he already knows everything from all eternity, they argue. Many people have pointed out that a major implication of this type of thinking is that it means that humans are not really free.

If God knows before the time which decisions people will make, then much of what is written in the Bible about God pleading with his people to repent, must be re-examined. How can God sincerely ask people to repent if he already knows that they will not do so? If one holds this view of a fixed "destiny" then all the choices which God asks people to make in the Bible must be false choices. People may think they are making a choice, but from God's perspective they could never make any other choice. To hold to this view has a profound impact on how we understand ourselves, our choices, our freedom and responsibilities as well as how we view other people. Read John 3: 16-21 again. We can choose to live our lives according to God's Word. God wants us to be his children, but we need to choose this path. We could explore this further at a later stage.

While many have considered the impact of such a deterministic view on our understanding of what it means to be human, not enough attention has been given to considering the implications of such a deterministic understanding of God's rule, on the way we understand the person of God. If God knows everything that will happen before time, then He cannot be affected emotionally by what happens at any moment in time. God would either have to be eternally angry, or eternally sad, or eternally joyful. He could not respond emotionally at any particular time to what people have done or are doing at present. God would be locked up in eternity and not free to engage with the here and now.

In the book of Jonah, however, we see that God does respond in the here and now. He repents of his decision to destroy Nineveh in response to their prayer of mercy. Jonah knew that this was what God was like, always ready to listen to the prayers of people and extend mercy to whosoever asks. That is God's freedom. That is what God is like!

The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: 2 'Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.' 3 But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord. 4 Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. 5 All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep.

6 The captain went to him and said, 'How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.'

7 Then the sailors said to each other, 'Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.' They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. 8 So they asked him, 'Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?' 9 He answered, 'I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.' 10 This terrified them and they asked, 'What have you done?' (They knew he was running away from the Lord, because he had already told them so.) 11 The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, 'What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?' 12 'Pick me up and throw me into the sea,' he replied, 'and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.'

13 Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. 14 Then they cried out to the Lord, 'Please, Lord, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, Lord, have done as you pleased.' 15 Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. 16 At this the men greatly feared the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows to him.