

A Study of The Scriptures

Tape 206

**Based on The Work of
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Jonah (Bible Study)



THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO JONAH: - 'You go to that Great City of Nineveh and tell them what they are doing is wrong.'

Jonah was one of the minor prophets and he was given a certain job to do. Many critics have said that the book of Jonah is a myth, an allegory and so forth. But this prophecy of Jonah is actually a literal history.

Why then did YAHWEH send Jonah to Nineveh? Well, in that great city of Nineveh lived Adamic people. And they, after building a great

civilization, had allowed the children of 'Darkness' to come into their midst and now they were 'Backsliding' in their original faith. But besides that, it was into this area that YAHWEH WAS SENDING THE TEN TRIBES IN THEIR CAPTIVITY, before they would go west in their migrations.

Jonah knew that the people of Nineveh were of his race. And now although they had built a great civilization, were now about to lose it. Which always happened when they stopped following the laws of YAHWEH. Jonah knew that Assyria at that time, was in great difficulties as the nations around about were gaining power. He must have suspected that this city of Nineveh was to be YAHWEH'S rod of judgment. But he did not seem to understand YAHWEH'S full purpose in this situation. And he tried to follow his own way of thinking instead of doing obediently, what YAHWEH told him to do as Prophet of His people. The great lesson of this book of Jonah then, is that the devices of man shall not frustrate HIS purpose and what HE hath said shall surely come to pass. This is the lesson of this book and makes it worthy of its place in the WORD of GOD.

Now, Jonah, thinking that if he did not go to Nineveh, then the city would be overthrown, and then YAHWEH would not send Israel there, thus decided to flee and go the other way. He should have known better. But he tried. For he boarded a ship for Tarshish (Spain). But a great wind came up. And those in the ship became afraid. They wondered why God was angry and made the wind and the waves angry. Finally, Jonah does confess that he was probably the problem for he had thought that he could flee from the 'Purposes' of God. So they threw Jonah overboard. And immediately the wind subsided and the waves quieted.

Now, your scripture says that a 'Great Fish' swallowed Jonah and he was in the belly of a whale for 3 days and 3 nights. The three days and three nights are also a symbol of Resurrection, showing the power of YAHWEH. Your King James Bible does not tell you this, but some of the other Bibles do. But the 'Great Fish' was simply the name of another ship which picked up Jonah and he spent three days and three nights in the lower parts of that ship in repentance and learning that he is to follow orders instead of his own mind. For YAHWEH knows what is best for Israel. If you noticed chapter 1:17, you see that YAHWEH HAD

PREPARED THIS 'GREAT FISH', this ship which would pick up Jonah before He cast him out in which he was trying to flee.

When the words 'Three days' are used in the Hebrew, it may be for any part of three days or even three years. But when the words '3 nights' are added to the three days, then this expression ceases to be an 'idiom' and becomes a literal statement.

Jonah, of course, knew that he was being punished and right away he began to call upon YAHWEH. He was now repenting and has learned his lesson, although he did not quite understand the content. So, YAHWEH spoke to the Captain of the ship and Jonah was put out on dry ground. And Jonah was now ready to go to Nineveh as he had been told to do and to speak to the people of that great city the words YAHWEH had instructed him to speak.

Thus, Jonah finally came to Nineveh, this great city which was 60 miles in circuit and 20 miles across. These cities, remember, at that time included large areas of cultivation and pasturage. For they had many cattle and sheep and great estates.

Remember at this time, this great old city was in deep trouble and here Jonah was telling them that in 40 days Nineveh would be overthrown. This was not a literal 40 days, but was a symbol of probation or original perfection. Here then, in Nineveh, as the King heard the words of Jonah, his proclamation from YAHWEH, then since they still believed in YAHWEH, they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least. Thus, the people repented. They turned in their thinking back to their original ways of following the laws of YAHWEH. And even the King of Nineveh covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

In other words, everyone in Nineveh repented and turned back from the path of destruction brought on by their own actions and YAHWEH saw and heard their pleas and their place here in His program was assured for a time. Now, Jonah had done what he was appointed to do. But there still lingered, in his mind, that now Israel will still be sent into exile. And not understanding the purpose or plan, he asked YAHWEH to take his life so

he wouldn't have to see the moving of the ten tribes out of Old Palestine. YAHWEH understands Jonah and his feelings. But Jonah must also learn his lesson. But Jonah is YAHWEH'S prophet and he will take care of that. We see recorded that in this lesson to Jonah and for Israel, that as Jonah went out of the city after doing his job and built him a little hut and then he sat down in the shadows to wait and see what would become of this old city. In symbolism we are told that YAHWEH prepared a gourd or vine which grew up and made a shade for Jonah there in that old land, for it gets very hot in the summertime along that old river. Especially that far down from the mountains. We also read that a worm or some sort of blight came upon the gourd vine and the next day as the sun came up and the east wind blew, the gourd wilted.

Actually, just as had happened to Israel, the worm or children of 'Darkness' would come among Israel and destroy their faith in their God. Jonah began to understand this and he was feeling very miserable. The word, 'shadow', in verse 6, means to deliver. Thus the lesson for Jonah is beginning to sink in. Verse 9: YAHWEH says: 'You do well to be angry, for the gourd', after all, is destruction for his protection. And Jonah said: 'I do well.' or it is right to be angry even unto death. Verse 10; YAHWEH says: 'Thou hast' or would have spared the gourd that came up in the night. But you had nothing to do with that for I made it to come up and grow. This gourd remember came up in the dark (night). Thus it had no light and it died in the darkness. And then YAHWEH asked Jonah a question: 'Should not I have spared that great city Nineveh wherein were more than six score thousand persons of your race, that cannot seem to discern between right and wrong at this time??

Besides, this work of Jonah in obedience had prepared the way for YAHWEH'S judgment on Israel by the sword of Assyria which took place in due time. The book of Jonah thus ends right there. In the Old Book about these ancient cities, we discover the tomb of Jonah across the river from the ruins called Nimrod wherein was found the 'Winged Bulls', the 'Winged Lions', and people telling you that at one time those people knew who they were and why they were in earth. But at the time of Jonah, they had forgotten much of this and was a bit of trouble to the Almighty until He straightened him out. However, he did what he was told to do and the

city of Nineveh straightened out and YAHWEH'S plan would go forward as planned.

Remember that in the Book of II Esdras, we are told of the leaving of that old land as Israel began her journey Westward in Destiny.

**May Yahweh Bless,
Ella Rose Mast.**



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