

# JONAH: "Go . . . preach!"

*"Get up, get going, get to preaching!"*

**J**onah is a message about God's love for the Gentiles. Jewish nationalism had blinded the prophet and his people.

"Get up; go to Nineveh; preach." "For God so loved the world . . ."

**NAME:** The book gets its name from the leading character and author (1:1; II Kings 14:25).

**AUTHOR:** Jonah (1:1) the prophet, and son of Amittai. His name means "Dove." He belonged to the Ten Tribes, and grew up near Nazareth at Gath Hopher. He was a prophet who was given a second chance. George Robinson says he was a "man whose religion resided in the realm of emotion, rather than in the sphere of his will."

**DATE:** between 780-760 B.C. during early part of the 41 bad years of the reign of Jeroboam II (782-752) (II Kings 14:25). He could be the first prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

**METHOD:** presents the experience of Jonah in story form.

**PURPOSE:** The author presents with compelling persuasiveness the responsibility of the saved to witness to others of God's grace. The missionary imperatives of Israel are clearly stated. Assyrians were the "big league" sinners. They were pagans with their capital in Nineveh. God will honor the repentance of gentile sinners. Obedience and disobedience is another theme that dominates this book.

**THEME:** The God of the Hebrews loves the Gentiles. He would rather forgive the repentant sinner than punish.

**KEY VERSES:** 2:9; 3:2; 4:2

**STYLE:** The prophecy is simple prose in narrative form. Movement, dialogue, and vivid description are prominent. It is more of "the history of a prophecy than a prophecy itself."

**HISTORY OR FABLE:** Either this is true or the greatest fish story ever told! Did God have the power to "prepare a great fish to swallow up Jonah"? Could God speak to a fish and cause it to vomit out Jonah upon the dry land? Jesus accepted the account of Jonah as historical (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-30). Clyde T. Francisco observed: "If one's God is great enough, the miraculous elements are not disturbing, even to the modern mind." B. O. Herring, "No reverent biblical student prior to modern times interpreted the narrative as parable or fiction."

**TYPE OF CHRIST:** Jonah and his strange experience is a type of Christ and His resurrection. When Jesus said, "a greater than Jonah is here" He was not referring to a legendary character, but a real man and a real experience. Other wise the comparison would not have made sense. Did Christ rise from the dead?

**CITY OF NINEVEH:** Nineveh had a wall 100 feet high with towers that reached another 100 feet higher.

The walls were so thick that three chariots could drive side-by-side on top of them. It was surrounded by a moat that was almost 150 feet across and 60 feet deep.

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Title: Introduction to Jonah

Series: A Look at the Book

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Wil is a graduate of William Carey University, B. A.; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Th. M.; and Azusa Pacific University, M. A. He has pastored in Panama, Ecuador and the U. S, and served for over 20 years as missionary in Ecuador and Honduras. He had a daily expository Bible teaching ministry head in over 100 countries for ten years. He continues to seek opportunities to be personally involved in world missions. Wil and his wife Ann have three grown daughters. He currently serves as a Baptist pastor and teaches seminary extension courses in Honduras.

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