

## A Study of Jonah

- A. 2 Kings 14:25 tells us that Jonah prophesied during the days of Jeroboam the second, king of Israel (786-746 BC).
- B. Nineveh – one of the oldest cities in civilization as it was built not long after the flood of Noah (Genesis 10:8-12). Located near modern Baghdad. The walled city had a circumference of about 8 miles.
- C. Joppa is South of Gath-Hepher by about 60-80 miles. Tarshish is located in Southern Spain.
- D. Jonah as a historical figure in the NT – Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32.

### Miracles in Jonah:

- A. 1:4 – the great wind.
- B. 1:15 – the sea ceased.
- C. 1:17 – the great fish “prepared.”
- D. 2:10 – the fish vomits Jonah out.
- E. 4:6 – God “prepared” a plant for Jonah.
- F. 4:7 – God “prepared” a worm.
- G. 4:8 – God “prepared” a vehement East wind.
- H. “Prepared” is a Hebrew word (manah) meaning that something has been consigned or allotted for a reason.

## Chapter 1

- A. 1:1-3 – One of the first lessons we learn in this book is that all nations are accountable to God. Jonah goes in the exact opposite direction (West) from Nineveh (East). Why?
  - a. The walls of Nineveh, according to discoveries, were about 50 feet thick and 100 feet tall. They were given a Sumerian name meaning “walls that terrify the enemy.”
  - b. Homer Hailey wrote that Jonah was, “motivated by a fierce patriotism for his own country and the fear that Jehovah would spare Nineveh...”
- B. 1:4-9 – The storm on the sea. It was apparently so bad that the ship was about to break to pieces and mariners were even afraid and began to overthrow the cargo!
  - a. All the men were praying and one commentator wrote that Jonah was the only “atheist” on board.
  - b. The “casting of lots” is mentioned a few times in the OT and only once in the NT (Acts 1). The OT Priest wore the breastplate of judgment that contained the Urim and Thummim (Exodus 28:30). This was a way in which God communicated to His people about certain decisions. Details are not given in the Bible.
  - c. Jonah is made to confess several things after the lot fell on him.

- C. 1:10-16 – Jonah cast into the sea and swallowed. The men tried to override what Jonah knew needed to be done (1:13) and it didn't work. We are not told what kind of vows they made, but they now understood something about the true God.

## **Chapter 2**

- A. 1:17, in my opinion, should be 2:1. The miracle is not just that there was a great fish, but that Jonah survived inside for three days and nights. Jesus used this event to parallel with His being in the earth for three days and nights (Matthew 12:38-40).
- B. These ten verses are a prayer to God.
  - a. *Sheol* is a Hebrew term meaning, “the unseen.” He initially ran from God, but now, because of affliction, he is crying out to God.
  - b. It is sometimes the case that a person must “hit bottom” before they will turn to God.

## **Chapter 3**

- A. We do not know how long it was between all these events, we just know that now Jonah is obedient. Some people learn lessons the hard way!
- B. Jeremiah 18:7-10 illustrates well what we read in chapter 3.
- C. From verse 5 it appears that it was probably the case that the people of Nineveh had heard about what happened to Jonah. Luke 11:30 helps us understand this.
- D. Verses 6-10 define repentance for us.
- E. Homer Hailey wrote, “The chapter clearly and nobly portrays the love and compassion of God for even the greatest and most cruel of the heathen.”

## **Chapter 4**

- A. One might think that based on everything Jonah had been through that his attitude might change. Verses 1-3 show that he had not changed.
- B. Could you imagine being angry over the fact that someone might repent when they hear the truth?
- C. “Anger” is from a Hebrew word meaning “to blaze, to burn hot with jealousy.”