

Author: Jonah - His name means "Dove"

Jonah son of Amittai (1:1). He was from Gath Hepher (2 Kings 14:25). Gath Hepher was three miles north of Nazareth in lower Galilee. Jesus confirms the story of Jonah in Matthew 12:39-41 (see also Luke 11:29-31 & Matt. 16:4)

Date: 780-753 (2 Kings 14:25 indicates Jonah prophesied during Jeroboam II's reign)

Biblical Context: 2 Kings 13:10-25, 14:23-29 .

Contemporaries: Amos, Hosea. (Reign of Jeroboam II)

Theme: God's fathomless mercy extends to all those who repent and turn.

Setting: Israel under Jeroboam II was enjoying a period of prosperity after the many bleak years they had endured. Nationalistic fever may have been high. Assyria was in a period of mild decline due to weak rulers, but they were still a threat. Assyrian cruelty had already become legendary. Their own records from the 9th - 7th centuries B.C. give graphic account of their cruel treatment of captives. The repentance of Nineveh (capital city of Assyria) probably occurred in the reign of Ashurbanipal (685-627 B.C.). Historians mark two plagues (765 & 759) and a solar eclipse (763) and events that may have prepared the people for Jonah's message.

Outline:

- I. God's Mercy upon Jonah. 1-2
 - A. Jonah and the Sea (1) (I won't go)
 - B. Jonah and the Fish (2) (I will go)
- II. God's Mercy upon Nineveh. 3-4
 - A. Jonah in the City (3) (Here I am)
 - B. Jonah under the gourd (4) (I shouldn't have come)

Key verses

Jonah 2:8 (NASB) "Those who regard vain idols Forsake their faithfulness, 9 But I will sacrifice to Thee With the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed I will pay. Salvation is from the Lord."

Jonah 4:2 (NASB) And he prayed to the Lord and said, "Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my [own] country? Therefore, in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.

Possibilities for the fish appointed to swallow Jonah: Whale Sharks: *canis carcharias* (a sea dog), *squalus carcharias* (a sea dog), = *carchorodon carcharias*, or a *cachalot* (Sperm Whale). All are common to the area and capable of swallowing a human whole. See *The Sign of the Prophet Jonah and Its Modern Confirmations* by John Wilson, Princeton Theological Review, Oct. 1927, pp. 630-642. See also *Jonah & Micah*, J. Vernon McGee, LaVerne, El Camion Press, 1979, p. 41

Detailed Outline of Jonah

I. God's Mercy upon Jonah (1-2)

A. Jonah and the Sea 1 (I won't go)

1. Jonah Is Disobedient to First Call (vs. 1-3)

2. Jonah is judged (vs. 4-17)

a. The Great Storm (vs. 4-16)

b. The Great Fish (vs. 17)

B. Jonah and the Fish 2 (I will go)

1. Jonah's Prayer (vs. 1-9)

2. Jonah's Deliverance (vs. 10)

II. God's Mercy upon Nineveh (3-4)

A. Jonah in the City 3 (Here I am)

1. Jonah is Obedient to Second Call (vs. 1-4)

2. Judgment of Nineveh Averted (vs. 5-10)

a. Their Repentance (vs. 5-9)

b. God's Mercy (vs. 10)

B. Jonah under the gourd 4 (I shouldn't have come)

1. Jonah's Displeasure (vs. 1-3)

2. Jonah is Rebuked (vs. 4-11)