

The Book of Jonah  
Class Notes  
Session 7

**Jonah 2.7-10** God responds to Jonah's prayer by addressing the fish. God "speaks" to the great fish and Jonah is vomited out! נִמְצָא ('ā·mā'ar)... "Tell" "Claim"

Again...It is God who is in complete control! God is the One who *saves* and *delivers*...Not Jonah and not the fish!

Where was Jonah "deposited" on land?

"Jonah's expulsion from the ship may have landed him in the coastal area near Joppa, his 'starting place.' At least one writer makes this assertion based on a probable translation of 1:13, where the seamen rowed hard to bring the ship "back" to the land. This indicated their nearness to the starting port of Joppa. The point of emphasis here is that Jonah was returned to dry land, thus completing God's rescue."<sup>1</sup>

In this brief narrative....We witness seven miracles affirming God's sovereignty...

- God "hurled" the storm... (1.4)...
- The "lot" indicted Jonah (1:7)...
- The sea calmed when Jonah was thrown overboard (1.15)...
- The "appointed" great fish swallowed Jonah (1.17)...
- The fish "held" Jonah alive... (2.1ff)
- Vomited Jonah out (Where he was running from?)... (2.10)
- Jonah's heart is being changed and he acknowledges YHWH sovereignty.... (2.2-2.9)<sup>2</sup>

(Martin Luther): "First God grants grace and spirit to cheer the heart, He reminds it of God's mercy, dismissing thoughts touching on God's wrath, turning the heart from God the Judge to God the Father. But this does not lie in the power of man; for Jonah says here that his soul fainted within him and that faintheartedness was the strength and power of his soul...The Spirit, and no one else, can bring the Lord to mind. And when it comes to pass that the heart is reminded of the Lord, a new light flares up, life again raises its head, and the heart is emboldened to cry in supplication; and thus its petition also surely finds an ear" (AE 19:79)."<sup>3</sup>

**Jonah 3.1-5** God made a new beginning with Jonah, giving him a second chance.

In Hebrew...The command to "go" is two verbs...Literally... "Rising...Go"

The sense is immediacy. Before (1.1-2), Jonah "arose" and ran away...But now Jonah is reconciled to Yahweh and he is obedient!

Jonah will not be told what to say until he is in Nineveh.

**(v.3):** Jonah likely knew his message would condemn Nineveh's evil...(1.2).

The "greatness" of Nineveh is described... "A visit required three days" ...

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<sup>1</sup> B.K. Smith and F.S. Page. *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from, J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, Eds. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Victor Books, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in, *The Lutheran Study Bible* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009).

The Hebrew phrase reads literally... “A distance of three days.” “This could mean that it took three days to go either across it or around it...”<sup>4</sup>

The textual reading also indicates that the city was *great to God!*

In the beginning...Jonah likely believed Nineveh was unimportant...However...all people are important to God!

**(v.4):** On the first day...Jonah announces God’s judgement...In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed!

Notice...In Jonah’s prophetic announcement there is no call for repentance or directions in what to do next!

“The message that God told Jonah to deliver may be understood in two ways: Jonah hoped that Nineveh would be overturned in destruction; instead, the city was overturned in repentance and faith...God then overturned His decision for judgment and granted them mercy (v 10). Nineveh changed and God changed His judgment, but Jonah did not. After Jonah delivered God’s message, nothing more is heard of him in ch 3.”<sup>5</sup>

**(v.5):** The power of God’s Word convicts! The reality of the coming divine judgement moves the people to turn to Yahweh.

The phrase “the people of Nineveh believed God” can be understood as...the Ninevites *believed in God!*

The Hebrew idiom reflects trusting in a person.

The Ninevites repentant response is to fast and put on sackcloth... Common expressions of grief, humility and penitence in the A.N.E.

**Going Forward:** “God is concerned for all people, even those we might write off. The people of Nineveh hardly seem like “good prospects.” However, the message they hear is from God, and God makes sure that it bears the fruit of repentance. Do you assume some people are unable or unwilling to respond to the Gospel? Leave conversion in God’s hands and faithfully fulfill your role as His witness. He has promised that His Word will bear fruit, and He is concerned that all people have the opportunity to be saved. Thank God, His Word bore the fruit of repentance in Nineveh and also in your life.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> F. E. Gaebelin, Ed. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets* (Vol. 7, p. 380). Zondervan Publishing House, 1986).

<sup>5</sup> *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*