

JONAH – LESSON THREE

INTRODUCTION:

1. Jonah was God's prophet for the Northern Kingdom Israel during the reign of *Jeroboam II* who reigned 792-753 B.C. in Samaria (first years of his reign overlaps the reign of his father – Jehoash) (*2 Kings. 14: 23-25*).
 - a. *Son of Amittai* from *Geth-hepher* – a city within the land allotted to the tribe of Zebulun and about 4 miles northeast from the later city of Nazareth (*cf. Joshua 19:13*).
 - b. Jonah's prophecy before us is a historical account of him being commanded by God to go to Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, preaching repentance and the judgment of Jehovah upon them.
 2. The city of Nineveh – "*the great city*" (Jonah 1:2).
 - a. Established by Nimrod, the great grandson of Noah through Ham and Cush (Gen. 10:8-12). (archaeologists estimate its origin - 5,000 to 4,000 B.C.)
 - b. Located on the Tigris River, near modern day Mosul, Iraq.
 - (1). 225-225 miles north of Babylon
 - (2). 220 miles northwest of Baghdad
 - c. Fortified by strong walls: the greatest being a wall 8 miles long and 100 feet high and wide enough for three chariots to drive abreast , with 15 gates, 1500 towers which were 200 feet high.
 - d. The seat of a nation (Assyria) known for its wickedness and cruelty (Nahum 3:1-3)
 - a. Wrenching tongues by the roots; skinning the captured alive (one inch at a time); impaling prisoners through the lower chest on poles.
- I. The Author: Jonah**
- A. A man zealous for God, who was determined to destroy God's enemies (Jonah 4:2-3)
 1. Why he initially fled to Tarshish – He knew God was merciful and would change His mind to destroy Nineveh if they repented unto the conditions of Jonah's preaching the word of God (*cf. Jonah 2:8*).
 - B. A man who learns the hard way that you cannot flee from God (Jonah 1:3)
 1. Instead of heading east to Nineveh, Jonah boards a boat in Joppa to flee as far westward he could sail Tarshish located in present day Spain.
 2. God is Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-12).
- II. Date of Book: 780 B.C.**
- A. Historians point to the fact that Assyria was torn with internal strife from the time shortly before 800 B.C. until Tiglath-pileser's reign in 745 B.C.
 1. They also were having wars with revolting provinces.
 2. Wars with a powerful country near the Caspian Sea (Urartu)
 3. Depressing times may have had a part in preparing hearts to be receptive unto the preaching of Jonah.
 - a. Jonah himself is also a sign - miraculously alive (Matt. 12:39-41; Luke 11:30).
- III. Features of the Book:**
- A. God prepares a destructive great wind upon the sea (1:4)
 - B. God prepares a great fish (Jonah 1:17)

1. Alive in the belly of the fish for three days.
 2. Vomited up on land alive by the great fish
 3. Obeys God and preaches to Nineveh.
 4. Jonah typifies Jesus's resurrection from the dead – 3 days in belly of fish- 3 days in heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40).
- C. God prepares a gourd, a worm, and a sultry wind (Jonah 4:6,7, 8).
1. Forces Jonah to see that he cares more for a gourd than many innocent children – Assyria was no benefit to him personally, but the gourd was.
- D. The flow of the Book:
1. Jonah "running away" from God- to Tarshish (Chapter 1)
 2. Jonah "running to God" – in prayer (Chapter 2)
 3. Jonah "running with God" – preaching in Nineveh (Chapter 3)
 4. Jonah "running ahead of God" – Thinking what God should do (Chapter 4)
- E. The movements of the Book: (Explore the Book; J. Sidlow Baxter, Vol IV. p.157)
1. Jonah and the storm (Chapter 1)
 2. Jonah and the fish (Chapter 2)
 3. Jonah and the city (Chapter 3)
 4. Jonah and the Lord (Chapter 4)

IV. OUTLINE OF THE BOOK: *(Condensed from Homer Hailey's outline in his commentary on the Minor Prophets, page 66).*

- A. Jonah's call and flight to Tarshish (1:1-16)
- B. Jonah's miraculous preservation (1:17-2:10)
- C. Jehovah's second call: Jonah goes to Nineveh (3:1-10)
- D. A narrow prophet vs. a merciful God (4: 1-11)

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Jonah not want to go to Nineveh?
Why did he want to go to Tarshish?
2. Jonah's sin against God was a sin of:
 - a. Commission
 - b. Omission
3. What were the sailors trying to do, that God was against?
4. In chapter 1, How "religious" was Jonah?

In chapter 1, How "religious" were the sailors?

5. How helpless did Jonah feel when cast overboard into the sea?
6. Why was Jonah's prayer more a prayer of "thanksgiving" than a "petition?"
7. Why was Jonah looking toward the temple of God while in the belly of the great fish?
8. How does God's use of Jonah dispel the following thought as a myth...?
 - a. ...Once you have failed, God cannot use you.
9. How "exceeding" was the "great city" of Nineveh?
10. Describe the "repentance" of the people of Nineveh?
11. Why was Jonah angry after doing God's bidding?
12. What three things did God prepare to expand Jonah's heart?
13. What was the population of the great city of Nineveh at the time of Jonah?
14. For whom does God care about that should influence our life?