

Outline of Jonah

We hope that this outline of Jonah will assist you as you investigate the pages of God's letter to you.

Jonah is the one minor prophet that is also mentioned in the historical books (2 Kings 14:25). According to legend, Jonah was the son of the widow at Zarephath. Such, however, is highly unlikely since Jonah would have been around 100 at the time of this account. We know that Jonah was a prophet used by God to prophesy the prosperity of Israel. The book of Jonah, however, unlike all of the rest of the minor prophets, is not about any particular prophecy, but rather about an episode in the life of the prophet. It is a historical account, not a sermon.

The book is the best account in the Old Testament, perhaps in Scripture, about how the will of God and the will of man interact. At the end God's will was done by an unwilling prophet. Jonah was God's servant (2 Kings 14:25).

Many have debated about what happened to Jonah, the prophet. My response is that someone wrote the book. I believe that this account is that given by Jonah. Josephus writes about Jonah. Josephus states that Jonah did not go to Ninevah at first because he was afraid.

There is a definite interplay between Jonah and God.

- 1:1 — The word of the LORD came
- 1:3 — But Jonah arose to flee
- 1:4 — But the LORD sent out a great wind
- 1:5 — But Jonah had gone down and was fast asleep
- 1:17 — Now the LORD had prepared a great fish
- 2:1 — Then Jonah prayed
- 2:10 — So the LORD spoke
- 3:1 — Then the word of the LORD came
- 3:3 — So Jonah arose and went
- 3:5 — So the people believed
- 3:10 — Then God saw their works and relented
- 4:1 — But it displeased Jonah
- 4:4 — Then the LORD said
- 4:5 — So Jonah went out
- 4:6 — And the LORD God prepared a plant
- 4:6 — So Jonah was very grateful for the plant
- 4:7 — But God prepared a worm
- 4:8 — God prepared a strong east wind
- 4:9 — Then God said to Jonah
- 4:9 — And he said
- 4:10 — Then the LORD said

The book begins and ends with God doing the talking. Jonah does not have the last word.

This is the structure of the book. The rest of the book provides the details.

We see the will of God versus the will of Jonah.

We see the pronouncement of God versus the action of the people of Ninevah.

We see God then hammering home, in a painful lesson to Jonah, the reason why He wanted Ninevah saved.

Yet, Jonah comes down to us as a type of Christ. Jesus said that it was Jonah's venture in the whale that would be the only sign given to Israel (Matthew 12:39-41; 16:4). Interestingly, in Luke 11:30, it was the preaching of Jonah that became the sign of Christ. Christ came from afar and preached and Israel did not repent. Christ drove home that the Gentiles would be more righteous than the Jews.

Date: Around 760 B.C.

He prophesied from about 775 to 760 B.C. The book was probably written near the end of his days of prophecy. There was some turmoil occurring in Ninevah at this time. Ninevah, though the largest of the Assyrian cities, was not the capital until later.

Outline

- I. **Jonah Rebels 1**
 - II. **Jonah Repents 2**
 - III. **Jonah Proclaims 3**
 - IV. **Jonah Pouts 4**
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Key Idea: God's salvation is for all

Key Passage: 2:9; see also 4:2

Key Lesson: It is best to do God's will