

Cover to Cover: From Genesis to Maps
Sermon # 32– “Jonah”
February 24, 2008

Author: Jonah (whose name means “Dove”) was the son of Amittai (which means “my true one”). He was a prophet of God sometime during the reign of Israel’s King Jeroboam II (793-753 BC). His prophecy that Israel’s boundaries would expand under Jeroboam became true (2 Kings 14:23-25). In the book that bears his name, Jonah writes of his own personal experiences in the third person.

Historicity: Jonah was a real person, a true prophet of God from history (2 Kings 14:23-25). Jesus authenticated the historicity of Jonah (Matthew 12:39-41, Luke 11:29-32): Jesus referred to Jonah as a prophet. He acknowledged the miracle of Jonah’s recovery from the great fish. He connected His message calling people to repentance with that of Jonah. He used Jonah’s experience in the belly of the fish as a picture of His own burial and resurrection.

Message: God, rather than Jonah, is truly the principle character of the book. God has both the first word (1:1-2) and the last word (4:11). God acts boldly throughout the Book of Jonah in order to accomplish His sovereign purposes.

The chief message of this book is that God loves and cares for all people, including Gentiles. The message of Jonah was also a reminder to God’s people Israel of their missionary purpose, to which they had been largely unfaithful.

As Hosea’s wayward wife Gomer pictured Israel’s unfaithfulness in her “marriage” to God, so too the real life prophet Jonah became symbolic of Israel’s disobedience and dissatisfaction toward God, as well as her indifference to the spiritual plight of other nations.

Outline of the Book of Jonah

Chapter 1 – Jonah, a Reluctant Prophet

- Running from God: A downward spiral. v. 1-3
- Running into God: A storm at sea. v. 4-16
- God’s gracious provision: A fish’s belly. v. 17

Chapter 2 – Jonah’s Prayer of Repentance

- A distress call from the deep: Jonah remembers, repents & rejoices. v. 1-9

- God's response: A second chance for Jonah. v. 10

Chapter 3 – Jonah's Preaching leads to a Great Spiritual Awakening

- Jonah proclaims God's message of judgment throughout Nineveh. v. 1-4
- The residents of the city repent, calling on God and turning from their evil ways. v. 5-9
- God compassionately relents from sending destruction upon the Ninevites. v. 10

Chapter 4 – Jonah's Pity Party

- Jonah, a recipient of God's grace, becomes angry with God because of his graciousness toward others. v. 1-4
- God challenges Jonah's inverted priorities. v. 5-9
 - God provides a vine.
 - God provides a worm.
 - God provides a scorching east wind.
- Two very different priorities: Jonah's concern for his own personal comfort vs. God's concern for people. v. 10-11