

1:7 – The LORD sees and reveals the heart in various ways.  
 1:9 – The LORD uses people to bear witness of Him and His power.  
 1:14-16 – The LORD can use any circumstance to bring people to Himself.  
 1:17 – The LORD preserves life (see also 1:12ff.).  
 1:17 – The LORD uses His Creation to carry out His purposes.  
 2:2 – The LORD hears the prayers of the righteous, and He hears them from anywhere.  
 2:6 – The LORD saves (see also 2:9).  
 2:10 – The LORD speaks to His Creation and it obeys.  
 3:1 – The LORD is a God of second chances.  
 3:2 – The LORD is not forgetful.  
 3:3-9 – The LORD works unexpectedly through our obedience.  
 3:10 – The LORD hears the cry of the desperate and repentant.  
 3:10 – The LORD is merciful.  
 4:1-3 – The LORD uses imperfect people to do His perfect work.  
 4:4 – The LORD is patient!  
 4:4 – The LORD often asks challenging questions to form His people.  
 4:6-11 – The LORD often uses creative object examples to speak or communicate to His people.  
 4:11 – The LORD is understanding.  
 4:11 – The LORD sees His lost sheep throughout the world as valuable.

### **The Sign of Jonah** (Matthew 12:40, 16:4; Luke 11:29-30)

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:40).

Jesus was talking about His death and resurrection.

“Three days and three nights”

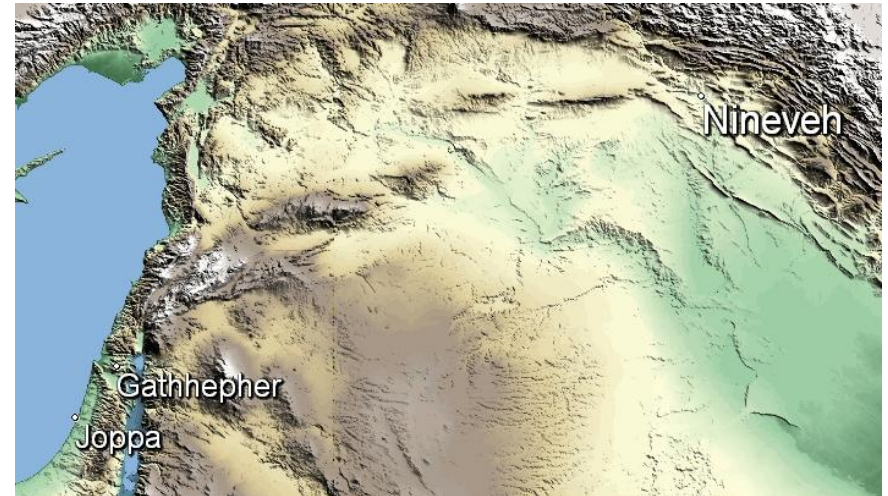
- Hebrew time: Counts parts of days as a whole. Example: Jesus was crucified on Friday, was in the tomb on Saturday, and was raised from the dead on Sunday. Wasn't this only one full day, and maybe two counting the parts?
- Hebrew time is commonly read as, Jesus was in the tomb on Friday, on Saturday, and on Sunday.
- Parallel associations with the days: nights. The nights could also be included as being part of the full day.
- Also accurate: “On the third day” (as in Matthew 20:19 and Acts 10:40)

### **The Whale as an Evangelist**

The whale was quite an evangelist! God used the obedient whale to bring back Jonah, who would successfully bring repentance to a heathen nation. The whale also served as prophetic imagery to Jesus' death and resurrection! God is truly sovereign over His Creation!

## **Jonah**

יונה



Jonah, son of Amittai, was a prophet from the town of Gath-hepher (2 Kings 14:25). Instead of going East to preach to Nineveh (modern-day: Mosul, Iraq) in obedience to God, Jonah went to the port of Joppa and sailed as far West as possible to Tarshish. However, God had different plans for Jonah as well as the great city of Nineveh, despite his disobedience. The mariners now worshipped God. The Ninevites repented, and even a whale obeyed. Jonah, though in close relationship with God, had the hardest time obeying!

**Time of Writing:** Likely during the time of Jeroboam son of Joash (793-753 BC) or before<sup>1</sup>.

### **Jonah: A Brief Outline**

#### **Jonah tries to run from God (Jonah 1:1-16)**

- I. The LORD's Command and Jonah's Response (1:1-3)
  - A. The LORD commands Jonah to go to Nineveh (1:1-2)
  - B. Jonah runs away as far as possible (1:3)
- II. The LORD's Response and the Mariners' Fright (1:4-11)
  - A. The LORD sends a storm (1:4)
  - B. The mariners are frightened (1:5, 10-11)
  - C. The mariners encounter Jonah (1:5-10)
    1. Jonah was found asleep in the midst of a brutal storm (1:5)
    2. Jonah's guilt is discovered (1:6-10)
- III. Jonah's Solution and the Mariners' Belief (1:12-16)

<sup>1</sup> Bullock, C. Hassell. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books*. Revised and expanded ed. Chicago: Moody Press, 2007, cf. 42.

- A. Jonah seeks to be thrown into the sea (1:12-15)
- B. The Mariners sacrifice to the One True God (1:16)

### **The LORD Resets the Situation (Jonah 1:17-2:10)**

- I. The LORD's Solution (1:17-2:10)
  - A. The LORD's Sovereignty over Creation (1:17, 2:10)
  - B. The LORD's Salvation in dire circumstances (1:2-9)
- II. Jonah's Prayer (2:1-9)
  - A. Jonah prays in distress (2:1-2)
  - B. Jonah recounts his own drowning experience (2:3-7)
  - C. Jonah has hope in seeing the LORD again (2:4)
  - D. Jonah recounts The LORD's Salvation (2:5-9)
- III. The LORD commands the whale to spit out Jonah (2:10)

### **Jonah goes to Nineveh (Jonah 3:1-10)**

- I. The LORD gives Jonah a second chance (3:1-2)
- II. Jonah obeys the LORD and preaches to Nineveh (3:3-4)
  - A. Nineveh is a great city (3:3)
    - 1. "Great" - Important to God?
    - 2. "Great" - Large in size?
  - B. Message: "...Nineveh will be overturned" (3:4)
- III. The Ninevites respond (3:5-9)
  - A. The Ninevites believed God (3:5)
  - B. The Ninevites and the King declare a fast (3:5-9)
  - C. The Ninevites repent (3:8-9)
- IV. The LORD shows compassion on the Ninevites (3:10)
  - A. The LORD saw the Ninevites turn from evil (3:10)
  - B. The LORD did not bring judgment on Nineveh (3:10)

### **What is Valuable to God? (Jonah 4:1-11)**

- I. Jonah complains about the LORD sparing Nineveh (4:1-4)
  - A. Jonah desired the destruction of Nineveh (4:1-2)
  - B. Jonah hates the result and asks for death (4:2-3)
    - 1. Jonah knew that the LORD was gracious (4:2)
    - 2. Jonah figured that the LORD would spare these sinful people (4:3)
    - 3. Jonah asks for death (4:3)
  - C. God: "Do you have any right to be angry?" (4:4)
- II. Jonah still waits for Nineveh's destruction (4:5)
  - A. Jonah sets up camp outside the city to watch the show (4:5)
  - B. Jonah still hopes for the destruction of Nineveh (4:5)
    - 1. Jonah: in denial of God's compassion (4:5)
    - 2. Jonah seems bloodthirsty (4:5)
- III. The LORD's vine illustration (4:6-11)
  - A. God grew a large vine to comfort Jonah (4:6)
  - B. God sent calamity to test Jonah (4:7-8)
    - 1. A worm ate and killed the vine (4:7)
    - 2. God sent a scorching wind (4:7)

- 3. Jonah was displeased and hated life (4:7-8)
- C. The LORD rebukes Jonah over his response to Nineveh (4:9-11)

- 1. Jonah was displeased over the destruction of the gourd, because he felt that it was valuable to him (4:9-10)
- 2. God would be displeased with the destruction of Nineveh, because the souls of lost people are valuable to Him (4:11)

### **Is Jonah an Allegory?**

*Theory for an allegorical (only symbolic) reading of Jonah:*

- Jonah (*Yonah*): "Dove" – Symbolic of Israel.
- Symbolic of God's universal love for the lost and God's sovereignty.

*Evidence against this theory:*

- Jonah, son of Amittai - mentioned specifically and directly (compare with Parables, e.g. view on The Rich Man and Lazarus the Beggar, Luke 16:19-31).
- Jonah was a well-known historical prophet (also mentioned in 2 Kings 14:23-29).

### **Themes:**

#### **1. Repentance → mercy**

- God spared the people of Nineveh at their repentance.

#### **2. God's merciful sovereignty to a heathen nation**

- God did not send judgment on Nineveh.
- God had compassion on the people (cf. 4:11).

#### **3. Evangelistic success even through failure**

- Men on ship, convert to the LORD after they see His control over nature after throwing Jonah overboard.

#### **4. Imperfection of the prophet**

- He did not want to be used to bring God's favor on these people.
- He wanted to see judgment, but He knew God better than that (cf. 4:2).
- Note Jonah's cynical/suicidal attitude:
  - 1:12 - Cast me into the sea...
  - 4:3 - Take my life from me
  - 4:8 - It is better for me to die than to live

#### **5. God vs. false gods**

- Only God could control nature.
- People turn to God and thrive.

### **Theological Observations:**

- 1:2 – The LORD punishes wickedness – He is Just.
- 1:2 – The LORD very often uses people to carry out His warnings.
- 1:4 – The LORD is in control of nature (see also 1:17).