

Jonah 03 – Jonah Disobeys God

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Jonah 1:1-6

Nineveh – Home of Nimrod

- First post-Babel city built by Nimrod (Gen 10:8-12)
- Known as “the great city” (נִיְנִוָּּ) – Can be Ancient
- Jonah’s Time – Provincial capital; later as capital of Assyria & beautified



Ashur – God Over Assyria

- Depicts the hunter Nimrod
- Sun god who is source of life of man (Sun rays) (Gen 11:12-15)
- Assyria’s mission: Bring all peoples under truth of Ashur {Nimrod’s original mission – Unite all men}



<http://www.sacredtexts.com/anc/asia/asha/asha20.htm>

Ishtar – Temple at Nineveh

- Goddess of both fertility and war (common in ancient cultures)
- Embodiment of Nimrod's wife Semiramis
- She gives birth to child Tammuz after Nimrod dies



<http://www.newsworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Ishtar> <http://www.biblehistory.com/whom-is-semiramis/>

Nabu – Temple at Nineveh

- Scribe of the gods
- Determines each man's destiny based on gods' wills and men's deeds
- Brings Ashur from Under World after initiation; restoring him to full deity

Christ giving Satan a full pardon for sin and ruler over all peoples for eternity (Early doctrine of Universalism (No eternity in Lake of Fire))



<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/30000/30000-h/30000-h.htm>

Nineveh – Idolatry Mimics God

- Nineveh great city because it embodies the plan of God in idolatrous form competing with God's message in Judah
 - Ashur – Goes to under world and back: Christ & Satan
 - Ishtar – Fertility and war
 - Eve – Gives birth to all men, mother of Cain who kills
 - Semiramis – Mother/child/god link: Mary & Jesus
 - Nabu – Scribe assists Ashur & men's destinies: Satan

Why Now?

- Omniscient - Nineveh's evil *always* known to God
 - Israel now a divided kingdom - Diminished God's message to the world [Temple sacrificial rituals]
 - Israel [Northern Kingdom] Replacing truth with idolatry
 - Judah [Southern Kingdom] Abandoning the truth
 - God sends Jonah, prophet to Israel, as sign to Israel that if Nineveh repents then Israel stands **condemned**

Jonah - True Israelite but Saved

- Jonah hears God's call
- Jonah understands the significance of the call
- Jonah rebels against God, following the steps of Israel: knowing to do right but **not** doing it (Is. 6:17)



Jonah Goes to Sea

- Jonah paid his fare
 - Bible clearly wants us to know that Jonah deliberately brought the ensuing events upon himself
 - Once a sinful course is chosen the consequences are already decided according to God's appointed ends
- Jonah went to sleep ensconced below decks
 - Exhausted by inner turmoil - Guilt for running away

They Go Down to the Sea in Ships

- Seas have special significance since Creation - The new Earth will have no seas (Ge 1:1-10; Re 21:1)
- Daniel's world kingdoms rise from the seas (Dn 7:1-8)
- Satan's Antichrist rises from the seas (Re 11:17-13:9)
- Many people encounter life's crisis on the seas (sinful lives) bringing them to God (Ps 107:15-32)
- Seas are rebellious sinful nature of men & Satan under God's sovereignty (Ps 8:22-31)

Satan Uses Nature-Bounded by God

- Satan used natural elements to inflict loss on Job but within the bounds set by God (Job 1:16, 19)
- Christ rebuked storms on the Sea of Galilee showing he was Lord over the spiritual elements at war in the world; it was not His time to die (Mk 4:35-41)
- God does not test man with evil but He does allow Satan to test man within limits He sets (1A 22:31-32; 3A 1:19-19)

Jonah's Nature Turns to Seas

- Jonah, acting in sin, chooses to place himself in the hands of Satan rather than the hands of God
 - He chose the sea
 - He placed himself at the mercy of Satan
 - He chose to rebel against God's express will
- God allowed him to enjoy the consequences of his choices (He choose according to his rebellious nature)

What was his plan when he arrived at Tarshish?

Testing Begins – Storm at Sea

- Ancient ships could not take the pounding of major storms very long
 - Ropes or chains were bound around the ship to hold it together as it would come apart
 - Cargo thrown over the side to help the ship ride atop the waves
 - Steering and navigation rudimentary by medieval standards, rode close to land usu.; no stars, no direction

Glimpse of Their Worldview

- Ancient worldview – Spiritual forces underlay physical events (Belief persisted until Enlightenment period: Shakespeare's *The Tempest*)
- Modern worldview – Physical forces alone responsible for physical phenomenon; however, runs counter to the Bible which clearly shows God and Satan at work (Accounts for lousy weather forecasts)

Multiculturalism

- Multi-cultural crew: each man took responsibility for the safety of the ship by consulting their deities for help
- Pilot or captain of ship angry at Jonah for not assisting in asking his God for understanding and help in surviving
- Problem: Jonah not talking to God and his actions deliberately endangered everyone; yet, he sleeps

Summary

Jonah has the opportunity to be the shining light of life but decides to be the dark light of death 06:6,22-28

Nineveh Represents Death

- Satan has used Nineveh (Nimrod) to perpetuate his message of spiritual death to confuse God's message
 - Nineveh is a great city because it is a bastion of death
 - It's idolatry points to a corrupted message of the gospel
 - It's people walk in darkness without seeing a great light 4:9,20
 - The extent of their sinfulness is exhibited in national violence - holy wars in the ancient world

Jonah Represents Torn Loyalties

- Jonah is a true prophet of the true God to Israel (2K: 14:23)
 - He advises Israel's king bringing Israel prosperity
 - He forgets he is God's prophet carrying His message of salvation; no record that he warns Israel to turn to God
 - Jonah understands a repentant Nineveh
 - Will condemn an unrepentant Israel
 - Will defeat Israel as God's punishment for idolatry

Sea Represents Satan at Work

- The demonic spiritual forces at work in the world are held in check by God because they have no self-control (Mt. 6:1-13; Ga. 5:22-23)
- Jonah would rather place himself in the hands of these out of control forces rather than in the hands of God (Jo. 3:27-37)
- He willingly endangers the lives of others rather than obey God whom He knows

Christians Face Same Choices

- Christians today *study* Jonah but miss much of the message that applies to them
 - Amazed at the *fish story* but not at the sinful attitude
 - Forget that Christians today choose to support godless nationalism rather than promote Gospel message of life
 - Their silence both condemns the lost to Lake of Fire (endangering others) and promotes continued violence

Our Worldview Also Ignorant

- Modern man believes himself to be much smarter than his ancient counterparts; however, in truth we are as ignorant but in different areas
- Christians should not be blinded by the god of this world, choosing to follow myths rather than the truth
- We are to be the Gospel light to those who are dying (Co. 4:14; 2Ti. 4:1-5)