

The
Book of
Jonah
A
Whale of
A
Tale

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How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5:
12

How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
2. The most important verse
3. The most prominent word
4. The teaching about Christ
5. The command to obey
6. The promise to claim
7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18

Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications

1. Past: this is the historical application
2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

Introduction

We have here a prophet named Jonah, not much is known about him, except for a mention of him in 2 Kings 14:25-27. All else comes from inside this book. Now before we get into the details surrounding this man Jonah, I would like to get rid of all of the junk concerning this book. First it is not a fairy tale, it is not a parable, and it is not a lie. If it is any of these then Jesus words in Matthew 12:39-40 are a lie and that would make Jesus a liar which He is not.

Jesus said that the only sign for an evil and God rebelling people would be the sign of Jonah. In Luke 2:34 Simeon the priest said that Jesus was set as a “sign which shall be spoken against”. What is spoken against Jesus today, it is that He did not die or rise again. What does the

liberal say of Jonah that he did not die; it was a dream or a fairy tale.

Jonah was a real person born to Amittai, which means “truth or truth telling”, and Jonah means “dove”, so we have a truth telling dove, what is a symbol of the Holy Spirit a dove and He is full of truth.

Jonah grew up in the town of “Gath-Hepher”, it is in the tribe of Zebulun, see Joshua 19:10-13, which is northeast of Nazareth. The events recorded in these 4 chapters take place during the reign of Jeroboam II who was on the throne from 824BC to 783BC. This was a dark time for the 10 northern tribes, their wickedness had not gone unnoticed by the Lord and He was going to raise up Assyria, the national power of that day to judge Israel and take them captive. Jonah is a contemporary of the prophet Elisha.

There is an unusual characteristic of his prophecy he wrote it entirely

in the 3rd person, as though he was viewing the events as someone else. Yet it is Jonah writing, possibly he wrote it after returning home from Nineveh and was reflecting back on the events. Jonah is a prophet to the gentiles, just as Paul the apostle was also in his day.

We find in these chapters that first God is merciful to the individual, a group, and to world powers. The city of Nineveh was an extremely large city in its day as seen in 2 King chapters 14-16 and here where it took 4 days for Jonah to walk through it.

Chapter One

Jonah in the presence of God and running from him in rebellion because it was not an assignment that he wanted, much the way some Christians do today. Jonah ended up in the whale's belly for it and so do Christians today, no not a literal whale but in the same type of predicament.

1-3 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went

**down into it, to go with
them unto Tarshish from
the presence of the LORD.**

Jonah receives his commission directly from God and his mission field also. That is the Lord God is the source and authority from which this message comes and is sent through Jonah to its recipients the city of Nineveh. His fathers name and town are all we are given here about Jonah's past; the reason is a good lesson for all of us. Who we were and what we are is only referenced in relation to the spreading of the message. Our past is gone once we accept Christ as our Saviour, Paul said we are new creatures and old things (life) are passed away. So the idea of constantly holding ones past against them after they repent is simply not from the Bible but our own prejudices as to whether we like someone or not.

To judge someone on that basis is sin and must be repented of. It is galling to the Lord to watch those who were sinners pass judgment on other sinners as though they were capable of doing it right. Only the Father has the ability to judge ones life and if He redeems someone then we are commanded in 1 John to accept that individual regardless of their past.

The Lord gives Jonah a very specific command, go up to Nineveh, the largest city in the known world at that time and was a very real threat to Israel and Jonah. Nineveh was on the east side of the Tigris River which would make for a really long walk, plenty of time to rehearse the message he was to deliver.

The message seems simple enough preach against the wickedness of this rich and powerful city the odor of which had come before the Most

High God. You might be thinking would not Jonah want God to destroy this enemy of Israel, and you would be right. With only one added difference Jonah was afraid that if he takes the message to Nineveh that they just might listen repent and that would be bad for Israel.

So Jonah does what any self respecting rebel would do, and that is just the opposite of the command given. You see rebellion is not new it started with Cain and has grown in strength since that time.

Jonah is thinking if he could get away to the end of the world than God couldn't find him. This makes it obvious that he had never read Psalm 134:19, you simple cannot run from God. Now matter where or how you try to hide your sin He knows exactly where you are and

what you have done, see Hebrews 4:13.

Watch as this prophet becomes a backslidden heifer, as Jeremiah would call him. First he goes to Joppa a city on the coast of the great sea. Second he goes down into the ship and this is not a passenger ship, he takes this one because he is running away from the Lord and just wants to be gone.

This is a cargo ship bound for the farthest point known at that time, a city on the southern coast of Spain called Tarshish. His next step down is into the hold of the ship (into the sides). Like most rebelling Christians he goes to sleep. He paid his fare just like the Bible says the wages of sin is death.

**4-10 But the LORD sent
out a great wind into the
sea, and there was a**

**mighty tempest in the sea,
so that the ship was like
to be broken. Then the
mariners were afraid, and
cried every man unto his
god, and cast forth the
wares that were in the
ship into the sea, to
lighten it of them. But
Jonah was gone down into
the sides of the ship; and
he lay, and was fast asleep.
So the shipmaster came to
him, and said unto him,
What meanest thou, O
sleeper? arise, call upon
thy God, if so be that God
will think upon us, that we
perish not. And they said
every one to his fellow,
Come, and let us cast lots,
that we may know for
whose cause this evil is
upon us. So they cast lots,
and the lot fell upon
Jonah. Then said they**

unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

Jonah was called to go west to east, yet he goes east to west. Once out to sea the Lord sends or actually hurls the wind at the ship and sea, so strong it nearly breaks the ship

in half. In the book of Ecclesiastes in chapter 9 verse 18, we find Solomon's words about those who are backslidden; you see one backslidden church member can sink a whole church. On the other hand one good preacher on board may be the salvation of the whole congregation, just ask Paul, his story of his own experience is in Acts 27:9-44.

The sailors as experienced as they were became fearful; you know a backslidden Christian can cause even non believers to be afraid of the wrath of God. There were on board men of many countries and each had their own version of a god and the prayer meeting breaks out, only to the wrong gods! But Jonah on the other hand was up against the side of the ship sound asleep so deep in sleep that he never even noticed the storm even that could not awaken him from his backslidden ways.

The captain must have noticed that Jonah was not praying to his god, so he goes down into the hold, finds him and wakes him up. Now the liberal scholar injects the words “why snoorest thou” now do you see that anywhere. They do this to justify the captain coming looking for Jonah, it is not needed. In that day during a storm everyone on board was expected to keep the ship afloat. Naturally Jonah is not on deck so there is only one place that he could be, below deck and that is the reason he went down there to wake him up.

These seamen do something unusual for that day, they through out their cargo, which meant when they arrived in port no money for the trip. However in their fear they were grasping at straws to make the ship ride high so the waves would not over wash the deck.

Jonah is no real help as he was a prophet not a seaman, you see backslidden Christians cannot help others as they are unwilling to live the Lord's way. These men had tried their wood, stone, and metal gods and all of them had failed to respond. They tell Jonah to call on his God as they had tried, maybe Jonah the Jew would be able to get his God to respond. This should remind you of 1st Kings 18, with Elijah and the prophets of the grove, maybe their gods were also on vacation. Worshipping false gods leads to only one thing, a religion without and real power as they are useless except to be burnt.

Throwing everything overboard was not enough, so they do the next religious thing; they played the lotto, see Proverbs 16:33. They cast lots to see who it was that was causing the gods of the sea and wind to be so angry. God had it come down to

Jonah and they ask him a very simple question, who caused this you or us. Jonah faced with this situation cannot lie as he would then be killed any way. So he confesses who he is, a prophet from the one true God Jehovah, and to where he was going. He serves the true God that made both the heavens around them and the sea they were on and yes he says I am the reason for this calamity as I refused to obey His call and now here we are. This made the sailors even more afraid because they knew that disobeying a god was a thing punishable in some fashion.

11-14 Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the

**sea; so shall the sea be
calm unto you: for I know
that for my sake this great
tempest is upon you.
Nevertheless the men
rowed hard to bring it to
the land; but they could
not: for the sea wrought,
and was tempestuous
against them. Wherefore
they cried unto the LORD,
and said, We beseech thee,
O LORD, we beseech thee,
let us not perish for this
man's life, and lay not
upon us innocent blood:
for thou, O LORD, hast
done as it pleased thee.**

There are those men in churches that think they are in the ministry, always trying to control the pastor but not willing to actually step into the pulpit where the devil stands attacking the pastor. Many is the man who has refused a true calling

of God to maintain their earthly life styles. They work hard in the church but what is theirs is theirs alone. Just let the pastor preach on jealousy, fraud, in sincerity, politicizing, griping, the powerhouse for God will turn into an emissary of Satan to remove the pastor. No church can chart a clear course with a Jonah on board.

They then ask Jonah “what shall we do then”, the heathen lost have at times a better understanding that God does become angry and judge men, see Joshua 7:1, 25 and 2nd Samuel 21:2-8 for the sins of one man.

Jonah admits that he is the reason for these men suffering and their lives threatened. They rely on Jonah for his own sentence, no doubt thinking Jonah would know best what his God would require for appeasement!

Instead of carrying out Jonah's words the crew grabs oars and start rowing fiercely. This is a picture of humanity trying to get to heaven by works when they know they need a substitute to die for them.

They tried to reach land a type of heaven but the storm grew in intensity forcing them back out to sea. At the last they call upon Jehovah God (Daniel 4:34) to not punish them for this man's life and do not hold his blood against them.

**15-16 So they took up
Jonah, and cast him forth
into the sea: and the sea
ceased from her raging.
Then the men feared the
LORD exceedingly, and
offered a sacrifice unto the
LORD, and made vows.**

So up and over the side goes Jonah splashing into the sea compare this with Job 1:19. Immediately the storm goes away. These sailors, even in Jonah's rebellion come to know the one true God just as the fishermen in Luke 5:8-9. Revival follows Jonah even when he is drowning.

Here is a little story about a sinking ship in 1880 the life boats were going into the water, the passengers were rioting when a woman screamed "somebody do something religious, quick!" one person jumped to action by grabbing a plate and ran around the ship taking up a collection.

Just as Ruth in Ruth 1: 15-16, these men give up their false god for the one true God and sacrificed to Him.

17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

This verse contains 3 words that have caused the liberal teachers to wear their pens out trying to explain it away or changing it to their preferences, disregarding that the Bible is the truth. These words are “a great fish”; the word fish here is where we get our word “Whale” Jesus used it in Matthew 12:40, even in the beginning, way back in Gen. 1:21, where the whale is given its own class of animal. Over in Isaiah 27:1-2 it says that the great crooked serpent is “Leviathan and that his type is the whale.

Jonah is going to be in the belly of this beast 3 days and 3 nights these are actual 24 hour periods.

This was a whale because God said so, but to bring science in late as usual there are several species that could easily do this. One fish at the Smithsonian was so large it contained another one weighing 1500lbs. A dog fish could do so sharks have been found with whole horses in them, so yes God has plenty to work with, only the whale ever visited the Mediterranean Sea. Here are some whale stories for emphasis.

6' human skeletons have been found in whale sharks. Charles Emerson an expert on whale's states that a sulphur bottom whale can grow to 90 feet long, weighing 147 tons with a sinus cavity of 686 sq. feet.

Sperm Whales eject the contents of its stomach before it dies. In the Princeton review of 1927 October,

recorded that a man was found
ALIVE unconscious after 2 days.

August 25th, 1881 Steersman
James Bartlett on a whaler cut open
a stomach and found a dead man
intact and purple, the stomach was
at 104 degrees and had 6 foot long
fish in it.

Chapter Two

Jonah learns a new way to pray!

**1 Then Jonah prayed unto
the LORD his God out of
the fish's belly,**

Notice carefully the wording, especially the word “then” the prayer that follows was done after the 3 days in the whale’s belly. Jonah prayed before and after his soul went to the paradise side of hell. Remember Christ said the sign of Jonah in Matt. 12:59, so what is this sign, why the resurrection of which Jonah is a type.

2-9

We will find that there are two different opinions on what happened to Jonah, some say he died with proof text, the other group says he did not die.

We will stay with the former group and their 7 proof texts as follows.

1. Christ used Jonah as a sign of his death and resurrection according to Matt. 12:40. The parallel could not be right if Jonah did not physically die.

2. The time in which Jonah prayed would have been in the first few moments before death and just before being vomited out.

3. Jonah cries out from the belly of hell in verse 2, the word “hell” here has the meaning of a “grave” it is used the same way in Gen. 42:35; Psalm 88:3, Jonah considered the belly to be his grave.

4. The phrase “the floods compassed me” certainly describes someone who is drowning to one who is alive.

5. The phrase “I am cast out” in verse 4 can only be adequate if it means physical death. David used it in Psalm 18:8 and 30:3.

6. The phrase “weeds wrapped” in verse 5 describes one who has drowned in the sea.

7. The word “corruption” in verse 6 describes death and parallels Jonah and Christ.

The emphasis of this prayer is on Jonah’s resurrection not the whale or Jonah being preserved!

2-4 And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy

**sight; yet I will look again
toward thy holy temple.**

This prayer is written in Jewish prose and has 3 stanzas, each beginning with Jonah's predicament.

Jonah describes his situation as being the grave for him. It took this dire situation to put Jonah on his knees.

Notice also that Jonah does not say the sailors cast him in the sea rather that God put him where he was. Jonah knows as the water swells over him that the one who put him there controlled everything.

This Hell is under us according to Amos 9:12, Matt. 12:40. Paul says in Eph. 4:9 that it is the "lower parts". We find that it has gates in Matt. 16:18, bars in here in verse 6 which can be lacked Rev. 1:18 and unlocked in Rev. 20:1-2. Notice the

words of this dying man, he knows that one day he would be able to look at the temple of God again in the flesh.

5-6 The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.

Here in these two verses are Jonah's rehearsing his condition, as the whale swam toward the bottom every thing that came it's way was swallowed such as long strands of seaweed which wrapped around Jonah like the windings that Jesus

was wrapped in, this making another fitting comparison.

Again Jonah express's his faith in 6b, a faith that knew Jehovah would deliver him safely. The word "corruption" is a word used for decaying flesh, so Jonah knew in his heart that his physical body would not decay. We find another man alive and speaking from hell over in Luke 11:23, this man had all of his faculties and memories, just as Jonah.

**7-9 When my soul fainted
within me I remembered
the LORD: and my prayer
came in unto thee, into
thine holy temple. They
that observe lying vanities
forsake their own mercy.
But I will sacrifice unto
thee with the voice of
thanksgiving; I will pay**

**that that I have vowed.
Salvation is of the LORD.**

This third stanza begins with Jonah giving a reminder of his impossible situation. This prayer is Jonah's repentance and his submission to the will of God. Jonah knew that what he was saying was heard by the king of the universe on His throne, compare Psalm 18:6 and 88:2.

Jonah then compares those who worship false gods lying empty, with their worship takes then from Jehovah God. The worship of **anything** other than Jehovah keeps one from His mercy or the mercy seat.

Jonah tells God he will make a sacrifice with the only thing he could, his voice. A voice full of praise and thanks, this is an

expression of gratitude. What Jonah vowed is not revealed, one can imagine Jonah promising the Lord if he is delivered he would go and do anything the Lord wants.

Jonah recognizes that all of salvation comes from the Lord and Him alone. Man can in no way bring it about, just as man can not get out of the belly of the whale in his life without God's deliverance.

10 And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

The faith, repentance and submission of Jonah will bring the Lord to deliver Jonah after his time was up and not a minute sooner. Upon the Lord's command the whale turns toward shore and vomits Jonah out. The whale may have

thought, good riddance to what caused my indigestion is gone!

Though the exact location of Jonah's return to the living is not mentioned, one can suppose that it was near to where Jonah fled from the "presence of the Lord". Anyone who runs from God has to go back to where they fled, and return to the Lord's presence before moving on in ministry.

Chapter Three

Jonah is now restored to his office of prophet and now goes to Nineveh the way he was supposed to go in the beginning.

1-4 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

This now is the second time that God has given Jonah a word or message for Nineveh. This is set against the backdrop of Jonah's disobedience, punishment, and repentance.

The Lord now graciously restores Jonah to his status of prophet with this message of now "preaching to" as opposed to the original one of "cry against" Nineveh. The rest of Jonah's message is the same.

So now Jonah gets up off the beach, where he probably was trying to get the stink and stomach acid off what was left of his skin, while also rinsing out his robes. Jonah does not hesitate this time he starts out for Nineveh at a trot, the journey would have taken some time to accomplish, giving Jonah time to air out a little and certainly to rehearse his message to Nineveh.

Now as Jonah approaches Nineveh, he tells us it was an “exceeding great city” so large in fact that one suburb “Calah” had at that time 70,000 residents. It may well have been larger than Cincinnati, Detroit, or even equal to New York, which is given credence in verse 4. It is in verse 4 that we learn that Jonah walked into the city one day’s journey before he began preaching that the city had 40 days from that day to repent or be destroyed.

5-9 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

This is without doubt the biggest evangelistic crusade ever recorded. This crusade would make any of our famous television preachers green with envy, why, well because they turn in numbers that may or may

not be true as research has proven. However here it is God turning in the numbers and He never lies or fudges numbers so He will look good.

What happens is that some 800,000 citizens repent including the King. They all put on “sack cloth” this would be a coarse material made from black wool from goats. The King decrees that no one was to eat or drink not even the animals. The king so wanted deliverance that he had every animal covered with sack cloth, now that would be a sight to have seen, cows, camels, sheep etc walking around with black cloth draped over them.

Nineveh, this once gleaming massive city, is now virtually covered in black cloth to represent the people’s repentance and mourning over their sin. Now that is evangelism as the people “believed

God” just as the Thessalonians in 1 Thess 2:13.

The King did not summon his wise men at all he believed and ordered a fast and repentance, because he believed God. There have been times that I have been told of Christian’s reaction when they lead someone to the Lord; it is like I did not really expect it to happen. From rich to poor, king to pauper people had true repentance. Even the king like Job sets in ashes a sign of sadness and contrition.

The reason the animals go on a fast is this city practiced bestiality a practice forbidden in Leviticus 20:15. They cry unto God and are told to quit the evil of that sin that they were occupied with. When people really get born again or truly return to God there will be a turning from all sinful practices.

The great circuit rider Sam Jones based all of his messages on “cease to do evil, learn to do well” Isaiah 1:16-17. They have responded to God and now God responds in doing what he said he pardoned the city according to Jeremiah 18:7-8.

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

When God saw the work that displayed that inward change, God changes His purpose destruction to loving deliverer. The Lord now gives grace and mercy where judgment was deserved!

The only one upset is the preacher, who is probably thinking I just

never thought they would repent,
now what am I going to do.

Chapter Four

Here is Jonah seeing the Lord work and is very unhappy about it. In chapter 1 he rebelled, in chapter 2 he repented, in chapter 3 he was recommissioned and now he rebels and is rebuked for it.

**1-3 But it displeased
Jonah exceedingly, and he
was very angry. And he
prayed unto the LORD,
and said, I pray thee, O
LORD, was not this my
saying, when I was yet in
my country? Therefore I
fled before unto Tarshish:
for I knew that thou art a
gracious God, and merciful,
slow to anger, and of great
kindness, and repentest
thee of the evil. Therefore
now, O LORD, take, I
beseech thee, my life from**

**me; for it is better for me
to die than to live.**

Jonah cannot go to his home city, because of Deut. 18:20, so instead of rejoicing over the mighty work of the Lord, he becomes every angry. James in James 1:20 the “wisdom of man worketh not the righteousness of God”. So Jonah will not profit by sulking and pouting. One would think Jonah would have been very excited, amazed even seeing the Lord (Elohim-sovereign, creator) hear cries of these people and deliver them.

Jonah’s anger causes him to say thinking that he should not. Jonah had told the Lord, at the start he did not like nor want the Ninevites to be saved from destruction. Jonah has gone from being controlled by the flesh to being controlled by the Spirit and now re returns to having

his flesh dictate his words and actions.

Jonah was deep inside himself hoping the message would fail. The Ninevites would hate God, be judged and wiped off the Earth. Since it did not happen Jonah wants to pout about it. The sailors risked their lives to try and save this man, yet he will not do the same for the 120,000 children plus adults of Nineveh compare 1 Thess. 1:9 and Acts 20:20.

Jonah had read (v2) Exodus 34:7 and 14:18, if you were to go to China and openly preach the gospel and a million or two were saved wouldn't you be rejoicing even knowing China could still attack America, I would hope so.

If you remember Moses felt the same way as Jonah in did in verse 3 according to Numbers 11:15. Elijah

felt this way in 1 Kings 19:4 and Paul in Phil. 1:23, 2 Cor. 5:8. Moses had to many responsibilities, Elijah was ashamed, Paul wants heaven so bad he wanted to quit. Jonah is so abased by the Lord who called him he wants to quit and die! If the first 3 had quit where would you and I be today!

**4-8 Then said the LORD,
Doest thou well to be
angry? So Jonah went out
of the city, and sat on the
east side of the city, and
there made him a booth,
and sat under it in the
shadow, till he might see
what would become of the
city. And the LORD God
prepared a gourd, and
made it to come up over
Jonah, that it might be a
shadow over his head, to
deliver him from his grief.
So Jonah was exceeding**

glad of the gourd. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.

Jonah does not bother with this question; no he just heads out of the city as the people begin crying out for the Lord in repentance. Can we say any less when we come to church with people dying spiritually around us?

Jonah is going up the nearest hill before the 40 days are up still hoping the Lord will judge them for

their sins against Israel. God was angry with Nineveh, yet He had been angry with Israel in Exodus 32:10.

The Lord has been angry with people as in Proverbs 1:26 and many a nation compare Ez. 32:21-32. Jonah builds a booth, just as he would have during the feast of tabernacles and sits down to watch.

Jonah tries to outdo God by his pitiful booth, however God will teach him a lesson and causes the gourd vine to grow and its leaves to overlay Jonah's man made work. The gourd was most likely the Castor oil plant from Egypt which has one foot square leaves and grows rapidly in as little as two weeks. So Jonah goes from mad in verse one to very happy inverse 6.

One morning Jonah awakens to find a worm had gotten into his vine. The vine shriveled up just as fast as

it came. The vine and the worm were used by God for his purpose, not Jonah's comfort.

Up next the Lord calls on the fearsome Sirocco winds (Ex. 10:13) that blow hard with dust and heat like a blast furnace. This while Jonah now has no protection again the Earth obeys the Lord even if Jonah would not! Jonah again calls out for the Lord to let him die instead of being uncomfortable in his distress. It would be good friend if more Christians would get uncomfortable, instead of just wanting to die and go to heaven.

**9-11 And God said to
Jonah, Doest thou well to
be angry for the gourd?
And he said, I do well to be
angry, even unto death.
Then said the LORD, Thou
hast had pity on the gourd,
for the which thou hast**

**not laboured, neither
madest it grow; which
came up in a night, and
perished in a night: And
should not I spare Nineveh,
that great city, wherein
are more than sixscore
thousand persons that
cannot discern between
their right hand and their
left hand; and also much
cattle?**

The Lord asks of Jonah if his indignation over the gourd was justifiable and Job in his self pity says yes. God reminds him that his pity was on something he had nothing to do with and not for the Ninevites. Jonah, you did not cause the vine to grow and neither did you have anything to do with the Ninevites, whose greatness God allowed to happen.

Nineveh came up in the night and perished in the night, Nahum chapters 1 and 2, as far as God's point of view was.

Jonah had great concern over a plant dying and yet had no compassion for those 120,000 children in Nineveh let alone the adults. Even today there are those who are more interested in camps, conferences, programs, parties, social events, that ask are you for us or against us. It is about what helps me or comforts me.

Jonah's idea of good was those things and people that comforted him and Israel that was from God. All of the people and things against him and Israel were of the devil, we have all heard Christians use that line before and it is still popular among some.

So the book of Jonah ends as it began with the Lord speaking to

Jonah. Who obviously at some point repented, because we have this prophecy from him?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Casey was born in Logan W.Va. and grew up there graduating from Logan High School in 1970. After spending several years living in Toledo Ohio he returned to go to work in the coal mines not realizing at the time that the Lord was at work leading him to his salvation. He was saved on February 21st 1976 at Van Lear KY. After spending time visiting several different churches Pastor Casey settled down at Logan Baptist Temple while there he started working in the bus ministry, learning to knock on doors, care and maintain the bus and both captain and drive when necessary. From there the Lord moved him on to began his ministry of teaching Sunday School as the Senior High Class teacher and Youth Leader in 1980 at Wilkinson Community Church at Monitor, W.VA. Since that time he has taught the Bible,

line upon line precept upon precept without compromise going into his 30th year.

He has taught, in several churches in southern West Virginia, teaching in every type of class from Nursery to Junior Church and finally as Senior Adult teacher. Pastor Casey went into the ministry in 1989 and began preaching the gospel along with his teaching. He currently serves as Pastor of Freedom Baptist Fellowship in Madison W.Va. a new Church work that is 7 years old and the Lord has blessed with some wonderful people.

Pastor Casey has a love for the Lord and His work. He teaches with practical application and on a level so that everyone from a new convert to a mature believer can gain something from the teaching classes, he also adds a touch of humor, as laughter is good medicine for the soul.

These studies are not meant to be overly scholarly, but down to earth and easy for anyone who desires to know more about Jesus and the Christian life to understand.

It is Pastor Casey's hope that these edited studies will bless you richly.

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