

I. Jonah is a True Story

- A. Jonah is a historical character
(2 Kings 14:25)
- B. Jesus refers to the story of Jonah as being historic

II. Fascinating Nature of the Book

- A. Miraculous element
- B. Unique presentation – it is not in any sense a typical prophetic book
- C. Careful literary style
- D. The language depends on other key passages of the OT
- E. The book of Jonah has the style of a parable
 - 1. Story may or may not be true
 - a) Good Samaritan
 - b) Parable of the Minas
- F. The book does not name Jonah as the author
 - 1. Basic information would have needed to come from Jonah
- G. We cannot be sure for whom the message was intended

III. Facts of the Story

- A. Jonah is commissioned to take a message to Nineveh
- B. Jonah heads for a place as far away from Nineveh as possible
- C. The ship gets in a storm and Jonah is thrown overboard
- D. Jonah is delivered from death by a great fish
- E. Jonah is recommissioned and reluctantly delivers the message
- F. Nineveh repents
- G. Jonah complains

Assignment:

Read Amos

IV. Why Did Jonah Head for Tarshish?

- A. Answers often given
 - 1. Fear of presenting the message – he showed no indication of fear
 - 2. Narrow nationalism – he could have stayed in Israel
- B. Jonah answers in Jonah 4:2 – “In order to prevent this”
 - 1. Note Jonah’s confidence in God’s Word
 - a) If God was speaking to Nineveh, He must also be working
 - b) There is a high probability that they will repent
 - 2. Note also his belief that if the word was not given the result would come
 - 3. Note finally that Jonah could not accept the fact of the grace of God
 - a) God is not willing that any should perish but all to come to repentance
 - b) If God would forgive the Assyrians, there is hope for all
- C. Note the irony of the story
 - 1. Jonah was disobedient to God with malicious intent
 - 2. Jonah was miraculously and graciously delivered by God
 - 3. Jonah was restored to his status as a prophet by God’s grace
 - 4. Jonah was upset with that same grace extended to others
- D. God used the circumstance to bring Jonah to an understanding of His grace
 - 1. Jonah must have repented since he alone could have provided the information necessary to relate the story