

## The Book of Jonah – Chapters 1 & 2

<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: <sup>2</sup> “**Get up** and go to the **great** city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come **up** before me.”

<sup>3</sup> But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went **down** to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord. <sup>4</sup> Then the Lord sent a **great** wind on the sea, and such a **violent** storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. <sup>5</sup> All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone **below deck**, where he lay **down** and fell into a **deep** sleep.

<sup>6</sup> The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? **Get up** and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.”

<sup>7</sup> Then the sailors said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this **calamity**.” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. <sup>8</sup> So they asked him, “Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?”

<sup>9</sup> He answered, “I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” <sup>10</sup> This **terrified** them and they asked, “What have you done?” (They knew he was running away from the Lord, because he had already told them so.) <sup>11</sup> The sea was getting **rougher and rougher**. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?”

<sup>12</sup> “Pick me up and **throw me into the sea**,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this **great** storm has come upon you.”

<sup>13</sup> Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even **wilder** than before. <sup>14</sup> Then they cried out to the Lord, “Please, Lord, do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, Lord, have done as you pleased.” <sup>15</sup> Then they took Jonah and **hurled** him **overboard**, and the **raging** sea grew calm. <sup>16</sup> At this the men **greatly** feared the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows to him.

<sup>17</sup> Now the Lord provided a **huge fish** to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the **belly** of the fish three days and three nights.

**2** <sup>1</sup> From inside the **fish** Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. <sup>2</sup> He said:

“In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From **deep** in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. <sup>3</sup> You hurled me into the **depths**, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. <sup>4</sup> I said, ‘I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ <sup>5</sup> The engulfing waters threatened me, the **deep** surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. <sup>6</sup> To the **roots** of the mountains I **sank down**; the earth **beneath** barred me in forever. But you, Lord my God, brought my life **up** from the pit. <sup>7</sup> When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer **rose** to you, to your holy temple. <sup>8</sup> Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them. <sup>9</sup> But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the Lord.’”

<sup>10</sup> And the Lord commanded the **fish**, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

## The Book of Jonah – Chapters 3 & 4

**3** <sup>1</sup> A message came to Jonah from the Lord a second time. He said, <sup>2</sup> “Go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce to its people the message I give you.”

<sup>3</sup> Jonah obeyed the Lord. He went to Nineveh. It was a very important city. In fact, it took about three days to see all of it. <sup>4</sup> On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He announced, “In 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed.” <sup>5</sup> The people of Nineveh believed God’s warning. They decided not to eat any food for a while. All of them put on black clothes. That’s what everyone from the least important of them to the most important did.

<sup>6</sup> The news reached the king of Nineveh. He got up from his throne. He took his royal robes off and dressed himself in black clothes. He sat down in the dust. <sup>7</sup> Then he sent out a message to the people of Nineveh. He said, “I and my nobles give this order. Don’t let any person or animal taste anything. That includes your herds and flocks. People and animals must not eat or drink anything.

<sup>8</sup> Let people and animals alike be covered with black cloth. All of you must call out to God with all your hearts. Stop doing what is evil. Don’t harm others. <sup>9</sup> Who knows? God might take pity on us. He might turn away from his burning anger. Then we won’t die.”

<sup>10</sup> God saw what they did. They stopped doing what was evil. So he took pity on them. He didn’t destroy them as he had said he would.

**4** <sup>1</sup> But Jonah was very upset. He became angry. <sup>2</sup> He prayed to the Lord and said, “Lord, isn’t this exactly what I thought would happen when I was still at home? That’s why I was so quick to run away to Tarshish. I knew that you are gracious. You are tender and kind. You are slow to get angry. You are full of love. You are a God who takes pity on people. You don’t want to destroy them. <sup>3</sup> Lord, take away my life. I’d rather die than live.”

<sup>4</sup> But the Lord replied, “Do you have any right to be angry?”

<sup>5</sup> Jonah left the city. He sat down at a place east of it. There he put some branches over his head. He sat in their shade. He waited to see what would happen to the city.

<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord God sent a vine and made it grow up over Jonah. It gave him more shade for his head. It made him more comfortable. Jonah was very happy he had the vine. <sup>7</sup> But before sunrise the next day, God sent a worm. It chewed the vine so much that it dried up. <sup>8</sup> When the sun rose, God sent a burning east wind. The sun beat down on Jonah’s head. It made him very weak. He wanted to die. So he said, “I’d rather die than live.”

<sup>9</sup> But God said to Jonah, “Do you have any right to be angry about what happened to the vine?” “I do,” he said. “In fact, I’m angry enough to die.”

<sup>10</sup> But the Lord said, “You have been concerned about this vine. But you did not take care of it. You did not make it grow. It grew up in one night and died the next. <sup>11</sup> Nineveh has more than 120,000 people. They can’t tell right from wrong. Nineveh also has a lot of cattle. So shouldn’t I show concern for that great city?”