

ABATT
Jonah Part One
 Christian Life Assembly
 Jim Hoffman

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The Minor Prophets		
Prophet	Date of Writing	Propesied to:
Obadiah	845-750	Israel/Edom
Joel	835-796	Judah
Jonah	793-753	Niniveh
Hosea	753-715	Israel
Amos	760-755	Israel/Judah
Micah	770-710	Israel/Judah
Nahum	663-612	Niniveh
Zepheniah	635-625	Judah/Assyria/Nations
Habbakuk	610-605	Judah/Nations
Haggai	520	Judah
Zechariah	520-470	Judah
Malachi	460-410	Judah

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The Minor Prophets

Outline by Chapter

Chapter 1
Running
From God

Chapter 2
Running
To God

Chapter 3
Running
With God

Chapter 4
Running
Against God

Run the race gives us.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

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The Minor Prophets

- **What is Jonah about?** It is about Jonah's disobedience to the race God gave him to run.
- **What is Jonah about?** It is about Jonah's cold-hearted disregard for the Assyrian people.
- **What is Jonah about?** It's about how one of the most successful evangelists ever can still be miserable.
- **What is Jonah about?** It's mostly about Jonah.

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The Minor Prophets

- **Jonah 1:1** Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me."
- God's first foreign missionary – while some of the other prophets prophesied about the surrounding nations, Jonah is the only one sent to a foreign nation.
- The Ninevites were old and familiar enemies of God – their founder was none other than Nimrod.

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The Minor Prophets

- **Jonah 1:3** But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.
- As it turns out, the one God chose was a racist and as such he would be a most unqualified missionary as he hates the ones he is sent to save.
- We don't find out until chapter #4 why Jonah had such a strange reaction to God's calling him to go preach to Nineveh.

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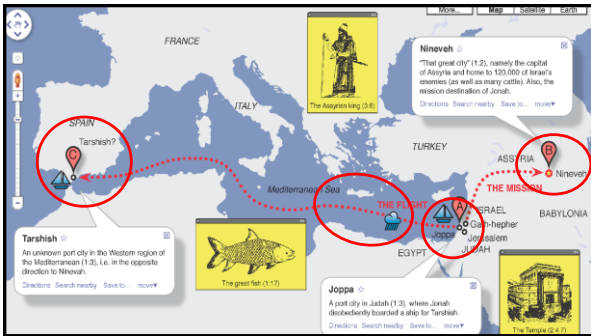
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The Minor Prophets

Spoiler alert! He was afraid the Ninevites would believe him and repent! 😊

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The Minor Prophets

- Jonah 1:7 And they said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ESV
- Even being exposed as the rebel he was turned out to be good for Jonah, for Nineveh, and for us.
- Good for Jonah in that he fulfilled his calling, good for Nineveh in that many will be in heaven, and good for us as we see God’s pursuit of the gentiles.

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The Minor Prophets

- Jonah, found out the hard way what Adam and Eve learned when they tried to hide in the garden, and what we all probably know intuitively – you cannot hide from God.
- Jonah heads for Joppa instead of Nineveh and perhaps feels safe enough down in the ship to take a nap.
- The spiritual insights of the ship’s crew are spot on – “Get up and pray to your god! Maybe he will pay attention to us and spare our lives.”

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The Minor Prophets

- Jonah confesses that he is running from the true God, Jehovah, and since the crew had heard of the Hebrew God, they were terrified.
- To Jonah’s credit, he does say, “Throw me into the sea, and it will become calm again. I know that this terrible storm is all my fault.”
- The sailors, now faced with their own death, make every effort to spare Jonah’s life, but finally relent and throw him into the sea.

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The Minor Prophets

Why didn’t Jonah take the sailors “off the hook” so to speak and just jump overboard?

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The Minor Prophets

Maybe he weighed living against dying
and his instinct for life prevailed.

Perhaps more likely - he didn't want to
face God.

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The Minor Prophets

- “15 So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. 16 Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.” ESV
- Heathen men who had only heard of the Hebrew God are convinced to worship him by one brief interaction.
- It would be interesting to know what happened to those sailors over the rest of their lives, because it seems they had a “death bed” sort of conversion right there on the sea.

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The Minor Prophets

- As for Jonah, “And the Lord **appointed** a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.” ESV
- No less than (4) times this word “**appointed**” appears in this book – it points us to the providence of God.
- In chapter 4 God is said to have **appointed** a “gourd”, a “worm”, and a “strong wind and the sun” – all to teach Jonah about his distorted value system.

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The Minor Prophets

- Never forget that God is active in the history of the universe and in all of our lives as well.
- We cannot look at our calendars and see all the “**appointments**” God has scheduled for us, but we can see them by looking back in time.
- That sister who took you to Sunday School, that youth leader who loved you, and that friend who put the gospel in your hands, or that, or that,

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The Minor Prophets

- Jonah 2:1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying, “**I called out to the Lord, out of my distress**, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. ESV
- Psalm 118:5 **Out of my distress I called on the Lord**; the Lord answered me and set me free. ESV
- Psalm 120:1 **In my distress I called to the Lord**, and he answered me. ESV

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The Minor Prophets

- How did Jonah survive in the whale (or fish)?
- There are lots of theories as to how Jonah survived for 3 days in the guts of a great fish, but no conclusive answers.
- Most likely answer – just as God supernaturally prepared the whale to swallow Jonah, he could have kept him alive supernaturally.

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The Minor Prophets

• There has been lots of doubt cast upon the biblical account of Jonah being swallowed by a whale, or by some large fish. (see below from www.answersingenesis.com)

1. Are there "great fish" large enough to swallow a man whole?

• Of course! Keep in mind that modern animal classification systems weren't exactly in use at the time of Jonah. Any aquatic creature could be referred to as a "fish." And we know that there are whales (blue and sperm) and even sharks (great white and whale sharks) that can swallow a man whole. The sperm whale grows to a length of up to 70 feet. Its esophagus is approximately 50 cm (20") wide and "sperm whales don't have to chew their food - so Jonah could have been swallowed whole."² Two marine scientists from Sea World in San Diego hypothesize that it was a great white shark that probably swallowed Jonah.³

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Questions?

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