

## COMMENTARY

### JONAH

#### Jonah 1

Jonah was from Gath-hepher (II Kings 14:25), which was a city about half-way between Mt. Carmel and the Sea of Galilee. God called for Jonah to go and preach against Nineveh (capital city of the Assyrians, who were oppressing Israel at the time). Jonah refused because he was afraid that Nineveh would repent and then God would not destroy them (Jonah 4:2)

Jonah fled, going to Joppa (a port on the Mediterranean, far South-- and in the opposite direction of Nineveh). His destination was Tarshish (a city thought to be in Spain). After boarding the ship and setting sail, a tremendous storm came up that threatened the lives of all on board. The sailors did what they could and called on their respective gods. They sought to determine why their lives were being threatened.

Jonah finally admitted his guilt and explained what he had done. After trying to escape the storm, the sailors finally gave up and obeyed Jonah's command to throw him into the sea. The sea grew calm immediately (the sailors then worshipped God), and the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah.

#### Jonah 2

Jonah prayed a prayer of repentance and devotion, while he was inside of the great fish. He recounted how the Lord had delivered him and realized the folly of trusting in other "gods".

The Lord then had the great fish vomit Jonah out onto the dry land.

#### Jonah 3

Jonah was then commanded by God to go to Nineveh, and he obeyed immediately. The city of Nineveh was 30 miles long and 10 miles wide, the "inner city" was about 1/10 of that. Jonah travelled through the city proclaiming that God would destroy it in 40 days.

The people of Nineveh and the King believed the message. The King issued an edict that they were to go into mourning and cease their sinfulness.

Because of their repentance, the Lord forgave them and did not, at that time, destroy their city (later during the time of Nahum, the city fell [607 B.C.]).

#### Jonah 4

Jonah was upset that God would not destroy this enemy capital. He felt that he had been humiliated by the entire episode and went out of the city and sat on the ground.

The Lord caused a shade-giving vine to grow up overnight, and Jonah enjoyed its' shade the next day. Then God sent a worm, which devoured the vine, and Jonah was upset because of the death of the vine.

God then questioned Jonah's priorities. He was more concerned about one vine, than he was about over 120,000 whose lives had been threatened.

STUDY GUIDE

JONAH 1

1. What did God tell Jonah to do? (vs. 2)
2. How did Jonah respond? (vs. 3)
3. What did the Lord send? (vs. 4)
4. What did the sailors know about Jonah? (vs. 10)
5. What did Jonah instruct the sailors to do? (vs. 12)
6. What did the sailors ask, before throwing Jonah overboard? (vs. 14)
7. What happened to the sea? (vs. 15)
8. How did the sailors respond? (vs. 16)
9. What did the Lord do for Jonah? (vs. 17)

STUDY GUIDE

JONAH 2

1. What did Jonah do inside the fish? (vs. 1)
2. When did Jonah call out to the Lord? (vs. 2)
3. What did God do for Jonah? (vs. 6)
4. What do idol worshippers forfeit? (vs. 8)
5. What comes from the Lord? (vs. 9)
6. What did the Lord command? (vs. 10)

STUDY GUIDE

JONAH 3

1. What did the Lord tell Jonah to do? (vs. 2)
2. What did Jonah do? (vs. 3)
3. What was Joanh's message? (vs. 4)
4. How did the Ninevites respond? (vs. 5)
5. What did the King command? (vs. 7,8)
6. How did God respond to the Ninevites repentance? (vs. 10)

STUDY GUIDE

JONAH 4

1. How did Jonah react to the events? (vs. 1)
2. Why did Jonah say he had fled to Tarshish? (vs. 2)
3. What did God send for Jonah? (vs. 6)
4. How did Jonah react to the removal of the gift? (vs. 8)
5. What did God say that He was concerned about? (vs. 11)