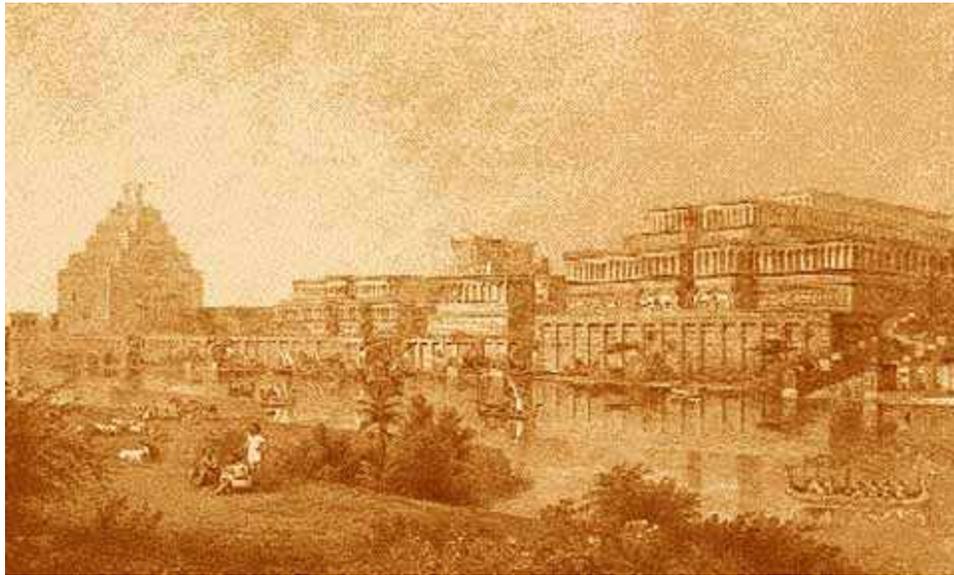


GOD'S COMPASSION

JONAH 1:1 The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: ² "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me."

Jonah was a prophet of God during the reign of king Jeroboam in the year 800 before Christ. God told His prophet to preach repentance to the great city of Nineveh.

The city of Nineveh during Jonah's time



The Word of God is also coming to us to share the Gospel with those living in sin and going to A place of eternal condemnation and suffering. Do we obey the voice of God?

What was Jonah's response?

JONAH 1:3 "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.

What is your response to the voice of God?

There are 3 reasons for Jonah's actions...

He was selfish. He feared doing God's will. This was a difficult mission. He could be killed.

He was patriotic. The Assyrians were the enemies of Israel. The Jews were praying to God to pour out His wrath on the hated enemies. Jonah was a Hebrew first and a prophet second. He was a loyal Israelite but a traitor to God.

He was disturbed. Jonah planned to disobey the word of the Lord. He went the wrong direction. He had enough money to pay the ticket of a ship to Tarshish. Actually God had provide this money for the mission to Nineveh! So he misused God's money. The Bible says he went down to Joppa, down into the ship, then down into the sea and finally down into the belly of the fish.



MOSUL, IRAQ MODERN DAY NINEVEH. 600.000 POPULATION

JONAH 1:4-6 “Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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, and we will not perish."

The results of disobedience.

The innocent suffered. The sailors suffered, the owners of the cargo suffered, the owner of the ship suffered. The people in Nineveh suffered because they had to wait longet to hear the message from God. The emergency religion of the sailors did not help. Throwing the cargo into the sea did not help. Jonah was asleep, he was doped by the devil. Many Christians are sleeping and not concerned about the destination of the unbelievers.

What is the result if we do not obey God?

JONAH 1:7-10 “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. So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I

worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land." 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.)”

YOUR SIN WILL BE DISCOVERED

NUMBERS 32:23 "But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the LORD; **and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.**”

Jonah was a fugitive from God. How many Christians are in the same boat? Jonah said to the sailor “I worship the Lord” but there was no evidence! To worship is to respect and to respect is to obey. Jonah was a hypocrite. Hypocrisy is the great curse in the church today. Jesus said in Matthew 15:8, "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

What shall we do with sin? Sin needs to be dealt with.

JONAH 1:11-16 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?" "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." Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. Then they cried to the LORD, "O LORD, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased." Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.”

Jonah offered himself as a willing sacrifice. Here Jonah is a “Type of Christ” Who died for others. Christ did not die for His own sin, like Jonah.

² COTINTHIANS 5:21 “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

THE MIRACLE

JONAH 1:17 “But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.”

God’s Compassion is great. He could have let Jonah drown in the ocean. But God used a great fish to save Jonah. God gave Jonah a second opportunity to fulfill his mission to Nineveh. So God is also giving you and I a second opportunity to obey His Word. God preserved Jonah to do His will. God is also preserving you and I so that we do His will. Remember the people in Nineveh were doomed to die because of their sin. God wanted to save them and Jonah was God’s Spokesman. God say in 2 Peter 3:9, “He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

God used a fish to save Jonah and inside the fish Jonah repented. Are there miracles today? What does it take to cause you and I to repent and commit our lives to Him?

THE PRAYER OF REPENTANCE OF JONAH

JONAH 2:9 But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the LORD." And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land."



THE ENTIRE CITY OF NINEVEH REPENTS

JONAH 3:1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city--a visit required three days. On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let any man or beast, herd or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened."

We notice several important matters in this reading...

God spoke to Jonah a second time
Jonah decided to obey God and went to Nineveh
Jonah is bold preacher sharing the Word of God as he walks up and down the city
The Ninevites believed God
The greatest revival in the history of the world
God changed His mind toward a repentant sinner

God needs many Jonahs to share the message of repentance and forgiveness. Luke 24:47
“and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”



1. We've a story to tell to the nations,
that shall turn their hearts to the right,

a story of truth and mercy,
a story of peace and light,
a story of peace and light.

Refrain:

For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
and the dawning to noonday bright;
and Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth,
the kingdom of love and light.

2. We've a song to be sung to the nations,
that shall lift their hearts to the Lord,
a song that shall conquer evil
and shatter the spear and sword,
and shatter the spear and sword.

(Refrain)

3. We've a message to give to the nations,
that the Lord who reigneth above
hath sent us his Son to save us,
and show us that God is love,
and show us that God is love.

(Refrain)

4. We've a Savior to show to the nations,
who the path of sorrow hath trod,
that all of the world's great peoples
might come to the truth of God,
might come to the truth of God.

(Refrain)