
BOOK OVERVIEW

Jonah

Author: The prophet Jonah (means “a dove”)

Date: 820-804 B.C. (date uncertain)

Recipients: While Jonah’s account focuses on Nineveh, his message was probably for the Northern Kingdom.

Key words: prepared (4 times)

Summary: The wicked city of Nineveh repents and turns to God under the reluctant preaching of God’s prophet Jonah.

Key verse: Jonah 3:10

Notes:

This is one of the most controversial books in the Old Testament primarily because of its miraculous story. Some critics view it as a myth, allegory, or parable. Those same critics reject the fact that Jesus was in the tomb three days and three nights before rising from the dead.

Clearly, Jesus accepted the book as truth. His references to Jonah are found in Matthew 12:38-41, 16:4; and Luke 11:29-32.

The book makes it clear that God’s compassion was not just for the Jews but extended to the Gentiles.

The Greek word that is translated “whale” in Matthew 12:40 (KJV) is more accurately rendered as “big fish” or “large sea creature,” as is done in Jonah 1:17 (KJV).

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