

Summary Handout**Sharing the Gospel
with the World**

Lesson
33
Summary

Jonah 1-4; Jonah is sent to call Nineveh to repentance—He flees on a ship, is cast into the sea, and is swallowed by a great fish.

Jonah 1-4; Jonah prays to the Lord, and the fish vomits him out on dry ground.

Jonah 1-4; Jonah prophesies the downfall of Nineveh—The people repent and the city is saved.

Jonah 1-4; Jonah is displeased with the Lord for his mercy upon the people—The Lord rebukes him.

Micah 2; The destruction of Israel is lamented—The Lord will gather the remnant of Israel.

Micah 4; In the last days, the temple shall be built, Israel shall gather to it, the Millennial era will commence, and the Lord will reign in Zion.

Micah 5; Messiah shall be born in Bethlehem—In the last days the remnant of Jacob shall triumph gloriously over the Gentiles.

Micah 6; In spite of all his goodness to them, the people have not served the Lord in spirit and in truth—They must do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before him.

Micah 7; Though Israel has rebelled, yet in the last days the Lord will have mercy on her—He will have compassion and pardon her iniquities.

**Supplemental
Holy Land and
Jewish
insights:**

Sinking to New Heights: The story of Jonah is his own poetic way of bearing a humble testimony that he was nothing, that he sank to the depths, and that he was to do the Lord's work instead of his own. His humility and confession may be mistaken as a "less than willing" prophet. Yet he is one of the greatest, and in fact, the most important prophet of his day.

Who Is Your Favorite? While visiting in Israel with some of the local Saints in Jerusalem, Elder James E. Faust was asked, "Who is your favorite prophet?" Unhesitatingly, he said, "The living one." God honored his prophets, assigning their names to events and covenants. Examples include: "The Abrahamic Covenant" that existed before Abraham and the "Law of Moses." Jonah received that honor as the only sign the Lord would give of his Messiahship. A little further in this article you will see how Jesus referred to the sign of the prophet Jonah.

Is It a Whale of a Story? From Jewish sources the following comments are of interest: "Jonah is known for the incident involving the whale, or large fish, but that episode is secondary to the lesson the Book comes to teach. Jonah learned through bitter experience that non-Jews are also God's creatures and one must not begrudge them God's love and forgiveness. Also to be learned is the fact that true repentance is accepted by God and earns His pardon for almost any sin. Because of its theme of sin, repentance, and forgiveness, the Book of Jonah is read every Day of Atonement at the *Minhabah* service." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Other Fish Stories: "In ancient literature there are several stories of people being rescued from inside fish (Heracles the Hesione, Perseus, and Andromeda); but only in that of Jonah was the rescue effected by prayer and not by force. The book is to be understood as a lesson in Divine forgiveness and mercy --- to Jonah as well as to the people of Nineveh --- and as a lesson in obedience to God's will. As a symbol of the effectiveness of repentance it is read as the *haftarah* at the afternoon service of the Day of Atonement." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Reoccurring Sea and Storm Accounts: There are a few "sea and storm stories" in the scriptures. Their meanings and lessons for us, nowadays, have a common connection. Noah is saved by the Lord, Jonah is saved by the Lord, the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee are saved by the Lord. When "sinking," remember, we are saved by the Lord.

Sea and Ships "Though the Israelites were not really a seafaring nation, the Bible is full of references to the sea and ships, and in the Book of Jonah, one of the main parts of the story takes place at sea when the hero is thrown overboard in the hope of stopping a storm." "During the Middle Ages Jews became less involved in the actual owning and sailing of ships but remained active as sea merchants and brokers. Jews were known for producing nautical instruments and maps. Abraham Zacuto invented the astrolabe and drew up nautical tables that were invaluable to sailors. Christopher Columbus is thought by some to have been a Marrano (secret Jew) and his

interpreter certainly was Jewish. In England a Marrano, Simon Fernandez, was chief pilot to Sir Walter Raleigh.” (*Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.*)

Jonah Learns the Mission of the Lord: In his own day Jonah did not know that we, twenty-nine centuries later, would be referring to his experience as a sign of the Messiah. The entire account is so symbolic that it deserves a closer look. Instead of going north and east as the Lord instructed, Jonah went south and west. Instead of going up to Nineveh, he went down into the sea. All this seems to be a short-term defiance on Jonah’s part, but the Lord Jehovah had a long-term lesson in mind. Jonah went down, personally, physically, and then the Lord brought him up. Jonah was dead (three days and three nights) and lived again. I suppose his account is one of the earliest “near death” accounts so popular today.

Grouper Fish: The popular expression about Jonah’s experience is that “it’s a whale of a story.” Hold on! According to Jacques Cousteau, whales are rarely found in the Mediterranean. However, there exists a grouper fish that, according to experts, can grow large enough to swallow a man. There are modern tales that reveal such occurrences as well.

God’s True Name: In reading Jonah’s account, it becomes obvious that he learned a great lesson. His four chapters are an interesting study in contrasts and opposites. His own poetry and literary style are a testimony that has one purpose: It is to witness that the Lord saves. He says that clearly in chapter 2, verse 9, “Salvation is of the Lord.” Since the word *Jehovah* is unspeakable in Hebrew (it means I AM—and “I am” isn’t even conjugated in Hebrew), a shortened version of Jehovah is found in “Jeho,” “Jah” or “Jahweh.” Names such as “Elijah” (my God is Jehovah), “Jeremiah” and “Hezekiah” all refer to “Yah.” The word salvation is rendered with the shortened sound “sha” or “shua,” such as in “Elisha” (my God saves). However, best of all is the Lord’s name “Jeho-shua.” This became “Joshua” and eventually that became “Jesus” in English. It means, “Jehovah saves,” or as Jonah put it, “Salvation is of the Lord.”

Messianic Sign of Jonah: The Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign that he was the Messiah—the Jehovah who saves. He informed them that a wicked and adulterous nation sought for signs. Jesus reminded the Pharisees that they already had the one and only sign of the Messiah they would get. Jonah was down in the sea for three days and three nights and then came alive again. Jesus prophesied that He would be three days and three nights in the earth and then come alive again in the resurrection.

Two Zions: Micah is another prophet that writes little yet his writing bears an immense impact for us in these latter-days. Two governing headquarters of the Lord’s kingdom will exist. Two centers in the “Tops of the Mountains” should be considered. Presently, there are two dedicated centers in the two “Zions” in the two “Tops of the Mountains,” Jerusalem and Salt Lake City. The Lord will speak from two Zions.

Misguided Wealth: “Micah directed his prophecy against the rich who lived in ill-gotten splendor at the expense of the poor. He warned them that God would forsake His people and that the inevitable results of the corruption of Judah would follow: the ravaging of Judah by its enemies, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and exile. Micah stated God’s demands simply: justice tempered with mercy. Micah’s verses of consolation are beautiful in their vision of the glorious future of Zion: “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem . . . And they the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid...” (Micah 4:5).” (*Encyclopaedia Judaica Jr.*)

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