

### Chapter 1 : The Psalm of the Prodigal Prophet (Jonah ) | racedaydvl.com

*The book of Jonah is more than just a delightful story for children. Here are 10 valuable lessons gleaned from Jonah's encounter with the great fish and the people of Nineveh. Here are 10 valuable lessons gleaned from Jonah's encounter with the great fish and the people of Nineveh.*

He was a God-called, God-commissioned man, with a God-given message. His sphere of service was as specific as his call. He was to go to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, located on the banks of the Tigris River about miles north of Babylon. The Assyrians were the fierce enemies of Israel. Jonah tried to resign his commission and take a cruise on the Mediterranean. But the same Lord, from whom he was trying to flee, was preparing a wind to bring him to obedience. They were praying to their gods, while Jonah was not even praying, just sleeping. When he was awakened, it took a series of humiliating questions to get him to confess. The conscience of those heathen men seemed to be more tender than that of the back-slidden saint. Jonah was finally cast into the sea. There, a great fish was lying in wait. The Lord had prepared the huge creature to swallow the disobedient prophet. There he began to pray. Had he prayed instead of fleeing from God, he would not have had this harrowing experience. Nevertheless, his prayer was real. It had conviction, confession, contrition, and intercession. In his prayer, he quoted from Psalms 18 ; 30 ; 31 ; 42 ; 69 ; ; ; and In spite of his prayers, pledges, and vows, he was not delivered. Jonah did not hesitate this time. The consequence of his previous experience had made him obedient. He was now a God-called man, with a God-given message, on a God-directed mission. Jonah delivered a message of repentance. To that city, some 20 miles long and 12 miles wide, Jonah spoke the words [that] the Lord had directed him to give. The Ninevites repented and believed God. Jonah was learning a lesson that the apostle Paul later phrased in these words: Is He not also of the Gentiles? God turned from His fierce anger, and Nineveh was spared, even though God knew that same city would later become the rod in His hand to chasten Israel. Jonah, no doubt, reasoned that the Assyrians would soon persecute his own people. But his displeasure was largely selfish. His own reputation as a prophet was at stake. He would rather witness the destruction of all the Assyrians than see himself dishonored. But God used a gourd [plant] to teach that poor, foolish servant a wonderful truth. Jonah was disgraced, and was forced to commit his reputation to the keeping of Jehovah. The prophet was more concerned about his own personal comfort than he was about the repentance and salvation of the inhabitants of that great city. It is remarkable to trace the hand of God behind the scenes of this story. It was God who sent out the wind. He prepared the fish, the gourd, the worm, and the east wind. No less remarkable is the fact that God took note of the little children of Nineveh-- more than , of them-- and even the cattle v. What a contrast between the great loving heart of God and the narrow, selfish love of His reluctant and disobedient servant. The sinning saint is silenced, and God has the last word. We are assured of this as we read these words of our Lord: An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet, Jonah; For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. See the Book Notes on Jonah for a verse by verse study of this book. Used by permission [within The Book from thebookwurm. Further distribution is not allowed without permission from RBC. For another brief look at this book of the Bible,.

### Chapter 2 : Progressives and the Uniting Methodists Biblical Reflection | Hacking Christianity

*The crew throws Jonah into the sea after Jonah declares that he fears the Lord, God of Heaven who made the land and sea. God has mercy on Jonah and a fish swallows Jonah. Jonah spends three days in the belly of the fish, a sign of Jesus, before God caused the fish to vomit Jonah up on the shore.*

He did, however, decide to talk about Jonah, whose story is also water related. Darlene helped us transition into worship with a sensitive and melodic tune. Brad then read Psalm The worship singing itself was led by Brad with accompaniment by Darlene. The Scripture reading was from Jonah 2 in preparation for the message. Reflection on Jonah One of the problems we have with the book of Jonah, a lot of people think they know the story. Jonah goes the opposite direction. When he is thrown overboard the Lord appoints a great fish to swallow Jonah. Pastor Shannon made a big show of testing us on this, lest we think it was a whale when Scripture specifically calls it a great fish. Three days and three nights he was in the belly of that fish. The fish had been commissioned by God to pick up Jonah, as if God spoke and the fish obeyed. Because of the nature of this story, since I have been a kid, it seems like a hard to believe kind of story. Brad took this further. The point is, it would take a miracle for this to happen. And is God capable of miracles" We know the answer to this. Brad noted how one of the key words in this book was the word great. Jonah is instructed to go to a great city, he flees and there is a great storm, great fish, etc. God does great things. In contrast, the key word associated with Jonah, is down. He went down to Joppa, down into the sea, down into the belly of a great fish. Down to to the very bottom where Jonah is finally constrained and can do nothing now on his own, except pray. The sea was a place of great fear for the Israelites, a place of death. He had been told to go to Nineveh but instead went to Joppa. Why did Jonah begin to pray? He had nothing else to do. He had hit rock bottom. Why do we have a hard time praying? Jonah was brought down and he had nothing left. Jonah had had his own plans, but they all resulted in disasters. So we reach the point of it. This story is all about hitting bottom. There, he discovers God. Hitting bottom was the best thing that ever happened to him. Has anyone else been in over your head like Jonah was over his head? God is never more than a prayer away. Even when we hit bottom and have nowhere else to go, God comes to us. Jonah was rescued on the third day. Third days are pretty big in Bible stories. On the third day the fish vomited Jonah onto the beach. All stories fit in two categoriesâ€¦ tragedy or comedy. In tragedy joy loses, life loses, hope loses. In comedy hope wins. This story is full of interesting elements. Pagan sailors come to the prophet and ask him to pray. Jonah is asleep in a boat in a storm while everyone else is in a panic? Maybe this will trigger your memory. Jonah was from a town called Gath Nappur, not far from Nazareth. When Jesus went down into the water at baptism, what did people see? And when Jesus was confronted by the Jewish leaders as regards His being the Messiah, He told them they would receive no sign except "the sign of Jonah. The first art inspired by Jesus, therefore, was not in cathedrals, it was in the catacombs. And the artwork most found in these catacombs was the story of Jonah. The real message of Jonah is that death has no sting, the grave cannot hold us. We were told the story of an alcoholic lawyer who went down and down, who ended up in rehab, and found his life again. And I will be there to meet you at the tomb.

### Chapter 3 : Reflection on Jonah | New Life Narrabri

*Reflections on Jonah September 18, John C Holbert Patheos Explore the world's faith through different perspectives on religion and spirituality! Patheos has the views of the prevalent.*

And foreigners live there. Foreigners who do not worship the Lord our God. As far way as Nineveh is, God cares anyway. The Lord calls Jonah: Go right now to Nineveh. Tell them how wicked they are. The Lord does not give up. The ship is caught in a big storm. Everybody on board is praying--to many different gods. They have not had the opportunity to know about the Lord our God. Jonah sleeps through the disturbance until the captain wakes him up. He demands of Jonah, "Start praying to your God. In response to their query, Jonah tells them about the God of heaven, sea, and dry land. And he tells them that he, Jonah, has been fleeing from the Lord. After some deliberation, they finally consent to sacrifice Jonah in hopes that this act will pacify the Lord. They throw Jonah overboard, but God is not ready to give up on this reluctant prophet. Have you slept through challenges? Are there groups to whom you are unwilling to approach? How far are you willing to go--literally or figuratively--to avoid answering the call of the Lord? Considering how ready the sailors were to believe Jonah, why did it take a disaster for him to speak out? Would they have been ready to believe him without the emergency?

### Chapter 4 : The Sign of Jonah - Orthodox Church in America

*The following is a reflection on Jonah 3: , 10, the Hebrew Bible lesson appointed for January 22, , the third Sunday after the Epiphany - according to the Revised Common Lectionary. Also on this site is a reflection on the Gospel Lesson for the same day, and a version of the Prayers of the People for all Epiphany.*

On this island much fishing is accomplished. Whether for sport or profit, fishing has been an integral part of life on Ocracoke for hundreds of years. Dramatic tales of wrestling fish from the surf or into the back of a small boat are a part of life in fishing communities. Some of these stories are true, others exaggerated, and a few are outright lies. Such is the nature of the fish story. The story recorded in the Book of Jonah is one such fish story. Let me say this from the beginning: The story of Jonah, the whale, and his time in Nineveh is a tale which wants the reader to ask a few key questions. What does this story say about God? What does the story say about us? What does this story say about how God feels about the people we hate? Is the writer of Jonah trying to convey the history of an actual fish, man, and trip to Nineveh? Like Jesus, the author is offering us a parable so we might better understand how we fit in to what God is already doing. God has an expansive view of our abilities and potential. God see us in ways we are unable to see ourselves. What does this story say about us? It says we think we know more than God and can make better decisions about the fate of people than the creator of the universe. When we feel comfortable, safe, and secure we are less likely to be compassionate, loving, or benefit of the doubt giving to anyone, especially God. What does this story say about how God feels about the people we fear and hate? Who are the Ninevehites? The remains of Nineveh are in present day northern Iraq. They were the people most despised and detested by the Israelites. Their religious practices differed from the Israelites. They were warriors who had conquered great swathes of land. None of that mattered to God. God saw value in the people that Jonah viewed as worthless. Jonah had one Nineveh to confront. Those are all places that seem to bring out the worst in humanity these days. In the back of our minds, we like Jonah have decided these people are evil, these people are bad, and they must die. And as Jonah did, when people begin to discuss compromise, coexisting, and compassion people get angry. We seek our tiny shrubs and woefully bemoan how wrong it is that God is being God and our rules seem to be ignored when it comes to running humanity. This God who has sent us to Nineveh wants to give everyone compassion, the benefit of the doubt, and kill no one.

### Chapter 5 : five words “ a reflection on Jonah , 10 | rick morley

*In the first chapter of the book of Jonah, we are not given any hint about why the Lord had picked Jonah for the assignment. We are not given any hint that Jonah had ever sought out the Lord's attention for help or to give thanks.*

Nineveh was a city of the Assyrians, a tribe that did terrible things by pillaging and laying siege to nearby cities, including the Israelites. Jonah had likely seen his own family members and friends lose lives and land to the Assyrians. In the tribal world of the Old Testament, it was kill or be killed, Us or Them, conquest or death. So by verse 3 yes! He cannot handle offering a chance for forgiveness to the people who have done so much harm to his people. We know the rest: The city repents and is saved! But the story ends in a haunting scene: Jonah is morose under a dead fig tree, angry at God for extending forgiveness to the people of Nineveh, to the terrible people who would have killed his people in a heartbeat”and have. His last line is to ask God to kill him to put him out of his agony. What kind of story is this? If so, why does it have an ending like this? A New Thing One interpretation of Jonah is that God is doing a new thing, and the story asks if the tribal people can see it and seek it when it happens. The story demands non-dual awareness: This story wants none of that. It was unheard of. And it asks the hearer of the story to consider if God actually did that in the real world, would the people accept it? Jonah would rather die than live with the tension. Progressives have seen Conservative Evangelicals lead LGBTQ children to death, driving them to suicide or homelessness, and adults to a lifetime of love-denial. To progressive Jonahs, Ninevah is full of Conservative Evangelicals who make the conscious choice to revel in their spoils of megachurches, money, and political power propped up by exclusive theology. Doctrinal differences are no moral equivalency for the physical, emotional, and spiritual harm done to LGBTQ persons. What is God doing? Is God doing a new thing through the Reconciling Ministries Network? Are we in a better place now than we were a year ago? Is God doing a new thing through the Uniting Methodists? Are they the livable lukewarm water between two dualistic approaches, hot and cold, that do not see a church with both waters together? Or are they the silencing white moderate that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr warned us about? How do you know? And either way, how are we called to engage? How are we called to engage? Is the tipping point here with full inclusion in our grasp? Do the political power and voter numbers bear out that sentiment beyond our anecdotal, regional evidence? If those both are true and supportable, how are we called to engage those who do not fit within this tribe? Or is God not doing a new thing at all? Are we called to reflect culture and divide into Churches of Sameness, a Demilitarized Zone between them, where both sides can live into their dream, and neither is sent to convert the other again? Is that the dream? Those are tough questions. But the worst is yet to come. Most difficult of all: Or will we be stuck in our tribe, the one that is, truthfully, right, that we fail to see it? Will the Perfect keep us blinded from seeing the Good? In the meantime, thoughts? Jeremy Smith is a United Methodist clergyperson who blogs about faith, young clergy issues, technology, internet theory, and geeky topics. [Click here to learn more.](#) You may reprint without permission but with attribution.

### Chapter 6 : Reflections on Jonah: God's Mercy |

*Running Away, Reflection on Jonah 1 Things are not going well in Nineveh, but Nineveh is a long way away. And foreigners live there. Foreigners who do not.*

Perhaps because of the fascinating story of him being swallowed by a whale. But what we may easily forget is why Jonah was swallowed by the whale. It was because he heard God call him to a particular mission in life and he ran as fast as he could the other way. He did all he could to avoid his calling. But God was relentless. In the end, God won and Jonah went to Nineveh to preach. The best part is that the people of Nineveh listened to him and changed their lives! Imagine what would have happened if Jonah would have just listened to God from the very beginning. It may have left us with much less of that fairytale-like story but it certainly would have saved Jonah and others a great amount of stress. He would not have had to endure the great storm at sea, the wrath of the crew on that ship, the distress of being thrown over the boat and the experience of being held captive in the belly of the whale for those three days. All this could have been avoided if he would have just listened to God from the very beginning. The truth is that Jonah did endure all of these difficulties. And though we may be tempted to judge him for that and shake our finger at him, we may want to be careful. Why would God do this? Most likely for our sake in that Jonah becomes a great example for us. God does not give up on us. He does not simply throw us away the moment we turn from Him. Instead, our denial of Him only makes His resolve to pursue us all the greater. He takes our brokenness, our lack of resolve, our failings and weaknesses and uses them for His glory and His perfect plan. Reflect, today, on whether you are discouraged in life and feel like you have failed in following the will of God for your life. If so, then the message of Jonah is clear. God has not given up on His plan for you and He has not lost hope. Lord, You never give up on me. You never lose hope. Give me the grace to change, to listen and to respond. Use my weakness and brokenness and let Your strength and grace shine through.

**Chapter 7 : Reflections: Reflections on Jonah 3**

*But if Jonah being three days in the belly of a fish is a metaphor for Christ being dead for three days prior to resurrection, then perhaps the metaphor of the fish's belly and death is applicable and operating in the original narrative of Jonah as well.*

Reflections is based on my personal devotional journals from a daily practice of reading through the Bible chapter by chapter. The city was so big that it took three days just to walk through it. After walking for a day, Jonah warned the people, "Forty days from now, Nineveh will be destroyed! Then everyone in the city, no matter who they were, dressed in sackcloth. When the king of Nineveh heard what was happening, he also dressed in sackcloth; he left the royal palace and sat in dust. Then he and his officials sent out an order for everyone in the city to obey. None of you or your animals may eat or drink a thing. Each of you must wear sackcloth, and you must even put sackcloth on your animals. Chapter 3 picks up this theme of repentance and deliverance with Nineveh. Go to the great city of Nineveh. So, as verse 3 tells us, he got up and went to Nineveh without further delay. What happens when he got to Nineveh is an amazing account. First of all, Nineveh was "an extremely large city. Though it would not be accurate to compare geographic size to population, Nineveh, no doubt, had a sizable population as well. Jonah simply began to walk through the city and proclaim the message that "In 40 days Nineveh will be over thrown. Would I pay much attention to a stranger from another country who showed up and began to preach doom? Adding to the amazement of this repentance by the Ninevites is the reputation these Assyrians had for being a cruel and violent people. We have to wonder if God had prepared their hearts in some way to hear this message. It seems that as Jonah walked through the city proclaiming his message of destruction that the people responded immediately, proclaiming a fast and dressing in sackcloth as a sign of their repentance. People from "the greatest to the least" responded in this manner to his message. Eventually word got to the king and he issued a decree for everyone to do what they were already doing - to dress in sackcloth and to fast. However, his decree also included for them to "call out earnestly to God" and to turn from their evil ways and from "the violence they were doing. First, I find it amazing that the king, without hesitation, responded in the same manner as the people. Secondly, it was amazing that the king openly acknowledged the evil ways and violence of the people. I find it of interest that he did not have to define what the evil ways were from which they must turn. We legislate laws in our nations in part to define what we consider to be right and wrong. Here the king legislated through his decree that they were to turn from evil and violence, but he did not define what that meant. Do we not inherently know what is evil? In reading this we wonder how genuine their repentance might have been. It seems so incredible for a people to immediately respond to a message of this nature they have heard for the first time, and from a stranger who has earned no credibility with them. Our clue to the genuineness of their actions, however, is provided in the last verse of the chapter. And He did not do it.

### Chapter 8 : The Wrath of Jonah: A reflection on anger, forgiveness, and letting go | Held In The Light

*Jonah is instructed to go to a great city, he flees and there is a great storm, great fish, etc. God does great things. In contrast, the key word associated with Jonah, is down. He went down to Joppa, down into the sea, down into the belly of a great fish.*

Reflections is based on my personal devotional journals from a daily practice of reading through the Bible chapter by chapter. You are a kind and merciful God, and you are very patient. Now let me die! He sat under the shelter, waiting to see what would happen to Nineveh. Jonah was very happy to have the vine, but early the next morning the LORD sent a worm to chew on the vine, and the vine dried up. Jonah was ready to die, and he shouted, "I wish I were dead! You are concerned about a vine that you did not plant or take care of, a vine that grew up in one night and died the next. In that city of Nineveh there are more than a hundred twenty thousand people who cannot tell right from wrong, and many cattle are also there. We return to the question we have asked of this book all along, "What is the message in this for Israel? All of us tend to see clearly the faults of others while being blind to our own, and so it was with Israel, and Jonah was demonstrating this attitude very well. He was not so gracious in his thoughts concerning the Ninevites. So much so, that the Ninevites believed his message and repented of their evil ways and violence. He could deliver that message convincingly because that is how he felt. But what Jonah feared came to pass. But they did repent and now he knew what would happen. He knew God to be merciful and compassionate and that He would relent from sending disaster once the Ninevites repented. Another aspect of this repentance by the Ninevites and relenting of disaster by God is that it placed Israel in a bad light. It now highlighted their own evil ways and violence and unwillingness to repent. But now the Assyrians had repented and changed their ways sufficiently to convince God they were genuine. Jonah was very pleased with this and became attached to it. Then, also overnight, God sent a worm followed by a scorching east wind that destroyed the plant. Then Jonah was so upset he wanted to die. Again, Jonah played his part very well, demonstrating the attitude of Israel. But he felt it rather unfair of God to take this blessing away. Most of us are prone to ask, "Why me, Lord? But we never ask, "Why me, Lord? If he could be so concerned about a plant he did not cause to grow and that he had enjoyed for only a short time, why should God not have concern for a people to whom He had given life and who included those who were innocent of evil as well as animals?"

### Chapter 9 : Welcome to New Life: Reflection on Jonah

*Reflection on Jonah: Made of the Same Stuff. Humility is the key to ethical Christian actions. Jonah's view of himself was the core of every one of his stumbles in following God.*

Print Today is the day to tell the story of Jonah, for this is its only appearance in the regular lectionary cycle. However, the story of Jonah is a whole piece and needs to be told from beginning to end. One key to preaching Jonah is to not get wrapped up in historical concerns. If Jonah is a historical figure, the telling of his story is not for historical purposes. Jonah is called out by God to go and prophesy to the enemy. We should not stand off on the sidelines and judge, but think of how we would feel in the same situation. I cannot imagine a worse position! We are not told why Jonah runs. Maybe he feared for his life, or perhaps he thought the enemy did not deserve to be offered a chance. Either way, Jonah leaves town on the first boat out. We all know that Jonah ends up in the fish, and it is only here that Jonah finally does something. He calls out to God; however his words are ones of a psalm that does not exactly fit the situation. Even inside the fish, Jonah does not use his own words to speak to God! Deep irony for someone whose job it is to speak to others. But it appears that Jonah only learned a very small part of his lesson. He goes to Nineveh alright, but gives the wimpiest prophecy ever recorded. Would we be any more enthusiastic? These folks are mortal enemies and the chance of instant death is great. The response of the people, like the sailors in chapter 2, is hyperbolic. The king declares that everyone and every beast fast and be covered with sackcloth and ashes. Imagine the picture; all the people and all the cows and all the sheep fasting with sackcloth tied to their backs! The image of the enemy is transformed from one of fierce occupier to comic supplicant. Just as God has transformed their hearts, their appearance is markedly changed. Jonah should be ecstatic; he is the greatest prophet of all! With a couple of words, he turns a whole nation to God. He should be headed for the evangelism hall of fame. The NRSV plays down his anger with the words "this was very displeasing to Jonah and he became angry" 4: The Hebrew reads roughly, "it was evil to Jonah, a great evil, and his anger burned. He tells God why he ran, "for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and ready to relent from punishing" 4: Jonah is angry at God for the very attributes that Israel has always depended on for its own salvation Exodus God speaks to Jonah, trying to explain, but the book ends without resolution and Jonah goes away mad. How willing are we to let God be God? God will be forgiving because that is the very heart of God. So the story of this old prophet is much more than a whale tale.