

The Book of Jonah

Unique Among the Prophets	The book of Jonah is primarily written in the <i>3rd person</i> . That's not normally the case prophetic with materials in the Bible. Most of the book is also <i>narrative</i> . That's why most people in the pew are familiar with the content of the book. Both the 3 rd person and the narrative style make this book a unique personal account.
From a Unique Place	The writer of 2 Kings 14:25 informs us that Jonah, the son of Amittai, was from a town called Gath-helper. That's also a very important piece of information. This town was right next to Nazareth, making him a Galilean. That not only means he is one of the few prophets that came from the Northern Kingdom of Israel, he's also from Jesus' location. That's also important because only four writing prophets are mentioned by Jesus by name: Isaiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and Jonah
With a Unique Reference	Jonah receives more than just a mention by Jesus. Jesus identifies himself with the prophet: <i>40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Mt 12:40).</i> The Book of Jonah, therefore, is an important book in terms of seeing how prophecy unfolds in the Bible. For it gives readers a glimpse of Jesus' death and resurrection hundreds of years before they occurred.
With a Unique Audience	The key to the Book of Jonah centers around one word in the book: <i>Nineveh</i> . It's the place where God calls him. It's the place he doesn't want to go. It's the place where he ends up. It's the place where repentance and revival breaks out. And it's the place Jonah still wishes God will destroy even after revival. Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. At the time of Jonah's prophecy during the reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BC), Assyria was a ruthless adversary of Israel. They not only persecuted the people of God, they slaughtered them and will continue to for 30 years after Jonah preached to them. Jonah doesn't want to go to Nineveh because he wants God to destroy Nineveh, the epicenter of Assyrian culture. The last thing he wants is for a revival to break out. The last thing Jonah wants is for the Assyrians to experience the love and mercy of God because <u>they were unmerciful</u> .
With a Unique Theme	There are two major themes in the Book of Jonah: (1) God is compassionate, slow to anger, abounds in love, and desires <u>all</u> to come to repentance. (2) God's nature creates problems for his people when his mercies extend towards individuals who persecute and kill them.
With a Unique Ending	It's the only book of the Bible that ends with a question. It's also a very important question that deals with the essence of what God is up to in the world, even when it is unsettling for us in its implications: <i>10 But the Lord said, "You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. 11 And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?" (Jonah 4:10-11)</i>

Chapter 1-2

Key Subject: Jonah	Key Place: The Great Sea	First Commission and Disobedience
Call	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." (1:1-2)	
Sin	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. (1:3)	
Consequences	(1) The Great Sea: ⁴ 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	

	<p>sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.” (1:4-6)</p> <p>(2) The Belly of a Whale: ¹³ Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. ¹⁴ Then they cried out to the Lord, “Please, Lord, do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, Lord, have done as you pleased.” ¹⁵ Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. ¹⁶ At this the men greatly feared the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows to him. ¹⁷ Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. (1:13-17)</p>
Prayer	<p>“In my distress I called to the Lord, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. ³ You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. ⁴ I said, ‘I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ ⁵ The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. ⁶ To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, Lord my God, brought my life up from the pit. ⁷ “When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. ⁸ “Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them. ⁹ But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the Lord.’” (2:1-9)</p>
Deliverance	<p>¹⁰ And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land. (2:10)</p>

Chapter 3-4		
Key Subject: Ninevah	Key Place: The Great City	Second Commission and Results
Call	<p>Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ² “Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.” (3:1-2)</p>	
Sin and Repentance	<p>³ Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. ⁴ Jonah began by going a day’s journey into the city, proclaiming, “Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.” ⁵ The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. ⁶ When Jonah’s warning 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. (3:3-6)</p>	
Consequences	<p>¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened. (3:10)</p>	
Prayer (In Anger)	<p>But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord, “Isn’t this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. ³ Now, Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.” (4:1-3)</p>	
Results	<p>(1) Produced Hostility in Jonah: ⁵ Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. ⁶ Then the Lord God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷ But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, “It would be better for me to die than to live.”</p> <p>(2) Three Questions from God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Is it right for you to be angry? (b) Is it right for you to be angry about the plant? (c) Should I not be concerned about that great city? 	

