

# Jonah: A Missionary God

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The table of contents, which you will find on the next page, is meant to help organize our thoughts. In the case of this book the chapters and units of thought, or stories, largely line up. As you look at the table you will see some of the major themes that the writer drew out through the book.

This is a book about cross-cultural evangelism. God used Jonah to tell the sailors on the ship as well as the people of Nineveh about the God who had made both land and sea, and would judge their sin, but would show mercy if they repented.

It tells us about God's dealings with both the missionary and the people to which he is sent by God. At this point in their story the king and people of Nineveh respond positively by believing and repenting. Jonah did not respond positively to the Lord. God had to take him through a crisis before he would obey. Then after he obeyed and Nineveh repented he was angry because God had shown mercy to the city.

Do people all over the world have issues? They do. Do missionaries have issues? Yes, they do. Missionaries, for example, can forget that God has had mercy on them, and if they forget this, God can take them through crises to remind them how important their personal salvation really is! God had Jonah hurled into the depths of the sea where he was in solitary confinement in the belly of the fish. He had to cry out for salvation. He remembered what it was like to be saved. Then he was ready to go preach salvation to Nineveh.

The feeling that slowly creeps into our hearts, that we as Christians and missionaries are all okay, is a subtle lie. We also needed to be saved. We also needed God's incredible mercy. No one is saved by their own merits. We who have our roots in Europe can easily forget our history. Our forefathers were idol worshippers, and looked to the stars and worshipped the sun. They even made human sacrifices? They drank beer from the skulls of their enemies. Many Europeans and their cousins in America are returning to idols and the celestial bodies to worship them instead of the Creator.

In my family my father was the first one to decide to follow Jesus. Then his sister believed. Their parents then took that step to trust Christ as Savior and Lord. Then some of the siblings followed. Were there ever believers in Christ in my family generations before us? I do not know. On my mother's side there were very religious people who went to church and even paid for their places in a pew in the church. But they did not understand what it was to make a personal commitment to the Lord Jesus, to think about him and live for him every day.

But they moved to another town and began to attend another church and there the pastor explained from the Bible the personal relationship they could have with God through Jesus Christ. They changed from being religious to knowing God in a personal, heartfelt, and obedient way. They began to send out missionaries from that church in increasing numbers. People were sent all over the world to share the Good News of Jesus and to help the sick and needy.

The table of contents you will find on the next page in order to keep the table altogether on the same page.

## Jonah: A Missionary God

Starting the Mission	Restarting the Mission
<p>Chapter 1 <i>Jonah in the Ship with the Sailors</i></p> <p>Jonah runs from God and His command to preach against Nineveh.</p> <p><b>Theme: God is the God of the Cosmos</b></p> <p>God brings a storm upon Jonah in the ship.</p> <p>The culprit, Jonah, is thrown into the sea and it calms. The Sailors worship and make vows</p>	<p>Chapter 3 <i>Jonah in Nineveh with the King and People</i></p> <p>Jonah obeys and preaches in Nineveh.</p> <p><b>Theme: God is the God of National Salvation</b></p> <p>Jonah warns of coming destruction.</p> <p>Sinful Nineveh experiences a people movement. From the king on down the city repents.</p>
<p>Chapter 2 <i>Jonah in the Fish alone</i></p> <p>Jonah cries to the Lord in his personal distress.</p> <p><b>Theme: God is the God of Personal Salvation</b></p> <p>Jonah offers sacrifices of praise and renews vows</p>	<p>Chapter 4 <i>Jonah under the Vine (Gourd) alone</i></p> <p>Jonah is angry that God does not destroy Nineveh.</p> <p><b>Theme: God is the God who is concerned for His creatures</b></p> <p>Nineveh and its inhabitants both people and animals are objects of God's compassion</p>