

The Book of Jonah

Its place in the OT

- Unlike the others in several ways
 - Prophesy does not come true
 - Its not about Israel
 - It appears to be quite late in post-exilic period
 - Mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25
- False distinction of Major vs Minor prophets

Ch. 1 Jonah's disobedience and flight

- Role of Nineveh, the Capitol of Assyria
- Tarshish: Spain - the very opposite direction
- Jonah fast asleep: note Jesus being asleep in the storm
- The crew: become even more terrified when they realize which God they are dealing with
- Jonah: prophesies truly about his removal and they repent (foreshadowing)
- Indeed they sort of convert

Ch 2: a song of thanksgiving - typical in Hebrew Lit - commits to memory

- Many parts of this Psalm are quotations from other Psalms in the Psalter
- It is a thanksgiving for God sending the fish to save him
 - No word of repentance here and on land he is cantankerous as ever
 - He prays to God in the Temple: God can still hear him
 - Like many people in exile he is far from Jerusalem
- God is in full control: He commands the fish to belch Jonah up

Ch 3 : The arrival at Nineveh

- Capital OF Assyrian, population of 120,000 (PD is 53K, Cochella 430K)
- He gets well into the city before he starts preaching, one third the way
- The King and the people repent in sackcloth and ashes
- Even the animals repent!
- Turning from the violence : that's a big tum for these guys
- Most important verse: God repented of the evil He threatened
- This is the key theme: God repents

Chapter 4

- Jonah is enraged at the mercy of God
- Like sulky workers in the vineyard
- Note "repent" appears three times

"Take my life": Jonah is probably humiliated at the no show destruction
Builds a hut - the sun is blistering hot in Iraq, up to 120f.
Gourd; only citation of this word in OT (compare: Joseph's coat)
God's Final dialogue with Jonah: God is more merciful than men and
women, and for all human beings regardless of ethnicity
People, it must be admitted can be pretty stupid ("who know not their
right..." But God judges the heart as well as action ("forgive them Father..."

*God is in charge of everything, even fish and worms

*He controls all events

*He is the God of all the nations, not just Israel

*He is merciful to all even to the evil (Assyria) and even at the last moment

*One would be well advised to do His Willthe first time He asks

Never delay doing His Will

*God is absolutely sovereign...He can even change His mind

Two words are relevant here in regard to "repent"

For men: "Teshuvah" meaning turning ones back on evil towards God

Sin disrupts the universe, teshuvah repairs that breach

Maimonides: "Arise from your slumber! Search your ways and return
in *teshuva* and remember your Creator!" Teshuvah is often public and includes
confession of sin to God, healing the crimes one has done

For God: Teshuvah is not identical with Nacham, (used in Jonah for "repent"
to: be sorry for and to comfort one, to relent of something uncomfortable: this is
more private inside

Nacham appears 57 times in OT and is trans "repent" 41 times normally in
reference to God: this is used in reference to God and it means relent