

WEEK 5

created by the Bible Project

UNIQUE AMONG THE PROPHETS:
AMOS OF BERKELEY

THE LORD SAYS
MURDER

STORY ABOUT A PROPHET

JONAH'S ONE OTHER APPEARANCE
in the OLD TESTAMENT:

GOD'S FAVOR IS WITH YOU!

JEROBAM II (REALLY BAD KING)

AMOS 6:13-14

NOT GOD'S JUSTICE IS AGAINST YOU!

PROPHET
WHO REBELS

BIGAN SAILORS
WHO REBEL

POWERFUL KING
WHO HUMILES

EVIL COUS
REPEL!

JONAH

THE SUBVERSIVE STORY OF A REBELLIOUS PROPHET WHO HATES GOD FOR LOVING HIS ENEMIES

DISTINCT NARRATIVE STYLE:
Satire

ESCAPE THE FLAVOR AND TASTE

THIS BOOK IS TRYING TO MESS WITH YOU:
ARE YOU OKAY WITH GOD LOVING YOUR ENEMIES?

THE BOOK OF JONAH

AREN'T YOU GLAD GOD LOVES HIS ENEMIES?

1 JONAH AND THE SAILORS

GO TO NINEVEH AND PREACH AGAINST ITS EVIL (1:2)

TARSHISH

WHY DOES HE RUN...??

I WORSHIP THE BOARD, WHO MADE THE SEA AND THE LAND...

THIS SHOULD WORK...

2 JONAH'S 1ST PRAYER OF REPENTANCE (...SORT OF)

NOTHING TECHNICALLY REPENTS, BUT... THINKS GOD FOR NOT ABANDONING HIM AND... PROMISES TO OBEY FROM THIS POINT ON.

BLECH

THIS THING ISN'T BATH!

3 JONAH AND THE NINEVITES

GO TO NINEVEH AND PREACH WHAT I TELL YOU (3:2)

NINEVEH HAS TURNED

FORTY MORE DAYS AND NINEVEH SHALL BE OVERTURNED!

IS THIS PROPHETIC SABOTAGE???

FORGIVE US, OH GOD!!

NEVERTHELESS...

A SHORT GOD SERMON

- ★ NINEVEH'S SIN
- ★ HOW TO RESPOND
- ★ GOD!!

WHAT HAPPENED: "TRANSFORMED" "CHANGED" (SEE 1 SAMUEL 10:6)

"OVERTURNED"

JONAH'S MEANING: "OVER THROWN" "DESTROYED" (SEE GENESIS 19:21)

4 JONAH'S 2ND PRAYER A CRITICISM OF GOD'S MERCY

JONAH IS YOUR ANGER JUSTIFIED? (4:4)

YES, JUST LET ME DIE...

I KNEW YOU ARE COMPASSIONATE AND LOVE TO FORGIVE! (EXODUS 34:6)

JUST KILL ME NOW...

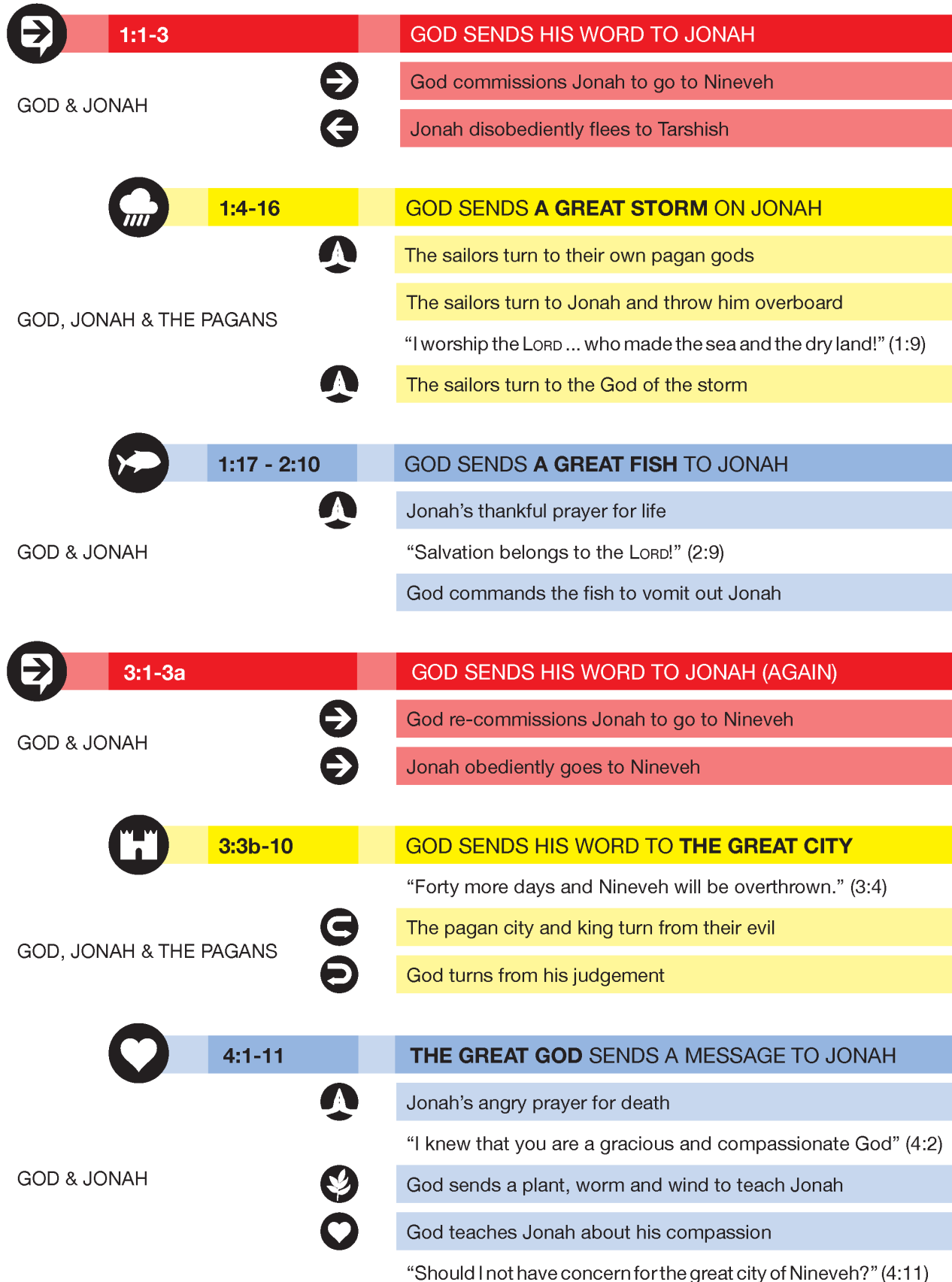
AREN'T HUMANS MORE VALUABLE THAN VINCS?

SHOULDN'T I BE CONCERNED ABOUT NINEVEH, THAT GREAT CITY?

THE END?

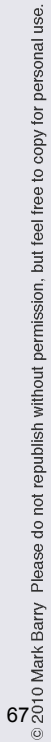
JONAH STRUCTURE

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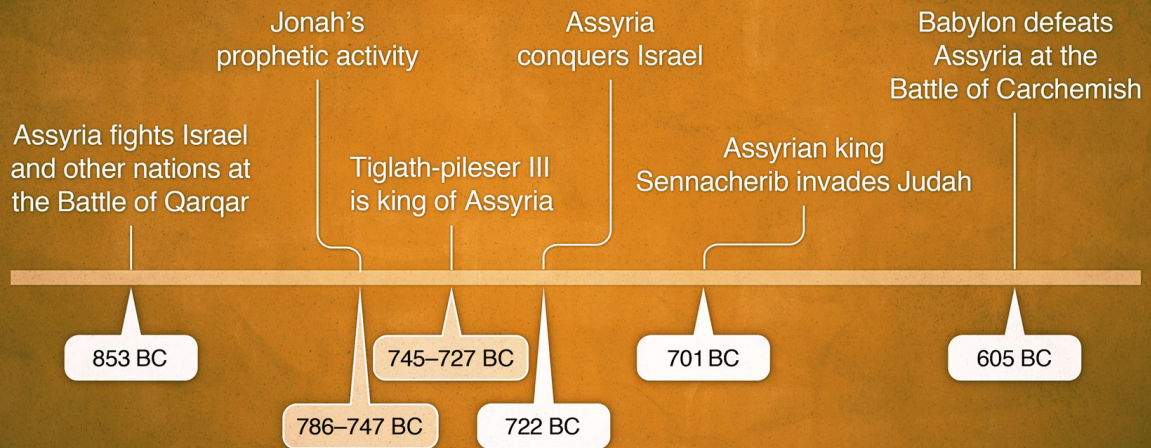
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TIMELINE

JONAH

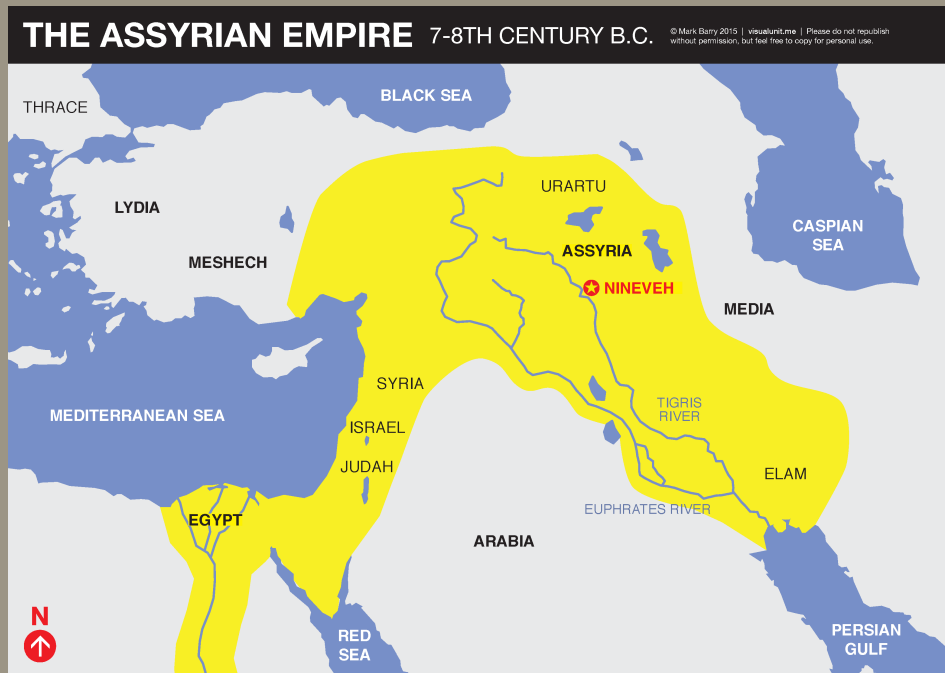


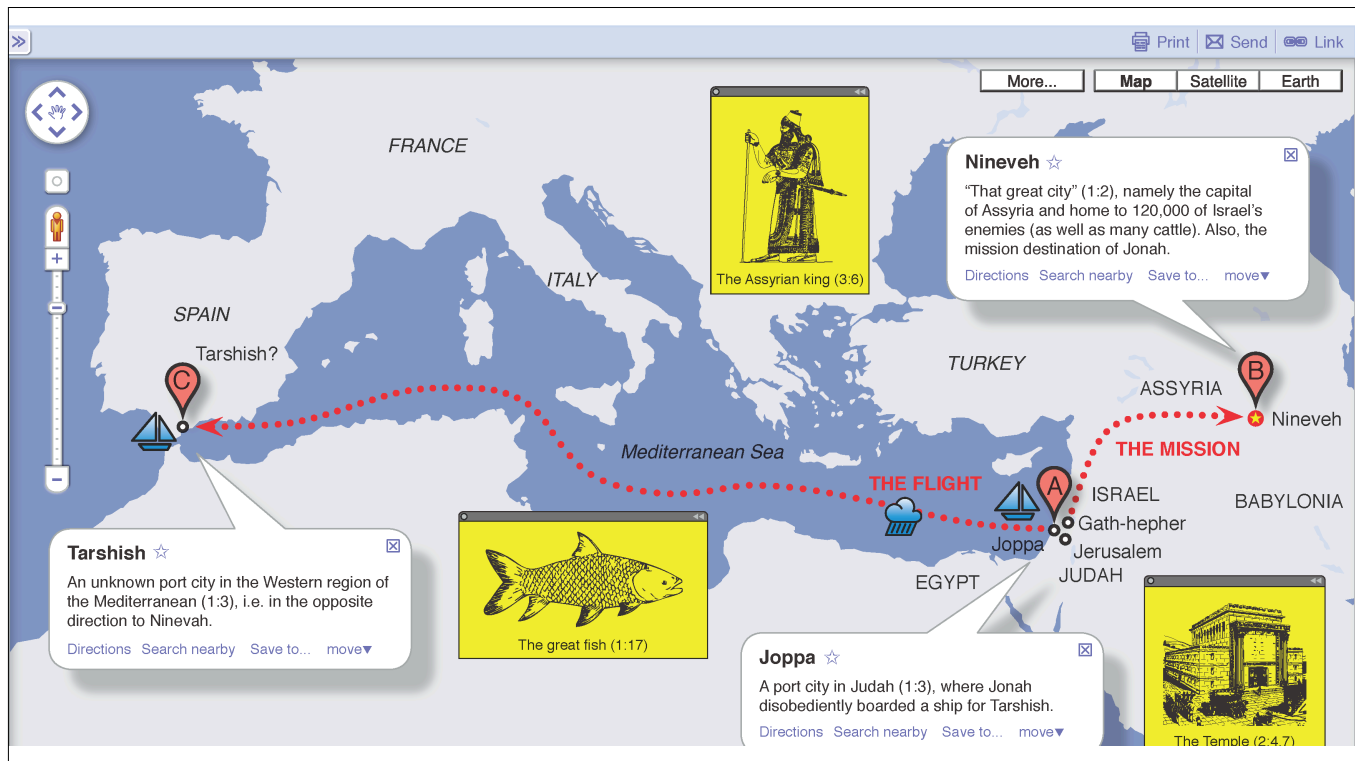
*All dates are approximate



JONAH: PROPHET TO ASSYRIA

- Jonah lived in the 8th century, and the narrative is set against the first half of the 8th century BC.
- This was a great time of optimism for the northern kingdom of Israel as they flourished, particularly under Jeroboam II (real situation: see Amos, Hosea, Isaiah).
- While the Assyrian Empire had been mighty in the 9th century, it had entered into decline.
- This allowed Jeroboam II to regain much of the territory that had belonged to Israel during the time of David and Solomon.
- While the Assyrians were not forgotten, they were not an imminent threat to Israel at the time.
- By the close of the century, Assyria would be the most potent political force the world would have known, and Israel would cease to exist.





PURPOSE AND MESSAGE

- The message of the book centers on the message that it is God's sovereign will to bestow gracious acts of compassion on whoever he will
 - This will be later echoed by Jeremiah *"If at any time I declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, and if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I intended to do to it"* (18:7-8)
- Important to note that their attempted act of self-preservation was not enough to warrant their deliverance, but God honored a small step in the right direction.
- While they were still under the threat of doom, it was no longer imminent.
- This truth is seen in Jonah's life: Jonah's hut was incapable of serving its function; it was really the plant that provided the shade. When the plant was gone, the hut did nothing to protect Jonah.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

- Highly structured.
- Organized in two parallel halves, with 1-2 roughly equivalent to 3-4.
 - Each starts with a call from the Lord and a response from Jonah
 - Then Jonah encounters pagans who are forced to consider the influence of Jonah's God.
 - Jonah is forced into a confrontation with God because of his attitude.
 - God's compassion highlights the end of each section.

REPENTENCE AND CONVERSION

- Repentance is not the same as conversion in this situation.
- Nothing suggests that they were actually introduced to Yahweh or adopted a monotheistic faith.
- While Jonah 3:5 affirms that they believed God, this is simply the fact that they believed what Jonah threatened would come to pass.
- 3:10 makes it clear that Yahweh relented on the basis of their deeds and not the basis of their faith.
- Their response was a typical Assyrian response—counting on ritual to appease an angry deity. This helps us understand some of Jonah's skepticism.
- However, Jesus did have this to say about the difference between the Assyrians and the Pharisees:
 - *The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. (Luke 11:32)*

THEME: THEODICY

- **THEODICY:** Justifying the ways of God.
- Common in the OT, but not usually seen in the ways we see it in Jonah
- Typically, the Israelites are concerned about why the righteous were suffering.
- In Jonah, the question that the Israelites often asked was, "Do you have the right to be angry?" Here it is God who asks Jonah the question.
- Then the question is reversed, for it concerns God's leniency toward the wicked.

THEME: THEODICY

- The book resolves the question by affirming God's right not to be angry or, better, to be "slow to anger".
- His justice is not negated by offering extensions of grace. However, God is not obligated to provide extension endlessly. His just punishment would eventually be carried out:
- This answer is also given in Habakkuk and reflected in the NT:
 - Romans 3:25 "*whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*"
 - Matt 20:15 "*Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?*"

THEME: ANGER

- The anger of God is assumed to have begun the whole sequence of events in the book of Jonah.
- The wickedness of Ninevah inspired the wrath of God to move into action.
- Jonah affirms that God is slow to anger (4:2), while he himself was not.
 - Remember Exodus 34:6-7: *The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.*
 - Jonah, like Joel, uses the term "relenting from disaster" (from Ex 34:7). He knew that God would always try to find a reason to show mercy if he saw repentance. Jonah did not want this because the Assyrians were so hated.
- Righteous anger is balanced by compassion, and God must be granted the freedom to exercise either.
- God's sovereignty must be viewed in relation to His compassion.

THEME: COMPASSION

- A significant focus of Jonah is the compassion of God and his sovereign right to perform acts of kindness.
- Jonah's mention in the book of Kings introduces an instance of God's compassion (where God shows undeserved compassion on Israel by fostering the wicked King Jeroboam II).
- **Jonah 1-2** provides an example by which Jonah, as an individual, was prepared to comprehend and accept God's sovereign right to act compassionately.
- **2 Kings 14:25-27** provides a national context by which Israel can understand God's sovereign compassion
- In Jonah, Jonah himself, along with Ninevah and Israel, is identified as the object of God's activity.
- God reserves the right to be compassionate, and he delights in performing those acts of compassion.
 - **EXAMPLE:** the postponement of punishment in 2 Kings 22, where Josiah's return to the LORD and his reforms were an occasion for God's grace

TRANSITION INTO CLASSICAL PROPHECY

- Remember that Isaiah is our transition prophet between pre-classical and classical prophecy.
 - **Pre-classical:** Elijah/Elisha, military advice, pronouncement of rebuke or blessing, usually to a king.
- **Classical:** GOD IS ANGRY AT THEIR DISOBEDIENCE
 - Based on the covenant relationship between Yahweh and his people, no ANE counterpart.
 - Announced God's agenda for the people.
 - Rebuke concerning the current condition of society.
 - Warnings of captivity, destruction, and exile
 - Calls for justice and repentance.

