

## Repentance of Nineveh

### **Matthew 12:38–41 KJV 1900**

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<sup>40</sup> For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

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### **Jonah 3:4–5 KJV 1900**

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<sup>5</sup> So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

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## 1. Second Guessing God

### **Jonah 1:1-3 KJV 1900**

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, <sup>2</sup> Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. <sup>3</sup> But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

### Jonah’s Travel Plans

God said, “Arise, go to Nineveh.” Jonah was to go there immediately or with no delay.

God called Nineveh a “great city” and “their wickedness is come up before me.” As with Sodom in Genesis.

Jonah was to denounce the city!

Jonah, as if he had not understood where he was to go, without asking for clarification, deliberately went the wrong way.

Later, in chapter 4, Jonah said that he had told God why he didn't want to go.

Jonah intended to run away from God!

Jonah planned to go west by sea all the way to Spain instead of the shorter overland journey to Nineveh.

Jonah's arrogance depicted that of the Jews, who refused to be God's example to all the nations.

There is little prophecy (1 verse 3:4, "yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown"), and a lot of narrative. The entire book is with satire.

The writer exaggerates many things. -The long trip to Tarshish. The "day's journey into the city." The unusual fact that the lot fell on Jonah as the one guilty of causing the storm.

Many things are quite comical: The goard vine spring for a day and dying the next. God seeming to tease Jonah about his desire to die.

Jonah tried to flee to a place where God was not. But he learned that God was everywhere. [Jonah 2:7](#)

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## 2. God's Exaggerated response to the excesses of Jonah

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The sailors found it impossible to row against the wind.

Jonah was sound asleep.

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Jonah's confession

**Jonah 1:9 KJV 1900**

<sup>9</sup> And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry *land*.

This really caused the sailors to be worried!

They took things into their own hands.

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<sup>15</sup> So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

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God rescued Jonah with the great fish.

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[Jonah's insincere prayer \(chapter 2\)](#)

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God gave Jonah a second chance

[3. The entire city repented and trusted God because of Jonah's one sentence sermon.](#)

This unlikely event shows the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

**John 16:8 KJV 1900**

<sup>8</sup> And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

The city was preserved for another 15 years, until the time of the prophet Nahum.

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Jonah's displeasure displayed.

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God's final lesson for a self-centered prophet.

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<sup>11</sup> And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and *also* much cattle?

Conclusion for us today:

### **Galatians 6:7-8 KJV 1900**

<sup>7</sup> Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

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Bill Johnson / General Adult

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