



COMING UP... APR 14: Amos APR 21: Hosea part 1 APR 28: Hosea part 2 MAY 5: 2 Kings part 3 (chs. 15-17) MAY 12 NO CLASS (*Mother's Day*) MAY 19: Joel

JONAH SUMMARIZED IN A WORD OR PHRASE: "Hard-Hearted"

THE BASICS ...

Who: Jonah ("dove") son of Amittai ("truth")

When: pre-exilic, approximately 790-750 BC

Where: to Israel (regarding the Assyrians)

Why: "Jonah's purpose in writing was to show Israel God's concern for the nations of the world. Israel was to be God's light to the world and the mediator of God's blessing to the Gentiles." –Charles Dyer and Eugene Merrill

LESSON THEME: Evangelism is a matter of the heart

Jonah

(see map, p. 3)

Jonah refuses God's calling (1)

He disobeys God's Word

He defies God's will

He runs from God

Jonah repents (2)

God mercifully rescues him from death in a fish

He repents and vows to offer sacrifices

He's grateful for God's mercy to him

Jonah reluctantly fulfills his calling (3)

He goes to the Assyrians and shares the minimum he can of God's Word with them (8 words!)

Unbelievably, they repent!

Jonah is angry (4)

He's angry at God's mercy and compassion

His hard-heartedness toward Gentiles is exposed

Hey Israel – Listen Up!

Chapter 1

Jonah, God's prophet ...

Hears God's Word and disobeys it

Knows God's will and defies it

Has no compassion for those Gentiles facing imminent death and destruction

The *Gentile* sailors, on the other hand ...

Are merciful to this unknown Jewish prophet

Hear from God's prophet and respond immediately

Seem to place themselves under the "fear of the Lord"

Chapter 2

Jonah, God's prophet, is grateful for God's merciful and undeserved deliverance after disobeying →

Chapter 3

Jonah, God's prophet ...

Reluctantly shares the bare minimum he has to with the condemned Assyrians, believing judgment for them is warranted and deserved

Observe ...

The Sailors

1:4 Crisis on the sea

1:14 Prayer to Yahweh

1:15b Deliverance from the storm

1:16 Sacrifice and vows offered to God

The Prophet

2:3-6a Crisis in the sea

2:2, 7 Prayer to Yahweh

2:6b Deliverance from drowning

2:9 Sacrifice and vows offered to God

Dr. John Hannah, ©1985 The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament

But the hated *Assyrians* ...

Repent upon their first hearing of God's Word!

Chapter 4

Jonah, God's prophet ...

Is exposed as self-righteous, merciless, spiritually insensitive, cold and calloused

The spiritually sensitive *Gentile* sailors and the hated *Assyrians* ...

Are revealed to be the spiritually sensitive ones who worship and rejoice in God's merciful deliverance

Will Jonah, God's prophet, and Israel ...

Learn that God's heart is exceedingly merciful, compassionate and interested in the lost and wayward?

APPLICATION: Evangelism is a matter of the heart

God's Heart for the World

Jonah 4:10-11 – to have compassion for the lost and wayward

Matthew 28:19-20 – to make disciples

"Go ..."

"While going ..."

To move toward those who're outside of Christ with His compassionate and merciful heart and share His Good News with them

Evangelism: A Matter of the Heart

Is your heart like Jonah's ...

Calloused?

Insensitive?

Judgmental?

Or just plain uncaring?

Or is it like God's ...

Merciful and compassionate toward the lost and wayward?

How's Your Heart?

Do you have a "Jonah" heart, or a broken heart like God's toward the lost and wayward?

Who's on your "3x1" prayer list?

Would you consider prayerfully approaching and inviting one of your non-Christian friends, neighbors or co-workers to church this year?

To know God, to be like God, is to share in His empathetic heartbeat for the lost

FOR NEXT TIME: _____

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YOUTUBE VIDEOS + HANDOUTS: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGhFjfAlhYpqC2XYXZJXiwut_8g7P3qhF

PODCAST: <https://feeds.transistor.fm/old-testament-survey>

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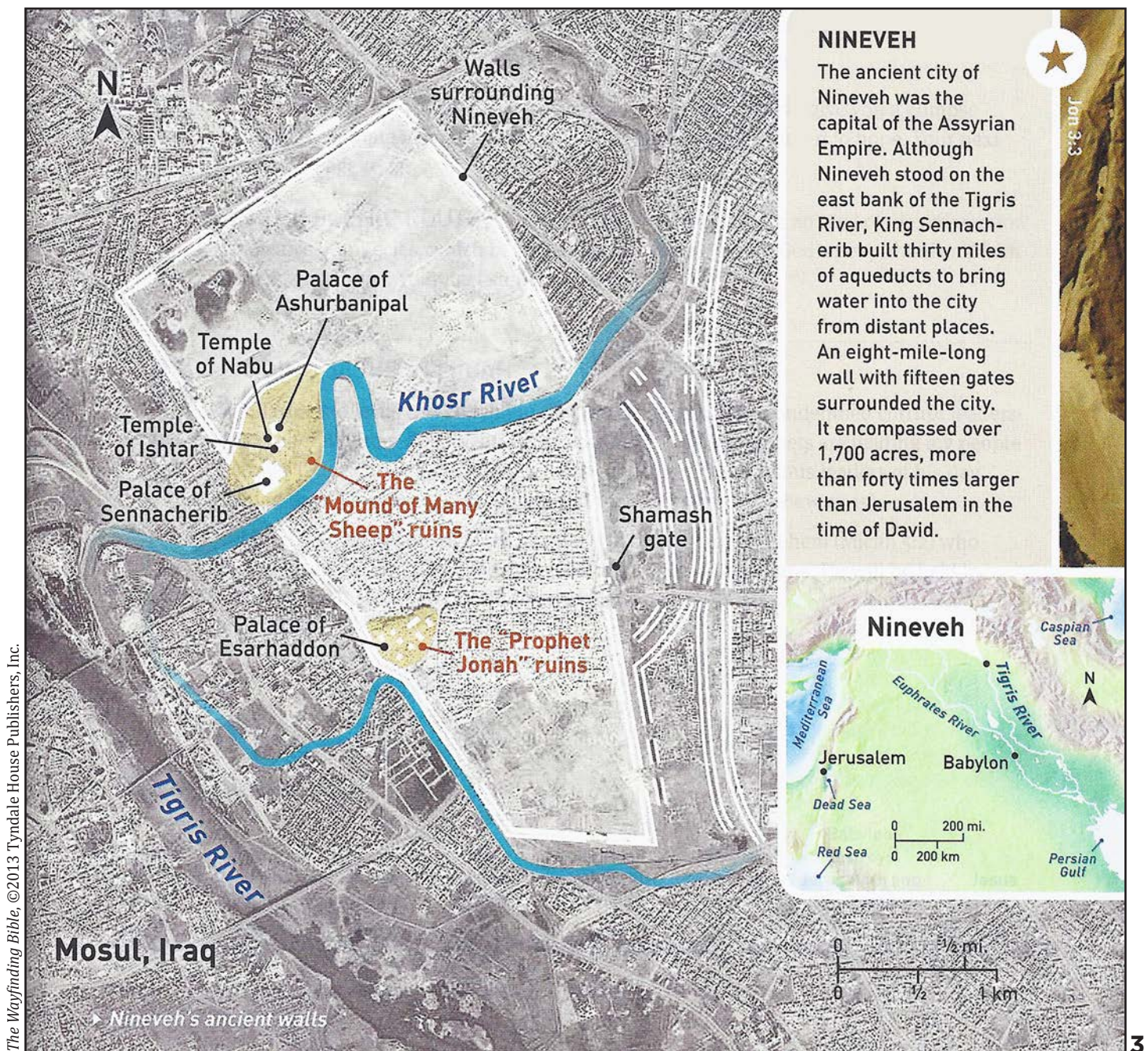
JONAH

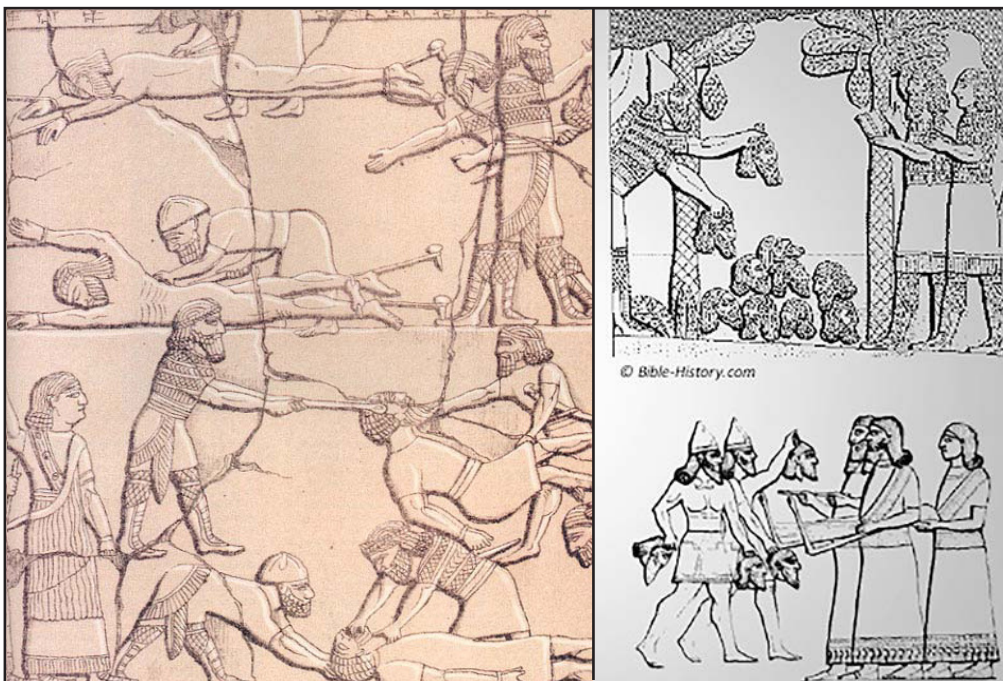
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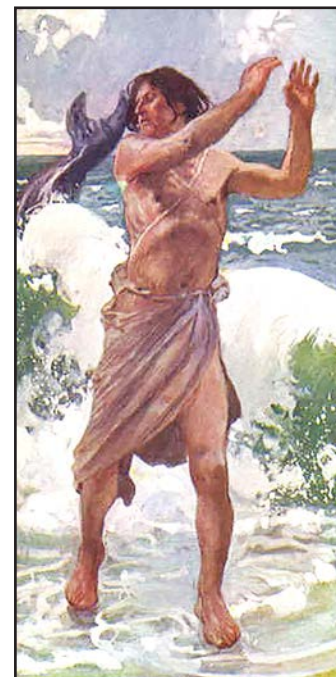
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Conforming to the will of God		Missing the heart of God	
"I won't go!"	"I will go."	"I'm here."	"I shouldn't have come."
Jonah's disobedience	Jonah's prayer to God	Nineveh's "obedience"	Jonah is rebuked by God
1:1 1:17	2:1 2:10	3:1 3:10	4:1 4:11





Stone relief of Elamites being tortured during the time of Ashurbanipal, King of Assyria. From the palace of Sennacherib (704-681 BC at Nineveh, now in the British Museum). Among the reliefs are pictures severed heads assembled in heaps. Two Elamites are seen fastened to the ground while their skin is flayed, while others are having their tongues pulled out. (British Museum)



"Jonah" by James Tissot

Assyria: Terrorists of the Ancient World

Assyrian national history, as it has been preserved for us in inscriptions and pictures, consists almost solely of military campaigns and battles. It is as gory and bloodcurdling a history as we know. After conquering northern Mesopotamia, Assyria's armies marched almost every year, ever expanding the Assyrian empire, the booty of their conquests financing their ever-greater exploits and dominion. It was from this time on that the Assyrians began to practice ever increasing cruelty and ruthlessness toward resisting foes.

Assyrian inscriptions and pictorial reliefs testify to the Assyrian treatment of those they conquered, their armies and rulers. In one case when a city resisted as long as possible instead of immediately submitting, King Ashurnasirpal (ruled 668-627 BC) proudly records his punishment: "I flayed as many nobles as had rebelled against me [and] draped their skins over the pile [of corpses]; some I spread out within the pile, some I erected on stakes upon the pile ... I flayed many right through my land [and] draped their skins over the walls."

The account was probably intended not only to describe what had happened, but also to frighten anyone who might dare to resist. To suppress his enemies was the king's divine task. Supported by the gods, he always had to be victorious in battle and to punish disobedient people: "I felled 50 of their fighting men with the sword, burnt 200 captives from them, [and] defeated in a battle on the plain 332 troops. ... With their blood I dyed the mountain red like red wool, [and] the rest of them the ravines [and] torrents of the mountain swallowed. I carried off captives [and] possessions from them. I cut off the heads of their fighters [and] built [therewith] a tower before their city. I burnt their adolescent boys [and] girls."

Ashurbanipal also boasted: "Their dismembered bodies I fed to the dogs, swine, wolves, and eagles, to the birds of heaven and the fish in the deep.... What was left of the feast of the dogs and swine, of their members which blocked the streets and filled the squares, I ordered them to remove from Babylon, Kutha and Sippar, and to cast them upon heaps." When Ashurbanipal didn't kill his captives he "pierced the lips (and) took them to Assyria as a spectacle for the people of my land."

A description of another conquest is even worse: "In strife and conflict I besieged [and] conquered the city. I felled 3,000 of their fighting men with the sword ... I captured many troops alive—I cut off of some their arms [and] hands; I cut off of others their noses, ears, [and] extremities. I gouged out the eyes of many troops. I made one pile of the living [and] one of heads. I hung their heads on trees around the city."

Biblical chronology places the story of Jonah the prophet between (793-753 BC). Given the accounts by the Assyrians of their ruthless cruelty, one can understand Jonah's reluctance and refusal to go there (see Jonah 1-4). It was an exceedingly dangerous assignment. But he eventually went, proclaiming to them a warning of coming destruction on account of their evil ways. But as the story goes, led by its king, the entire city repented, and so was spared. It is possible that this story occurred during the reign of Adadnirari III, for there is evidence of a monotheistic revolution in which the god Nabu appears to have been proclaimed the sole, or at least the principal, god, occurring in Assyria during his reign.

These depictions, verbal and visual, give a new reality to the Assyrian conquest of the northern kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C. and to Sennacherib's subsequent campaign into Judah in 701 B.C.

"Assyria must surely have among the worst press notices of any state in history. Babylon may be a byname for corruption, decadence and sin but the Assyrians and their famous rulers, with terrifying names like Shalmaneser, Tiglath-Pileser, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, rate in the popular imagination just below Adolf Hitler and Genghis Khan for cruelty, violence, and sheer murderous savagery."

—British historian Paul Kriwaczek

JONAH STRUCTURE

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The City of Nineveh

Nineveh, which was situated at the confluence of the Tigris and Khoser rivers (modern-day Mosul, Iraq), was first settled in the seventh millennium B.C. According to the Bible, Nimrod was the founder of the city (Gen. 10:11). Major excavations took place under the direction of Henry Layard from 1845 to 1854. The diagram pictures the results of those excavations, especially as they reflect the period of the Assyrian Empire (1420–609 B.C.). Around 1000 B.C. there occurred a great revival of Assyrian power, and Nineveh became a royal city. It was a thriving city during the first half of the first millennium, and contained such luxuries as public squares, parks, botanical gardens, and even a zoo. One of the great archaeological finds of the period is the library of King Ashurbanipal (669–627 B.C.; called Osnapper in Ezra 4:10). The size of the city was approximately 1,850 acres. The book of Jonah reflects the flourishing nature of Nineveh at this time (3:1–5). Nineveh eventually fell to the Medes and Babylonians in 612 B.C. The invading armies dammed the rivers that supplied water to the city, causing a flood that broke through one of the perimeter walls, giving the foreign armies access to the city.

