

# JONAH - STUDY PART 1

## Jonah Flees From the Lord (798 BC)

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1 *The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai:*

2 *“Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”*

3 *But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD.*

4 *Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up.*

5 *All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep.*

6 *The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.”*

7 *Then the sailors said to each other, “Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.” They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.*

8 *So they asked him, “Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?”*

9 *He answered, “I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”*

10 *This terrified them and they asked, “What have you done?” (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.)*

11 *The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?”*

12 *“Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.”*

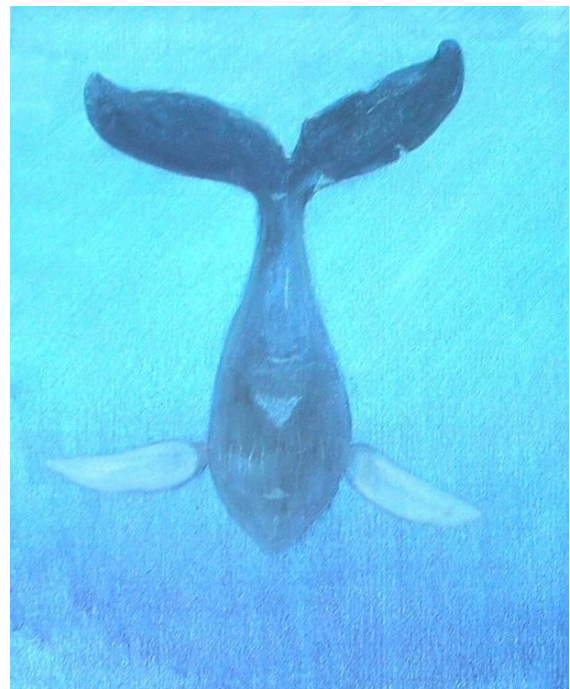
13 *Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before.*

14 *Then they cried out to the LORD, “Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased.”*

15 *Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm.*

16 *At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.*

17 *Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*



Descending whale  
acrylic on canvas board by Barbara Ann Storrier

## Jonah referred to in 2 Kings

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### 2 Kings 14:23-27

23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel became king in Samaria, and he reigned for forty-one years.

24 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit.

25 He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hepher.

26 The LORD had seen how bitterly everyone in Israel, whether slave or free, was suffering; there was no-one to help them.

27 And since the LORD had not said he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

## Jesus compares the fate of Ninevites

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### Luke 11:30-32

30 For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation.

31 The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom; and now something greater than Solomon is here.

32 The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and now something greater than Jonah is here.

## Cush built Ninevah (~5000 BC)

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### Genesis 10:8-13

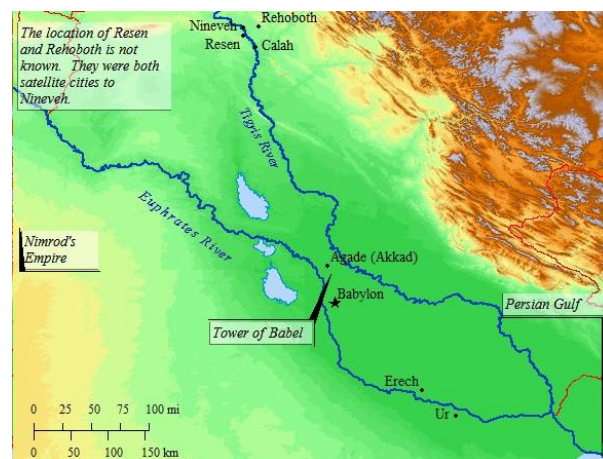
8 Cush was the father of Nimrod, who became a mighty warrior on the earth.

9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; that is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD."

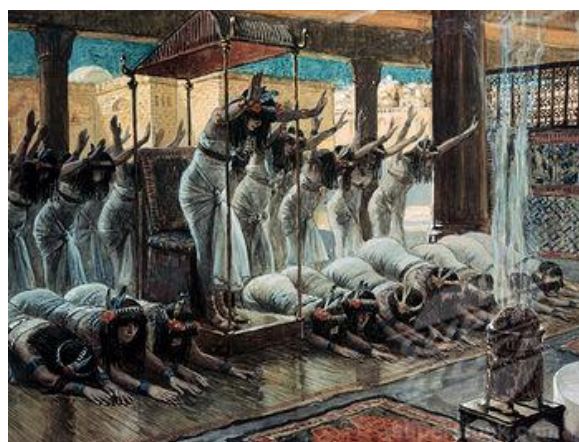
10 The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad and Kalneh, in Shinar.

11 From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah

12 and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah— which is the great city.



[http://www.hyperhistory.com/online\\_n2/maptext\\_n2/assyria.html](http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/maptext_n2/assyria.html)



The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon  
James Tissot (1836-1902 French)  
Jewish Museum, New York

The LORD's Anger Against Nineveh – Nahum 1  
(648 BC)

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1 A prophecy concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

2 The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on his foes and vents his wrath against his enemies.

3 The LORD is slow to anger but great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.

4 He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of Lebanon fade.

5 The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it.

6 Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him.

7 The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him,

8 but with an overwhelming flood he will make an end of Nineveh; he will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness.

9 Whatever they plot against the LORD he will bring to an end; trouble will not come a second time.

10 They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble.

11 From you, Nineveh, has one come forth who plots evil against the LORD and devises wicked plans.

12 This is what the LORD says:

“Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be destroyed and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, Judah, I will afflict you no more.

13 Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away.”

14 The LORD has given a command concerning you, Nineveh:

“You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the images and idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile.”

15 Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, Judah, and fulfil your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.

| Jonah:<br>The Mercy of God<br>798 BC                  | Nahum:<br>The Judgement of God<br>648 BC  |
|---|---|
| Emphasis on the prophet, only one prophet in the book | Emphasis on the prophecy, the only thing we know about the prophet is that he was from Elkosh |
| Disobedient prophet                                   | Obedient prophet  |
| Obedient nation                                       | Disobedient nation – in only 150 years the nation became so bad it had to be destroyed        |
| Deliverance from water                                | Destruction by water  |
| Repentance of Nineveh                                 | Rebellion of Nineveh  |

Assyria & Nineveh referred to by Zephaniah (634BC)

*Zephaniah 2:13-15 (New International Version)*

*13 He will stretch out his hand against the north and destroy Assyria, leaving Nineveh utterly desolate and dry as the desert.*

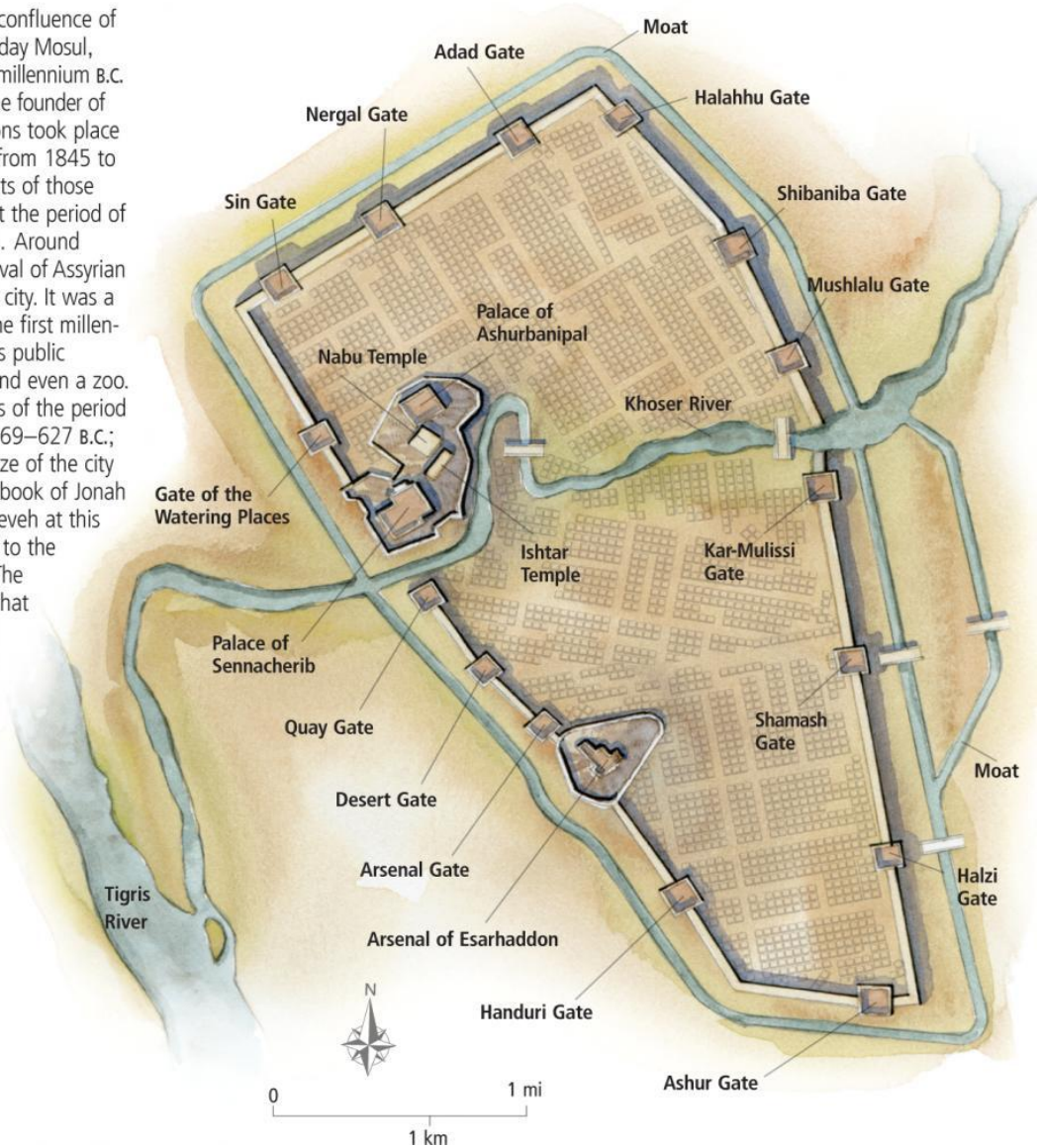
*14 Flocks and herds will lie down there, creatures of every kind. The desert owl and the screech owl will roost on her columns.*

*Their hooting will echo through the windows, rubble will fill the doorways, the beams of cedar will be exposed.*

*15 This is the city of revelry that lived in safety. She said to herself, "I am the one! And there is none besides me." What a ruin she has become, a lair for wild beasts! All who pass by her scoff and shake their fists.*

**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 Osnappar 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.



## Timeline of Assyrian History

Peter BetBasoo (<http://www.aina.org/aol/peter/timeline.htm>)

- 5000 B.C. (-250) The earliest known settlement of Nineveh. In 1932, Sir Max Mallowan, the eminent British archaeologist, dug a deep sounding which reached virgin soil ninety feet below the top of the mound of Nineveh; this gave a pottery sequence back to prehistoric times and showed that the site was already inhabited by 5000 B.C.
- 4750 B.C. (0) The first temple of Ashur is built. This marks the beginning of the Assyrian calendar.
- 2500 B.C. (2250) The three great Assyrian cities of Ashur, Arbel and Nineveh are clearly established long before this date, yet no solid archaeological evidence can be cited (because of a lack of research into this area). By 2500 B.C., these cities were thriving metropoli.
- 2371 B.C. (2379) Sargon of Akkad rises to power, establishing the first Assyrian kingdom in South Mesopotamia.
- 2000 B.C. (2750) Assyrian merchant colonies in Cappadocia are well established by this time. From the Assyrian clay tablets found at these sites, trade with the city of Ashur in tin and textiles was the main business.
- 1765 B.C. (2985) The great code of Hammurabi is produced in Babylon.
- 1365 B.C. (3385) Ashurballit lays the foundations of the first Assyrian empire.
- 1307 B.C. (3443) Adad-narari establishes the first Assyrian empire.
- 1115 B.C. (3635) Tiglath-Pileser establishes the second Assyrian Empire. The Aramean invasions of Assyria begin.
- 934 B.C. (3816) Ashur-dan II establishes the Neo-Assyrian empire. The Empire unifies the Middle East, from Egypt to the Caspian Sea, under one rule and by so doing lays the foundation for the subsequent rise of the Persians, Hellenism, Christianity, and Islam. Great advances in science, technology, philosophy, medicine, and government are made. The Assyrian conquests spread civilization to formerly savage lands. This aspect of the Neo-Assyrian empire is often overshadowed by scholars' baffling preoccupation with the Assyrian military machine and its so-called "barbaric behavior". The Assyrians never conquered and destroyed, they conquered and civilized, teaching their subjects the art of the highest civilization then in existence. The cultural unification of the middle east is a subtle point to grasp, yet it must be understood that this was the greatest achievement of the Assyrians. Other achievements in that period are too numerous to list fully. Some examples are: paved roads, postal system, magnifying glass, electric battery, plumbing (with flush toilet), the first use of iron, the first chariots, the first aqueduct (which was in use until 1996 A.D.), the first library, the first system of musical notation.
- 752 B.C. (3998) Aramaic is made an official language of the Empire, alongside Akkadian.
- 612 B.C. (4138) The Neo-Assyrian empire collapses under an attack by Medes, Scythians and Babylonians tribes. The Royal family escapes to Harran.
- 609 B.C. (4141) Ashur-uballit is proclaimed the new king of Assyria in Harran. Egypt sends its army to support the Assyrians but is delayed by Jewish resistance in Gaza and Judah. When the Egyptian army does finally arrive, it is met by a Chaldean force and is defeated. With the collapse of the Egyptian army, its final buttress, the Assyrian empire came to its end.
- 500 B.C. (4250) The Persians ascend to power. They adopt the Akkadian writing system (Assyrian cuneiform).
- 350 B.C. (4400) Assyrians attempt to re-establish their autonomy, but the Persians suppress the attempt and castrate 400 members of Assyrian ruling families.
- 50 B.C. (4700) Some Assyrians experiment with Judaism.
- 0 A.D. (4750) Jesus Christ is born.
- 33 A.D. (4783) Assyrians become the first nation to convert to Christianity. The Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East is founded by Thomas, Theodos and Bartholomew.
- 200 A.D. (4950) The Assyrian New Testament, the Psheeta, is produced.
- 256 A.D. (5006) The last known Ashur worshippers. Assyrians are now all Christians.
- 358 A.D. (5350) The School of Nisibis is Established, the first university in the world.
- 400 A.D. (5150) The great translation movement. Assyrian monks, because of their close ties with Greek Christianity, translate the significant body of Greek knowledge into Assyrian, including all the great works of religion, medicine,

philosophy, science, and mathematics. These works are eventually translated into Arabic and brought to Spain by the Moors, where they are translated from Arabic to Latin and distributed through Europe, igniting the Renaissance.

- 448 A.D. (5198) 153,000 Assyrians are massacred by order of the Sassanid king, Yesdegerd II.
- 450 A.D. (5200) The Assyrian Church splits over a doctrinal dispute. Mar Yacob leaves the Church of the East and establishes the Monophysitic Syrian Orthodox Church (also known as the Jacobite church).
- 633 A.D. (5383) Muhammad declares himself the prophet of God and originates Islam. It is well known that Muhammad's principal teacher was the Assyrian monk Sargis Bkheera. This accounts for the extraordinary doctrinal similarity between some aspects of Islam and the Assyrian Church of the East. For example, according to Assyrian Church doctrine, there is no awareness of passage of time between the moment of death and final judgement; final judgement occurs immediately even though thousands of years may have passed on Earth. Islam holds this same view. It is also noteworthy that the Koran states that in the day of final judgement the angels of Allah will speak to man in Assyrian.
- 650 A.D. (5400) Church of the East missionaries reach China and Japan.
- 781 A.D. (5531) A stone monument is erected in China during the T'ang Dynasty in honor of the 130th anniversary of the Church mission in China.
- 1000 A.D. (5750) Assyrian monks develop a writing systems for Mongolian using the Assyrian alphabet.
- 1200 A.D. (5950) The Church of the East is at its largest, larger than the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic combined, with eighty million members, from Egypt to Japan.
- 1250 A.D. (6000) The Paradise of Eden is published by Mar Abdisho Sowa, effectively silencing Arab critics of the Assyrian language.
- 1300 A.D. (6050) Timurlane the Mongol sweeps westward and destroys everything in his path. The Assyrian Church of the East is completely destroyed. Assyrians are forced to retreat into the Hakkary mountains of eastern Turkey. The Church becomes a small, single nation entity.
- 1552 A.D. (6302) The Assyrian Church of the East splits in a dispute over Patriarchal succession. The hereditary faction wins and takes control of the church; the election faction becomes a uniate of the Roman Catholic Church. Assyrians now belong to three denominations: Nestorian (Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East), Jacobite (Syrian Orthodox Church), and Chaldean (Roman Catholic Uniates).
- 1843 A.D. (6593) 50,000 Assyrians are massacred by the Kurd Badr Khan-Bek.
- 1918 A.D. (6668) The Ottoman Empire collapses. Three of four Assyrians (750,000 total) are killed by Turks and Kurds. The surviving Assyrians flee to Iraq and Syria (British and French mandates). The Patriarch *Mar* Benyamin Shimoon is assassinated by the Kurd Simko. A nationalistic movement sweeps through the Assyrians.
- 1933 A.D. (6683) The Assyrian town of Semile, and its surroundings, is massacred by Iraqi troops on August 7th. Because this was a massacre specifically targeted against Assyrians as a nation, as opposed to a Christian group as in World War One, Assyrians would eventually adopt August 7th as official martyr's day.
- 1957 A.D. (6707) The Assyrian Democratic Organization is founded in Syria.
- 1967 A.D. (6717) The Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA) is founded in Iran.
- 1970 A.D. (6720) The great Assyrian exodus from the Middle East begins, which would see one million Assyrians flee into a diaspora, mostly to America and Europe, by 1997.
- 1974 A.D. (6724) The Patriarch *Mar* Esha Shimoon is assassinated. The successor, *Mar* Dinkha is elected, thus ending the hereditary succession.
- 1979 A.D. (6729) The Assyrian Democratic Movement is founded.
- 1980 A.D. (6730) Iran-Iraq war begins. 60,000 thousand Assyrians would die by the war's end.
- 1990 A.D. (6740) Iraq invades Kuwait.
- 1991 A.D. (6741) The United Nations Coalition Forces drive Iraq out of Kuwait. The Kurds rise against the Iraqi government and are given protection in North Iraq by the United Nations. The Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM) achieves a significant presence and wins 5 of 100 seats in the parliamentary elections.