

THE BOOK OF JONAH

Lesson 2, Chapter 1

In Herman Melville's epic work, Moby Dick, we find a most poignant remark by one of the novel's characters named Father Mapple. This remark, I believe, well defines what we are about to undertake today: studying the unique and divinely-inspired Book of Jonah. Father Mapple says this:

"Shipmates: this book, containing only 4 chapters..4 yarns..is one of the smallest strands in the mighty cable of the Scriptures. Yet what depths of the soul Jonah's deep sealine sounds! What a pregnant lesson to us is this Prophet! What a noble thing is that canticle in the fish's belly! How billow-like and boisterously grand! We feel the floods surging over us..we sound with him to the kelpy bottom of the waters, sea weed and all the slime of the sea is about us! But, what is this lesson that the book of Jonah teaches? Shipmates, it is a two-stranded lesson; a lesson to us all sinful men, and a lesson to me as a pilot of the living God.

The major theme and premise of Jonah is not only for layman and leadership alike, it is also simple. A true Prophet of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has been commanded by his God to go and preach to the people of a gentile nation who, it turns out, are utterly detestable and repugnant to the deepest recesses of the soul of this faithful man...the Prophet Jonah. Nothing on earth could have been more nauseating and repellent to Jonah than to do what God has just instructed him to do. God knew this in advance, of course, but for the sake of Jonah's generation and all generations of the future God determined that Jonah was exactly who He wanted to take this oracle to the people of Nineveh.

Jonah had a knee-jerk...yet deeply felt...obverse reaction to God's order that is so very human and, therefore, most of us ought to easily be able to identify with it. Yet, at the same time, it leaves us to wonder how such a called-out person of Jonah's stature and high spiritual quality and knowledge of God could even entertain rebellion...if for only for a moment...as a legitimate possibility, let alone dedicate himself to follow through with it... to the death if that's where it led.

As we read the Book of Jonah, picture Jonah as among the strongest-willed of humans...a man who sincerely loved God and was also a sincere, devoted, and long experienced God-appointed Prophet. Yet, just as with us all, he suffered under the effects of a fallen nature that was bequeathed to us from our common ancestor, Adam.

Open your Bibles to Jonah chapter 1.

READ JONAH CHAPTER 1 all

The first words of this book are usually casually read over without fully grasping what is being said. In Hebrew, it is: **Way yehi debar Yehoveh**. Or in English "the Word of Yehoveh came". First, nearly all Bible translations will say "The word of the Lord came". This is patently and clearly incorrect. The word "Lord" is simply not there in the Hebrew. Rather what appears is the tetragrammaton...God's formal name...that in the vowel-less original biblical Hebrew is expressed with the 4 consonant letters **Yud-heh-vav-heh**. Second; because of a superstition that arose among the Jews against saying God's name...sometime around the era of Alexander the Great in the mid-4th century B.C.... those who copied and spoke the Hebrew Scriptures substituted God's name by writing on the margins of the scroll that Hebrews should say "Adonai" instead of pronouncing God's formal name as it was written. Saying God's name is commanded scores of times in the Scriptures. But, what is also important for us to obtain is that especially in the period of the Old Testament, when even the Israelites fully accepted the notion of many gods and goddesses existing...even if mostly for the nations other than Israel...naming a god was of extreme importance so that a reader or hearer might know exactly which god was being spoken of. And especially when we understand that the name of the Canaanite's chief god, Ba'al, was actually a common Canaanite word that meant "the Lord", then we can see why being very clear about the exact name of a god...even of the Hebrew God...MUST be spoken or written otherwise it was unclear which god was being addressed.

Third (and perhaps the most important); nearly universally when those first words of chapter 1 are read, we assume that the phrase "word of Yehoveh" is referring to the speech...the words and the sentences that form the oracle that God is about to impart to His Prophet. This is not correct. In English grammar and

syntax, we need to capitalize the word "Word". That is, The Word is a proper noun. The Word of God is a particular named manifestation of God, just as is the Holy Spirit. This notion ought to be familiar to all Bible Believers and especially familiar to followers of Yeshua. I'll quote the KJV because its translation is the most known to Believers around the world.

^{KJV} John 1:14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

The Word was an actual spiritual essence of God that existed long before humanity was created. And, it is this Word that came to Jonah as a living messenger of God the Father's command and oracle. The Word (as an actual, specific manifestation of God) did NOT come uniquely to Jonah. Rather, we find this opening statement of whom, exactly, was to be credited for bringing The Father's oracle to a Prophet in several of the writings of God's Prophets, including Hosea and Joel.

As we discussed in the Introduction to Jonah, because people in that era didn't have "last names", then no person had an entirely unique name. The same name was often used by hundreds and probably thousands of people. So, there were plenty of men named Jonah that were Israelites. How do we know which Jonah among all the other Jonahs this was? Because the identifier "son of Amittai" was added. That is, a man named Amittai was Jonah's father and adding the name of a person's father more often than not narrowed a person's identity down to a single person. And, especially because we find "Jonah son of Amittai" in another Bible book...the Book of 2Kings in chapter 14...and historically we know that this Jonah also lived in the same era as the main character in the story of Jonah...then as certain as we can reasonably make it, this can only be the same person.

Verse 2, then, is really the opening line of the narrative story. Jonah is instructed by God, through The Word, to go to the Assyrian city of Nineveh, and there to pronounce upon them an oracle of some sort. Nineveh is described as a great city. But, great in what respect? Probably a better English translation for the Hebrew ***gadol*** as it is meant and used here is "important"...that is, the important city of Nineveh. ***Gadol*** carries many meanings such as chief, large, leading, etc. so

using the term "important" sort of encompasses it all. Nineveh was not the capital of Assyria at this time, and in fact, historically, there is some uncertainty as to which city was indeed designated as the capital. That said, the king of Assyria spent much time in Nineveh, which was probably the largest most influential city in Assyria.

Nineveh was often used in the Bible to represent all of Assyria, not unlike in our day and time when New York City or Washington, D.C. is often used (at least by foreign nations) as representative of the USA, or as London is used as representative of the UK, and Moscow of Russia, and so on. The Prophet Nahum speaks strongly against Nineveh, but really as being representative of Assyria at large.

CJB Nahum 1:1-3 *This is a prophecy about Ninveh, the book of the vision of Nachum the Elkoshi: ² ADONAI is a jealous and vengeful God. ADONAI avenges; he knows how to be angry. ADONAI takes vengeance on his foes and stores up wrath for his enemies. ³ ADONAI is slow to anger, but great in power; and he does not leave the guilty unpunished. ADONAI's path is in the whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.*

We continue in Nahum with chapter 2.

CJB Nahum 2:10-14 *¹⁰ Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! There is no end to the treasure, weighed down with precious things. ¹¹ She is void, vacant; she is made bare. Hearts are melting, knees are knocking; every stomach is churning, every face is drained of color. ¹² What has become of the lion's den, the cave where the young lions fed, where lion and lioness walked with their cubs, and no one made them afraid? ¹³ The lion would tear up food for his cubs and strangle prey for his lionesses; he used to fill his caves with prey, his lairs with torn flesh. ¹⁴ "I am against you," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot. "Her chariots I will send up in smoke, the sword will consume your lion cubs, I will destroy your prey from the earth, and your envoys' voices will be heard no more."*

CJB Nahum 3:1 *Woe to the city of blood, steeped in lies, full of prey, with no end to the plunder!*

Most English translations in Jonah 1:2, interpret the passage such that they say the reason God is sending Jonah to Nineveh is due to their evil or wickedness. The reason is that the Hebrew word that is being translated is **rah**. **Rah** indeed can be properly translated to evil or wicked; however, that is only one of its common uses. At other times it can mean misery, calamity, or destruction. It can simply mean trouble as in having a serious problem. The issue is that there is nothing in Jonah that says that God meant to say that in His eyes Nineveh was evil. Perhaps God saw this gentile city as being "in trouble"; they have suffered a calamity. Or (and this is what I think), God meant to be a little ambiguous that more or less meant that, yes, Nineveh had been behaving wickedly and now it is suffering much trouble for it. Again; there is NO evidence of a divine threat involved. Just a message that God sees what is going on there. In fact, although we'll approach it again when we find Jonah arriving in Nineveh, one has to ask why the people of the gentile nation of Assyria would have any interest whatsoever in hearing from a foreigner, the Hebrew Jonah, and from his God? What would provoke them to any action except to mock and scorn this unwelcome visitor that wasn't one of them? That is, they had to be receptive to Jonah's message for some reason, otherwise there was no hope for a change. If it was that Nineveh was prospering (just like it was at this time for the Northern Kingdom of Ephraim/Israel), then the people would have assumed that their behavior was not only approved by the gods, but also that their abundance was a great reward for their behavior. That is, whatever wickedness was happening in God's eyes, would not only seem NOT EVIL in their eyes, but actually GOOD!

What we know historically is that at the time of Jonah, Nineveh (and Assyria in general) was at a low point in their history. They had suffered earthquake, famine, and terrible military losses. They had a couple of weak kings in a row. Do people who are neck-deep in abundance and good fortune pay any attention to predictions of doom? Do they pay any attention to someone saying that they are behaving immorally and unethically? How about if that person saying it was a foreigner? Giving any heed to it is more than unlikely. Therefore, I believe that the way we ought to understand the meaning and intent of the term **rah** in this instance (and therefore the gist of God's message through Jonah to Nineveh) is that it serves to convey two things: first, that there is indeed wickedness in Nineveh of which they seemed oblivious; and second, that it is this wicked

behavior that has resulted in their serious troubles. Let's bring this to an application for modern times.

If you truly trust God, and especially if you are over 50 years old, then the blatant immorality and the degradation of our Western societies (and I'll focus primarily on the USA) is all the more evident. Until 25 or 30 years ago, the USA was the envy of the world. It was the one nation on this planet that was irreplaceable; we had no real territorial ambitions, we had a military that was the most formidable, and all this coupled to a financial system that drove the other world economies. If anything, there was jealousy by other nations towards the USA as opposed to disdain. America was thought to be a safe place, a fair and just place, and a place of abundance where disagreements on principles could be aired and debated without threat and without censoring. 50 years ago, it was even more so. At that time there was so little disagreement among Americans on what amounted to our shared sense of morality (and the source of it) that it was barely worth discussing. The definitions of right and wrong, good and evil, were vivid and they were agreed to regardless of where in our nation one lived, or to which political party or religious group one belonged. Children could go to school, or stay out until dark to play, with no real threat by others to their safety. Teachers were given the authority to have discipline over their classrooms with the chronic disrupters being removed or even expelled. Television shows were inevitably about teaching important moral lessons. Movies were sensitive to not showing overly-provocative (let alone lurid) scenes and instead left much to the imagination. Our aspirations (as a nation) were for community well-being, happiness, and a good and moral future for all. The lack of personal responsibility was not tolerated. Those who were lazy were called lazy and often shunned. Common sense made it rather easy to discern those unfortunates who truly needed and were gratefully open to a hand-up from those perpetual malingerers who always wanted and felt entitled to a hand-out. Yes, America was not perfect and we had things such as racism that needed to be addressed...and it was addressed based on the principle of racism being immoral and ungodly.

Today, all that has changed. We live in a post-moral society; that is, a major segment of our population goes on the principle that if one accepts that there even remains such a thing as morality, that it can only be defined by what our civil laws say is legal. Whatever our law makers say is legal, is therefore the

defining source of what is moral. Others of this same segment say that paying attention to the concept of traditional morality is but a barrier to our personal, individual happiness and liberty, and is also but a relic of a (happily) soon-to-be-extinct Judeo-Christian mindset and ought not be a consideration to our lives and choices. This slow-rolling progressive abandonment of a universal, well-defined set of behavioral boundaries and rules called morals that has its source from outside the human sphere, has run parallel to rampant and increasing lawlessness, a disregard for the lives of the unborn, anarchy in our schools and on city streets, and a fall from the USA's former international pre-imminence on virtually every level. The separation between haves and have-nots among us has grown large as a grand canyon. Hope has turned to hopelessness. Our music and our entertainment have, across the board, turned dark, perverted and despondent in tone. Trust in our public institutions has evaporated. But, perhaps the pinnacle of our immorality and loss of direction has finally arrived: the emergence of a belief in alternative and fluid genders and of an attitude of "anything" goes regarding sex and sexual behavior as a sign of progress towards ultimate liberty and inclusiveness.

The first and chief physical characteristic that our Creator instilled in humanity was gender; male and female. They were numbered as a total of 2 and only 2. The exact characteristics of each...biologically and societally... were plain and well-defined; so much so that our fundamental DNA and our innermost instincts calls out which we shall be and are. Roles of each gender were laid out as were the boundaries of various kinds of interaction between the two. However, within the past 2 decades, this most basic foundational essence (and absolute truth) of human characteristics has been challenged by self-styled elites and determined to be wrong. The chaos this is causing between those who accept and welcome this new definition of gender and gender roles versus those who deny it has resulted in extreme polarization of our population and is near to spilling over into open violent conflict. And yet, somehow, the USA remains prosperous. Therefore, the general assumption among our population and our government is that what we're doing must be right. This situation is a perfect parallel to Nineveh a few years prior to Jonah's time, and to Ephraim/Israel just a few years later. They were self-deceived and so their wickedness was not seen by them as wicked, but rather as intelligent, innovative and good, with their prosperity and strength as proof of their rightness. But then...as was inevitable... the other shoe fell. Their

society began to crumble under the weight of their weak leaders, and a general societal malaise caused by their immoral mindset and behaviors fell upon them. By Jonah's day, Nineveh was still reveling in their wickedness, but not about what it had finally led to in their economy and in their society in general. Clearly, they simply did not associate the cause and effect. They could not see that it was their wickedness that was the cause for their downfall. This is, without doubt...and for those with eyes to see... where we are in America (and in the West) today. Will we learn the lesson of Nineveh, or will we choose to ignore it and become a target of God's wrath?

So: was this to be the end of Assyria? Is that what God sent Jonah to Nineveh to announce? While at this point it might seem so, the story advances to tell us something else.

Verse 3 begins with the words: "but Jonah rose up". In response to God telling him in verse 2 to rise up (**qum**) in Hebrew, Jonah indeed rose up (**qum**), but it was to go in the opposite direction God told him to go to Nineveh, which was to the east; so, Jonah decided to flee to the west. The place he chose to go is called Tarshish.

Tarshish has been the subject of much research over the centuries. There is still debate over whether it is the literal name of a real place, or if it is an idiomatic expression that carried a meaning that had little to do with the word. Often in Bibles, commentaries, and some of the Targums (that's the **Tanakh** that was translated into Arabic) the word "sea" is substituted for the Hebrew word Tarshish. Others say there were likely a number of places called Tarshish and each time it designated where metals were obtained. Yet, when we find it used in the Bible, and as it is used here in Jonah, it is difficult to see it as anything but expressing the name of an actual known place. The most likely candidate is in southern Spain where there was a Phoenician colony named Tartessus. In fact, an expression used in the Bible when describing distant places is "from Tarshish to Sheba". Tarshish was invariably towards the west, while Sheba is to the east of Israel. However, it seems like Tarshish and Sheba were used to express the furthest extent of the known world (from east to west) to the Hebrew writers, just like it is usual to express the east to west extent of the USA as "from New York to Los Angeles". We also use in our culture the idiomatic expression "from

here to Timbuctoo” to mean some non-specific but remote place that is far, far away. I remind all that Timbuctoo is a real place in the Western African nation of Mali that has existed for millennia. So, I place my bet on Tarshish being a real place in southern Spain, which from the perspective of a Hebrew living in Middle Eastern Israel in that era, as being as far west as the Earth goes before coming to its end, or perhaps it is as far to the west that anyone in the Middle East has any knowledge of. We must recall that still at this time, all people believed the earth to be flat, with edges that could (for the careless adventurer) be a deathtrap where you could literally fall off into nothingness.

At this point one must ask: was Jonah’s theology such that he actually believed that he could escape from God by traveling someplace else? Someplace far away? Since the universal belief among humans was that each of the many gods was bound to a specific territory, and when crossing the boundary from one nation or territory to another that the god from your previous territory could not follow or had no power once crossing a national boundary line, could this have been Jonah’s attempt not so much to escape the reality of God but rather to distance himself from the area of his God’s influence? Since he was a Prophet, I find it unlikely that he believed such a thing. He knows full well that He cannot escape God’s will. However, in the understanding of His era, it was probably that he believed that since God seemed to ONLY give His revelation to His Prophets when they were in Israelite territory, perhaps it was that He could escape to a place outside of Israel where God didn’t reveal Himself. But even more, why would Jonah determine to do this disobedient act in the first place? Our answer to Jonah’s motivation for running away is found towards the end of the book. We looked at it last week and we’ll look at it closer again when we get there, but here’s what it says:

CJB Jonah 4:2 *He prayed to ADONAI, "Now, ADONAI, didn't I say this would happen, when I was still in my own country? That's why I tried to get away to Tarshish ahead of time! I knew you were a God who is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in grace, and that you relent from inflicting punishment.*

In other words, Jonah was pretty certain that once he spoke God’s oracle of warning (or perhaps of doom) to the people of Nineveh, that they would take

heed and repent of their behavior. His worry was that then God would turn around and let them off the hook according to His compassion towards them. The mere thought of it disgusted Jonah so thoroughly because he despised the Assyrians and didn't want God's love extended to them. He, personally, hated them so much that he was willing to risk God's ire rather than being obedient. He just could NOT bring himself to do anything that, in the end, held even the possibility of Assyria receiving love and mercy from Israel's national God.

So; Jonah went to Joppa to get a ship that was headed toward Tarshish. Joppa (or **Yafo** in the Hebrew dialect) has gone through many name changes over the centuries, including one still in use today: Jaffa. Why choose to try to find a ship there? Interestingly, history shows us that Joppa was not in the possession of Israel at that time and never had been. Joppa was foreign territory. So, the people he'd meet, and the crew of a ship he hoped to hire, weren't likely to be Israelites that might recognize him. Nor would the crew he'd hire worship Yehoveh (whom he was trying to escape from in the first place). For Jonah, to arrive in Joppa might have already put him beyond God's chosen area of revelation; therefore, Jonah wouldn't have to be confronted by God chastising him for not doing what He told him to do. There in Joppa he indeed found a ship that traveled to Tarshish and he hired it for the journey.

There is some discrepancy among scholars as to whether he was simply one paid passenger among several, or whether he hired the entire ship and was its only passenger. Certainly, in the story only the crew plus Jonah is mentioned; no other passengers. In that era there was no differentiation between passenger ships and cargo ships; ships carried passengers and cargo at the same time. One can only imagine the discomfort for the passengers as there were no rooms for them to stay and shelter. They simply huddled together below decks surrounded by animals, casks, baskets and barrels of many kinds. That said, very likely Tarshish ships were of the larger (if not the largest) variety. They were going to travel the furthest distance over the unpredictable Mediterranean of any ship, so naturally they needed to be more sturdy and greater in size to carry as much cargo as possible. A one-way trip took many weeks even if it was smooth sailing.

The final words of verse 3 leave no doubt as to Jonah's intention. We're told that he did this in order to get away from the presence of the Lord (actually, in the

Hebrew it says to get away from the presence of Yehoveh). What we need to notice is that this is the only record in the entire Bible...Old and New Testaments...of ANY Prophet of God disobeying God's call to him. So, the story of Jonah is all the more extraordinary and unique, and something that we need to take far more seriously than a colorful and fun children's story. Folks, for any of us to hear God's calling to serve Him in some specific way, and then to ignore it and deliberately attempt to avoid it, will bring consequences that more often than not are uncomfortable for us. Even more, Jonah teaches us that should we finally tire of our rebellion due to that discomfort, and do what we're told but with a poor attitude, brings no reward or merit to us that otherwise could have been. Jonah was no biblical hero, remembered for his selfless service to The Father. The Father accomplished His goal of mercy to Nineveh despite the best efforts of Jonah to subvert it.

Douglas Stuart puts it this way as concern's Jonah's reaction that was such a radical departure from all other biblical Prophets. It is a rather long excerpt, but is so powerful in explaining the essence of Jonah's rebellion that it is worth hearing.

"But to refuse to preach the possibility of divine mercy to one's enemies, no matter how malicious they may be, is simply too narrow a view of God's love. Jonah was a seasoned Prophet with plenty of experience in pro-Israelite, anti-foreigner preaching. Those sorts of assignments he presumably didn't mind. He understood..correctly..that the enemies of his people (Israel) were automatically the enemy of his God (Yehoveh). That is, after all, the basic assumption of oracles against foreign nations in the prophetic books. What he did not understand..or want to believe..however, was the fact that God actually loved His (God's) enemies. He (Jonah) should have been able to infer this important truth from the long history of God's mercy to Israel, but his view was too narrow. Like most Israelites, he assumed that God automatically loved Israel because it was His (God's) own nation, and that God would never think of Israel as an enemy. It fell to Jonah's contemporaries, Hosea and Amos, to preach to the people that their own nation (Israel) had become God's enemy and that other nations than Israel could bear the Lord's name. For Jonah, on the other hand, foreigners deserved only hate; Israel only love."

In Christ's most famous speech that Christianity calls The Sermon on the Mount, He repeated God's sentiment about what our attitude ought to be even about those who are our legitimate enemies. Just a few sentences after making the (mostly ignored) statement about the Torah and the Prophets remaining in force until the Heavens and Earth pass away (as we see occur in the final chapters of the Book of Revelation), and as His followers our continuing obligation to obey those commandments lest we be given a status of "least" in God's Kingdom, He says the following:

CJB Matthew 5:43-48 ⁴³ *"You have heard that our fathers were told, 'Love your neighbor- and hate your enemy.'* ⁴⁴ *But I tell you, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!* ⁴⁵ *Then you will become children of your Father in heaven. For he makes his sun shine on good and bad people alike, and he sends rain to the righteous and the unrighteous alike.* ⁴⁶ *What reward do you get if you love only those who love you? Why, even tax-collectors do that!* ⁴⁷ *And if you are friendly only to your friends, are you doing anything out of the ordinary? Even the Goyim do that!* ⁴⁸ *Therefore, be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

As God's Prophet for many years, Jonah should have innately understood this message that Yeshua would speak some 800 years later, even if the average Israelite did not. Jonah loved his neighbors (his fellow Israelites), but he hated his enemy (Assyria). Even though Assyria was a legitimate enemy of God and of Israel, Jonah nevertheless was to love them because God still loved them. How was Jonah to be judged as any different than anyone else in this fallen world...Hebrew or gentile... if he was friendly only towards those he loved? My goodness, what a poignant personal message and profound lesson for us to take from the story of Jonah, should we take away nothing else from it.

In verse 4, the intensity of the story picks up as we are told that God sent a great storm over the sea upon which Jonah's ship was traveling. The Hebrew word used to describe the way that God sent the storm is **tuwl**. It means to hurl with force. It doesn't mean merely to send or to "let loose" as the CJB frames it. It is a word that indicates something is done with intention, purpose, and violence. God's purpose was to thwart Jonah's attempt to flee. To best understand why this story was so impactful especially upon the ancients, and why God would do

what He did in the way He did it, is to grasp that storms over the seas were and are completely out of human control. They are awesome in their appearance, and frightening in their effect. Universally in ancient times...and still to perhaps a slightly lesser degree in modern times...storms over the deep waters of our oceans and seas induce such wonderment, if not reverence, such that they give writers an incredible opportunity to spin their tales around storms at sea. Although Jonah's adventure was real and not contrived, it presents the perfect format for God to make His point by means of inspiring an unknown writer to tell Jonah's story for posterity.

In ancient times, those who survived terror filled ordeals at sea felt that their god or gods had shown great grace to save them. Their survival against all odds so impacted some who made it out alive that it changed their lives as they saw it as a sign of a higher calling. Josephus recalls how he was 1 of only 80 survivors of a sea storm, out of a crew and passenger list of 600 souls. He so believed that he was saved for a divine purpose that it changed the course of his life. We even find the same as it concerns the Apostle Paul as he was shipwrecked not once, but THREE times! Paul confidently assumed that he survived because His God would not allow him to die until his mission was fulfilled, and so he kept on the path the Lord set him on with increased fervor and fearlessness. I suppose, when viewed from a 30,000-foot panorama, we ought to see echoes of Jonah's saga in Paul's adventures. After all, Paul was also sent to the gentiles and I doubt this trained Rabbi had much use for gentiles considering Rome's iron grip upon his countrymen. Yet, he didn't do what Jonah did; instead, against what was likely his instincts, he obeyed his divine calling and threw every ounce of himself into his mission to spread the news that:

KJV John 3:16 For God so loved the world (not just Israel!), that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever (gentile or Jew) believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

We'll stop here for today, and resume Jonah chapter 1 next time.