

104.14. GONE FISHING. Jonah's trips.

Jonah a Hebrew prophet, in 500 BC, was called by God to go to the city of Nineveh to warn them that their wickedness was seen by God, Jonah 1:2. Nineveh, Assyria's capital, was founded by the hunter Nimrod, who had led the rebellion against God with the tower of Babel & was a large powerful city, though the empire was weakening from plagues & wars, but they still had a reputation for ruthlessness & barbarity.

God sent Jonah with a message for them to repent, or be judged by God, via complete destruction. But Jonah knew them & felt that they deserved destruction & knew that if they repented, God would forgive them & he said to God, I know you are gracious, slow to anger & abounding in love & a God who relents from sending calamity, but Lord, I would rather die, then help to give them a chance to live, Jonah 4:2. The Ninevites were sworn enemies of the Israelites, as they persecuted many nations, worshiped false idols, offered human sacrifice etc. So in the eyes of a man of God, like Jonah, the Assyrians were an abomination, worthy of all of God's wrath & Jonah didn't want any part of their possible salvation, so Jonah runs & tries to hide from the presence of God, Jon. 1:3.

In the process of running from his mission, Jonah jumps on a ship heading in the opposite direction. A storm threatens to sink the ship, which Jonah says is because of his hiding from God & he is thrown overboard & is swallowed by a giant fish, which keeps him 3 days, (maybe Comatose?), though He was able to repent & had said; In my distress I called on the Lord & He answered me, I called & He listened to my cry, Jonah 2:1 & He was then puked up on shore near the city of Nineveh.

When the Ninevites saw Jonah, someone who did not love them, but who God used anyway, they were ready to hear his message; as his story had preceded him, as the Godly man who had been puked up on a beach from a giant fish & all who heard him, repented & were saved. God heard the cry of the Ninevites & saw their repentant hearts & forgave them 3:5 & Jonah was angry.

Hoping to change God's mind, Jonah sits down under a vine shelter that the Lord had cause to grow up, in order to await the destruction of Nineveh, but the vine dies & Jonah is roasted in the hot sun & angrily says to God, it would be better for me to die, than to live, Jonah 4:8.

God pointed out to Jonah, that there is a lot more at stake, than what Jonah is seeing. God said; You care about this vine, though you did not tend it, or make it grow, it sprang up overnight & it died overnight, so should we not have more care for all the people in Nineveh, who cannot tell their right hand, from the left, Jonah 4:10.

God uses all kinds of people to accomplish His will & this reluctant prophet Jonah became one of the most effective preachers in the Bible; as he learned that we are to love our enemies & do good to them, without expecting anything back, then our reward will be great & we will be children of the Most High, as He is also kind to the ungrateful & wicked, Luke 6:35.

Remember we don't warn, help, assist people, because of who they are, or because of the kind of person we are, we do it because of who our God is & what He has done for our undeserving selves & we do it without expecting any earthly reward, as our rewards are awaiting us at the Bema seat judgement for use on the new earth.