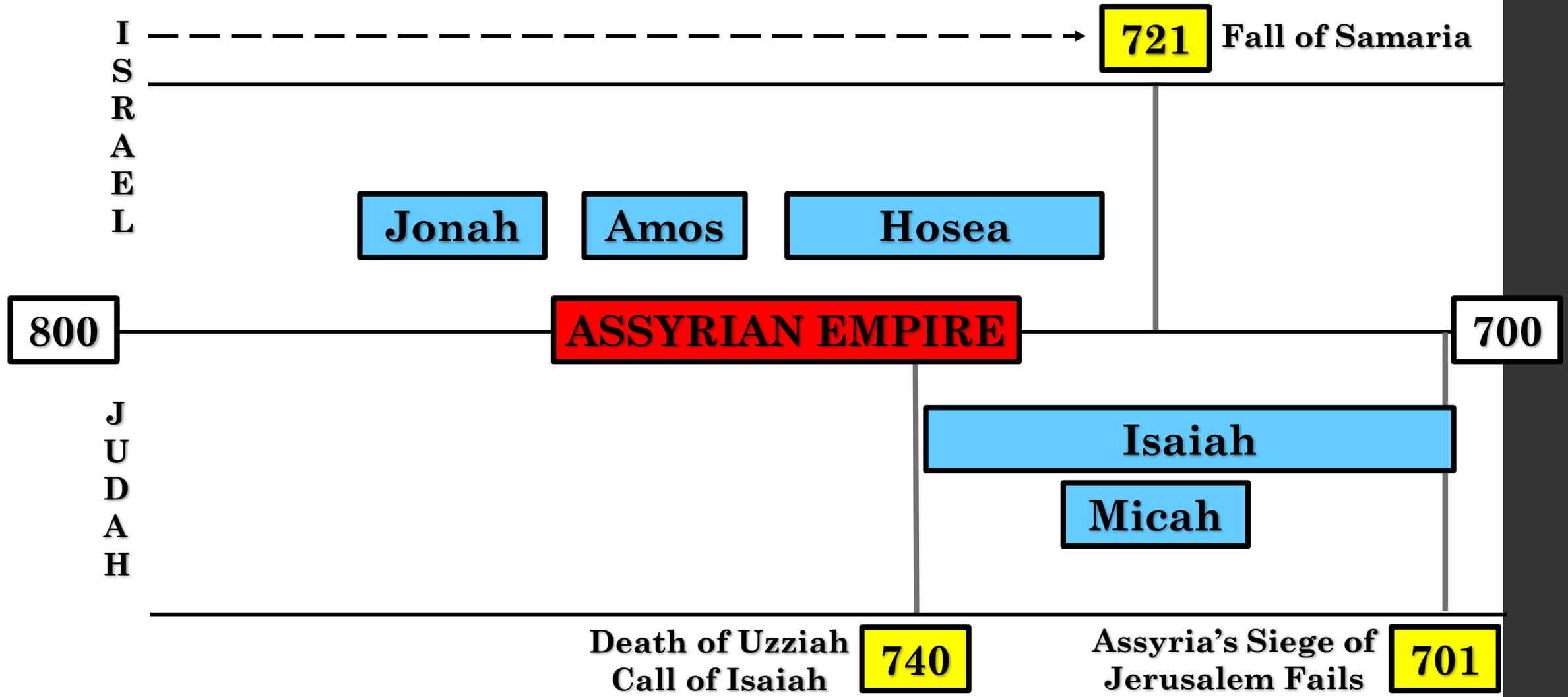


Book of Jonah

Old Testament Workshop
Morrison Heights Baptist Church
March 29, 2020



Historical Context



Biographical Data

Family of Orientation

Father: Amittai (1:1; 2 Kg. 14:25)

Hometown

Gath-hepher (2 Kg. 14:25)

located on the eastern border of the territory apportioned to Zebulun
(Jos. 19:13)

modern el-Meshhed, approximately two miles from Nazareth
The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia

Ministry

Location and Time: 8th Century Israel AND Nineveh
occurring, like Amos, during the reign of Jeroboam II

Overview of the Book



Lastman: *Jonah and the Whale* (1621)

“When a dog bites a man, that is not news, because it happens so often. But if a man bites a dog, that is news.”

John B. Bogart, Editor of the *New York Sun*

When a man eats a fish, that is not news, because it happens so often. But if a fish swallows a man, that is a story.

READ the Book of Jonah!

Overview of the Book

“The tragedy of the book of Jonah is that a great missionary plea is known largely as a fish tale! The fish was not a major character—he played only a supporting role!

John Tullock, *The Old Testament Story*

“Unlike other prophetic books, it contains no prophetic oracles and does not claim to have been written by a prophet.”

Flanders, Crapps, and Smith, *People of the Covenant*

“The prophecy of Jonah is unique in that it is an account of what happened to a prophet and not a report of his message. Since this book was placed in the canon among the prophets, one may conclude that the story of what happened to Jonah is the message.”

La Sor, Hubbard, and Bush, *Old Testament Survey*

True Story?

PRO

Jesus refers to Jonah.

Matthew 12:38-41; Luke 11:29-32

CON

- ❶ Has a person ever survived three days inside a fish?
- ❷ Nineveh was neither sizable (3:3) nor populous (4:11).
- ❸ NO non-biblical source mentions a revival in Nineveh.

“The narrative seemingly does not intend to be a simple documentary of Jonah’s adventures; neither does it appear to be an allegory, a parable, or a typological exposition of the destiny of Israel or of the Messiah. It would seem best, therefore, to consider it as a consummate religious masterpiece presenting its moral along the lines of what we know today as a short story.”

A. J. Glaze, Jr., *The Broadman Bible Commentary*

Contents of the Book

The Book of Jonah is 48 verses. Less than a third of the book is Jonah speaking; why what the prophet did is better known than what he said **(1:9, 12; 2:2-9; 3:4; 4:2-3, 8-9)**.

Chapters 1, 3, and 4 are narrative (prose); chapter 2 is a prayer/psalm (poetry).

The Book of Jonah, like the Book of Nahum, concludes with a question.

Outline

- The rebellious prophet and his chastisement **(1:1-16)**
- The reprieved prophet and the prayer **(1:17-2:10)**
- The obedient prophet and the results of his preaching **(3:1-10)**
- The resentful prophet and the rebuke of his narrowness **(4:1-11)**

(A. J. Glaze, Jr., *The Broadman Bible Commentary*)

Protagonist: Jonah

DISOBEDIENT



Southwest is not Northeast.
The prophet was **NOT**
directionally-challenged!

PREJUDICED

Assyria was the consummate bully, terrorizing nations of the Ancient Near East.

1:1-3

Why Jonah reasoned that disobeying God was better than helping Nineveh

3:10-4:4

Why God being merciful to Nineveh infuriated Jonah

4:5-11

Why Jonah cared more about a plant than a people, the Ninevites

Protagonist: God



SOVEREIGN OVER NATURE

God roused a storm (1:4-16).

God “appointed” a fish (1:17), plant (4:6), worm (4:7), and scorching east wind (4:8).

SOVEREIGN OVER PEOPLE

In spite of Jonah, God’s will was done.

SEE Acts 5:34-39.



GRACIOUS

“The word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time.” (3:1)

SEE also 3:10-4:2.



LOVE FOR ALL PEOPLE, NOT JUST ISRAEL

conversion of the captain and his crew (1:4-16)

repentance of Nineveh

“For there is no partiality with God.” (Rom. 2:11)

The Debate

How do God's people interact, if at all, with Gentiles?



PARTICULARISTS

avoid them or they **WILL** corrupt you

Deuteronomy 23:3-6; Ezra 9-10; Nehemiah 13; Esther; Jonah (prophet)

UNIVERSALISTS

connect with them, gain their trust, minister to them,
represent God to them

Genesis 12:1-3; Ruth; Jonah (book)

“On one level, the message of Jonah may be boiled down to a warning to the hearer/reader: ‘Don’t be like Jonah.’”

Douglas Stuart, *Word Biblical Commentary*