

Jonah, whose experience with death typified that of Christ, had his home about 3 miles from Nazareth. Because he preached to Gentiles, the Jews did not like to accord him the title of prophet. So they said that no prophet arose out of Galilee, denying Jonah as a prophet. See John 7:52.

Jonah was given a commission which he did not like. He did not want Nineveh to repent, for she was an enemy of Israel. So he tried to evade the task by fleeing from the presence of the Lord.

Jonah tried to escape to Joppa, paid his fare and went *onto* the ship, a huge storm blew and the mariners were afraid that the ship would sink but Jonah was

*down*

below in the ship and was asleep. When asked to pray to his God Jonah admitted he had disobeyed the Lord and told the men to cast him into the sea. The sea became calm after he was thrown overboard but Jonah was swallowed by a great fish where he prayed unto the Lord. Now read Jonah's prayer unto God in

### **Jonah 2:2-9**

. Was Jonah under water? Were the weeds around Jonah's head? Did Jonah go down, down to the bottoms of the mountains? What was the corruption that God brought his life up from? He died in that belly of the great fish after he had made a prayer there.

Jonah has been a subject of debate for many centuries. Some have doubted that a fish did swallow Jonah. Probably, they would have believed if it had said that Jonah swallowed the great fish. As if to silence the doubters, a great fish or monster was thrown up on the beach at Joppa years ago and we have heard that its skeleton is in a museum there. It is very hard for men to make excuses to disbelieve what God has said.

Jonah was thrown up by the fish on to dry land. Someone might say that the fish could not stomach a backslidden prophet. But the Word says that God commanded the fish to throw Jonah up on dry land.

Jonah is the center of this account. One would think that the destruction of Nineveh was to be the main thread of the story. But God was also dealing with Jonah. Jonah had a lesson to learn.

The lesson we must learn is: . . . seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For **as Jonah was** three days and three nights in the whale's belly; **so shall the Son of man** be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

**Matthew 12:39-40**

How was Jonah in the whale's belly and what type of Christ would he be if he was alive therein?