

Jonah 1:2

"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me."

When you hear of the book of Jonah or read it for yourself (it's only 4 chapters and can be read in less than 15 minutes). What do most people think about? That's right, how a whale swallowed a man; Except, there are a few things wrong with that thinking.

First off, the bible never says it was a whale that swallowed Jonah, but rather a great fish that God prepared for this particular instance.

† **Jonah 1:17** *Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.* (underlined for emphasis)

The second thing is that people put so much emphasis on a fish swallowing a man that they miss the entire point of the book of Jonah, or why Jonah was even sent to Nineveh.

Once again it is 4 chapters long and only 57 verses in total, and out of those 57 verses, only 3 verses mention the great fish.

- God Created the great fish to swallow Jonah (1:17)
- Jonah cried out to God from the belly of the great fish (2:1)
- And the great fish vomited Jonah up (2:10)

So that leaves 54 additional verses that are way more important than the 3 verses talking about a great fish.

So then what is the point of the book of Jonah if it's not about a great fish? We can read the answer in today's devotional verse.

† ***"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me."***

It has nothing to do with a fish story, but rather, it's a redemption story. It's a story of God's love, grace and mercy on a sinful nation. It's a story that we in the USA should read and cause this nation to repent just like the Ninevites did.

† **Jonah 3:4-5** *And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.*

But what do most people do instead when someone tells them about Jesus? They look for a fish instead of redemption. Meaning that they seek signs and wonders and miracles instead of God's, love, grace, mercy and forgiveness. Even Christians do the same thing, looking for signs from God, instead of looking in His word for answers.

But what does Jesus say about this? If you are seeking signs and wonders and miracles, then this is something you need to stop and listen to.

† **Matthew 12:38-41** *Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here." (underlined for emphasis)*