

Session #3

Biblical Narrative: A Case Study







Daddy
I Gwow'ed,
I Gwow'ed

Daddy
I Gwow'ed,
I Gwow'ed

...I'll show you!





**Why Do Big People
Stop Growin'?**

**Why Do Big People
Stop Growing
Spiritually?**

**We Stop Growing
Spiritually when we
Stop Pursuing
the Heart of God**

2000

Interpretive Approaches

Non-Historical

(Fiction, Moral Story, Allegory, Parable)

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(Historical Parable, Prophetic Narrative, Satirical Narrative, Historical Narrative)

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Literary Masterpiece—Meant to Teach!



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“Growth Indicators”

Background

Jonah 1:1 = Son of
Amittai

2 Kings 14:25: Gath-Hepher
(near Nazareth)

Jeroboam II 786-746 B.C.

Nineveh = heart of Assyrian

Irony

An incongruity or discrepancy

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An incongruity or discrepancy

* a figure of speech, event, statement, etc. that occurs or is used in a way just the opposite of what is expected.

John Fretheim

“Irony is commonly used by those who wish to state a truth to those who are guilty of prostituting it.”

Jonah

***Jonah* by definition**

means “dove”

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***Amittai* is play-on-word**

***Jonah* by definition**

means “dove”

***Amittai* is play-on-word**

meaning “truth”

Jonah 1:1-3

The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai:

“Arise, go to the great city of Nineveh...”

1 Kings 17:8-10

The word of the LORD came to
Elijah:

“Go at once to Zarephath...So he
went to Zarephath...”

1 Kings 18:1-2

The word of the LORD came to
Elijah:

“Go and present yourself to Ahab...
So Elijah went to present himself
to Ahab.”

Jonah 1:1-3

The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai:

“Arise, go to the great city of Nineveh...” ...But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish...

The sins of the Assyrians

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- Polytheism

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- Polytheism
- Brutality, Exploitation,
and Violence

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The sins of the Assyrians

- Polytheism
- Brutality, Exploitation, and Violence
- Witchcraft and Sorcery
- Alcohol Abuse
- Prostitution and Illicit Sexuality

Growth Indicator #1

Growth Indicator #1

A Life that is Growing Spiritually is moving towards God's Commands...not away from them—regardless of the difficulty.



***There's always a boat
at Joppa***

v.6

The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up (Arise) and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish.”

Edwin Good

Jonah's Theology is unexceptional, but like so much theology, it seems to make no difference to his actions.

We are certainly intended to perceive the incongruity between the prophet's confession of God as creator of the sea and his attempt to escape on it.

Growth Indicator #2

Growth Indicator #2

A Life that is Growing Spiritually shows a consistency between words and works

Perry Brown

“Jonah’s fear is a feeble thing, for all its orthodoxy. . . the runaway prophet is shown in a bad light: crew and captain can teach him many a lesson about his own faith.”

**Then they cried out to . . .
(Jonah 1:14)**

**Elohim = Generic
name for deity**

**Yahweh = Covenant
name for God**

CONTRAST OF JONAH AND THE GENTILES

GENTILES

JONAH

CONTRAST OF JONAH AND THE GENTILES

GENTILES

Each sailor calls out
to his own god

JONAH

The captain must
request that Jonah call out to
his god

CONTRAST OF JONAH AND THE GENTILES

GENTILES

Each sailor calls out
to his own god

Sailors attempt
to save Jonah's life

JONAH

The captain must
request that Jonah call out to
his god

Jonah is fleeing lest the lives
of Gentiles be Saved

CONTRAST OF JONAH AND THE GENTILES

GENTILES

Each sailor calls out
to his own god

Sailors attempt
to save Jonah's life

Sailors fear the LORD

JONAH

The captain must
request that Jonah call out to
his god

Jonah is fleeing lest the lives
of Gentiles be Saved

Jonah claims he fears
the LORD

CONTRAST OF JONAH AND THE GENTILES

GENTILES

Each sailor calls out to his own god

Sailors attempt to save Jonah's life

Sailors fear the LORD

Sailors offer sacrifices to the LORD

JONAH

The captain must request that Jonah call out to his god

Jonah is fleeing lest the lives of Gentiles be Saved

Jonah claims he fears the LORD

Jonah make vows and promises to offer sacrifices to the LORD, but never does so in the book

Growth Indicator #3

Growth Indicator #3

A Life that is Growing Spiritually exhibits a testimony to the non-believing world...not the other way around.

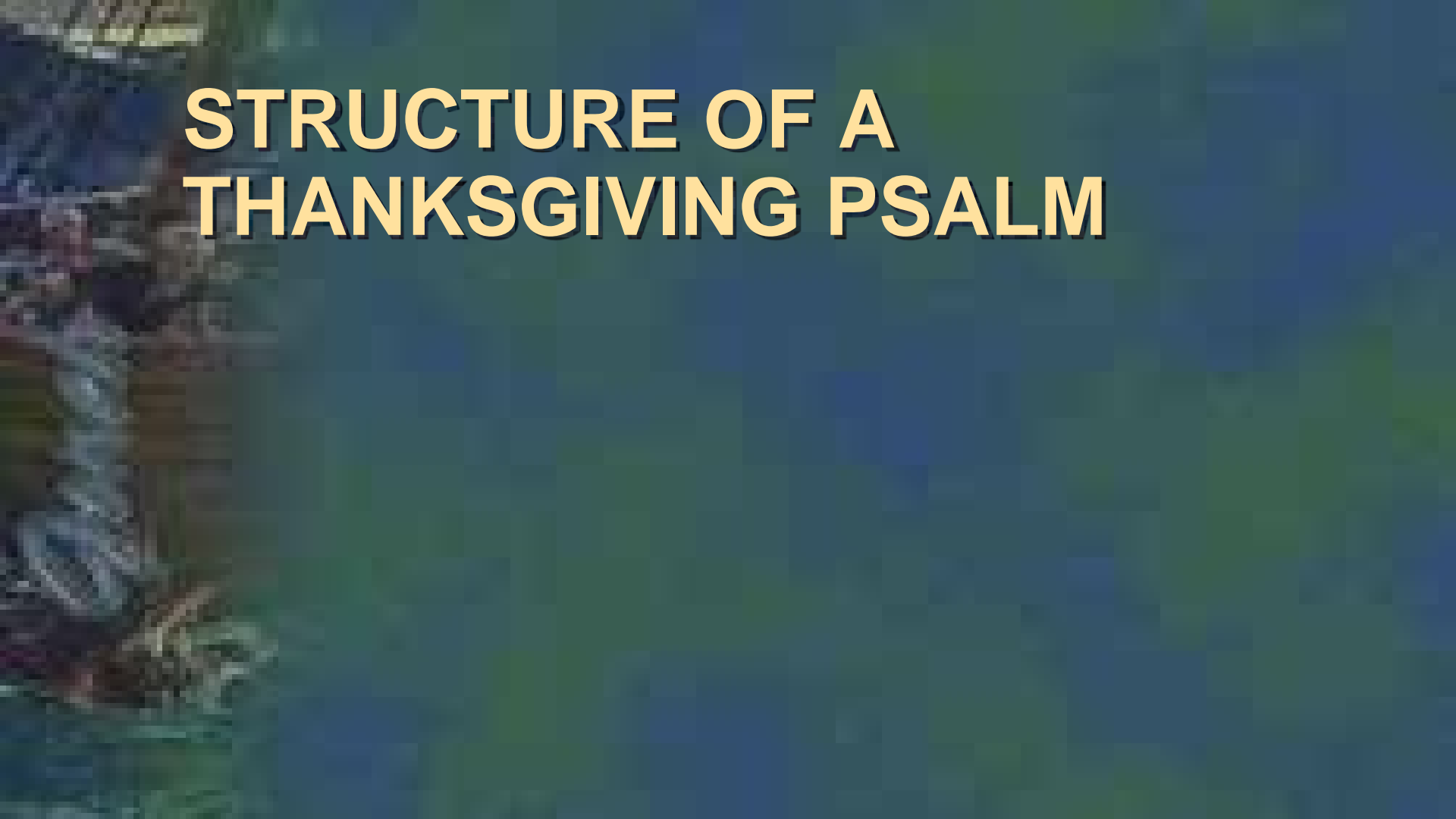
Jonah 1:17 (2:1)

“But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.”

Growth Indicator #4

Growth Indicator #4

A Life that is Growing Spiritually acknowledges and responds to the Grace of God.



STRUCTURE OF A THANKSGIVING PSALM

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- Introduction

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- Past Distress

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- The Lord answers
the cry for help

STRUCTURE OF A THANKSGIVING PSALM

- Introduction
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- The Lord answers
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- Acknowledgement
of God's gracious act

STRUCTURE OF A THANKSGIVING PSALM

- Introduction v.1-2
- Past Distress v.3-6
- The Lord answers
the cry for help v.7
- Acknowledgement
of God's gracious act v.8-9



Jonah 2

Psalm

Jonah 2

v. 2

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

v. 4

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

5:7

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

v. 4

v. 5-6

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

5:7

69:1-2; 18:5; 116:3

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

v. 4

v. 5-6

v. 7

Psalms

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

5:7

69:1-2; 18:5; 116:3

18:6

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

v. 4

v. 5-6

v. 7

v. 8

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

5:7

69:1-2; 18:5; 116:3

18:6

31:6

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

v. 4

v. 5-6

v. 7

v. 8

v. 9

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

5:7

69:1-2; 18:5; 116:3

18:6

31:6

3:8; 50:14, 23

Jonah 2

v. 2

v. 3

v. 4

v. 5-6

v. 7

v. 8

v. 9

Psalm

18:4-6; 120:1

69:1-2; 42:7

5:7

69:1-2; 18:5; 116:3

18:6

31:6

3:8; 50:14, 23

Growth Indicator #5

Growth Indicator #5

A Life that is Growing Spiritually knows and applies the Word of God.



Growth Indicator #4

*A Life that is Growing Spiritually
acknowledges and responds to
the Grace of God.*

Growth Indicator #4

A Life that is Growing Spiritually acknowledges and responds to the Grace of God.

Growth Indicator #5

A Life that is Growing Spiritually knows and applies the Word of God.

Jonah 2:10

“And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.”

Jonah 2:10

“vomited” -- Lev 18:24-30; 20:22

Jonah 2:10

“vomited” -- Lev 18:24-30; 20:22

“dry land” -- Cf. 1:9

Jonah 2:10

“vomited” -- Lev 18:24-30; 20:22

“dry land” -- Cf. 1:9

Perhaps it is an editorial comment by God concerning Jonah's confession (1:9), promises and vows (2:9)...and the sincerity of the prayer.

James Watts

Song of the Ancient Reader

“The prayer ignores the essential issue between the prophet and God: Jonah’s refusal of a prophetic commission.”

Growth Indicator #6

Growth Indicator #6

A Life that is Growing Spiritually confesses sin...not pious words of religiosity.

Jonah 3:1-3

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time:

“Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I gave you. Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord...”

Jonah 1:1-3

The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai:

“Arise, go to the great city of Nineveh...” ...But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish...

Jonah 3:1-3

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time:

“Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I gave you. Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord...”





Growth Indicator #7

Growth Indicator #7

A Life that is Growing Spiritually responds to God's commands in total and complete obedience.

Edwin Good

“In the author’s mind, Nineveh is not a quantity but a quality, not a mere metropolis but an immorality. He takes the symbol of the ancient world’s most impressive evil, magnifies and intensifies it by mass, and sends his timorous prophet into the middle of it.”

Hapak

Hapak

(Jonah 3:4)

Nineveh will be overturned

Hapak

(Jonah 3:4)

Nineveh will be overturned

(Genesis 19:25)

Sodom and Gomorrah overthrown

Hapak

(Jonah 3:4)

Nineveh will be overturned

(Genesis 19:25)

Sodom and Gomorrah overthrown

(Exodus 7:15)

Moses' staff changed to a snake

(Exodus 7:17, 20)

Water of the Nile changed into blood

(Hosea 11:8)

Lord's Heart is changed



Hebrew Verb *qum* = ARISE

LORD tells Jonah to *arise* and go to Nineveh (1:2)

The captain implores Jonah to *arise* (NIV = “get up” - 1:6)

The Lord tells Jonah to *arise* and go to Nineveh a second time (3:2)

Jonah “*Arises*” and goes to Nineveh (NIV = “Went to Nineveh” - 3:3)

The King of Nineveh *rose* from his throne (3:6)

Actions of the King of Nineveh

Actions of the King of Nineveh

- 1) Rises from throne (seriousness)

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- 2) Took of royal robes (submission)

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Actions of the King of Nineveh

- 1) Rises from throne (seriousness)
- 2) Took of royal robes (submission)
- 3) Covers w/sackcloth (repentance)
- 4) Sits in dust (hopelessness)

Growth Indicator #8

Growth Indicator #8

A Life that is Growing Spiritually responds to God in humility...not in arrogance and pride.

Satire

The attempt to effect reform by ridicule of an idea, a person or type of person; makes frequent use of irony.

Jonah 3:10

“When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he threatened.”

Jonah 3:10

“When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he threatened. (4:1) But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.”

4:1

“But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.”

**Lit: And it was evil unto
Jonah—a great evil—
and it burned him.**

Growth Indicator #9

Growth Indicator #9

A Life that is Growing Spiritually love's the unlovely, and pursues them.

4:1

“But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.”

**Lit: And it was evil unto
Jonah—a great evil—
and it burned him.**

4:2

NIV: “Is this not what I said...”

Lit: “Is this not my word”

4:2

“I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.”

*Jonah Feared that the LORD just
might be the LORD.*

*He feared that God might be God
(not himself)*

Exodus 34:6

“And he passed in front of Moses proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness...””

- 1) He was a Hebrew**
- 2) He knew the “Holy” clichés**
- 3) He could quote the Psalms**
- 4) He understood the Scriptures**
- 5) He could preach the Word**

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- 5) He could preach the Word**

...But he couldn't love

***Jonah couldn't love because
he had yet to understand
God's love for him.***

Growth Indicator #10

Growth Indicator #10

A Life that is Growing Spiritually strives to love as God loves.

v.5

Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city.

hapak
[anger]

“overturned”

hapak
[anger]

~~“overturned”~~

“changed”



v.6 ***“God provided a vine”***

v.6 *“God provided a vine”*

v.7 *“God provided a worm”*

v.6 *“God provided a vine”*

v.7 *“God provided a worm”*

v.8 *“God provided a wind”*

Growth Indicator #11

Growth Indicator #11

A Life that is Growing Spiritually evaluates one's heart and removes that which hinders service or perspective

v.10

But the Lord said, “You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight.”

v.11a

“But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well...”

Jonah was concerned about the vine





Jonah was concerned about the vine

(He was only concerned about himself)



Jonah was concerned about the vine

(He was only concerned about himself)

120,000 PEOPLE (L/R)



Jonah was concerned about the vine

(He was only concerned about himself)

120,000 PEOPLE (L/R)

inverted scale of value

Jonah was concerned about the vine

(He was only concerned about himself)

120,000 PEOPLE (L/R)

inverted scale of value

shelter—plants above animals—human


Growth Indicator #12

Growth Indicator #12

A Life that is Growing Spiritually is concerned about people...not things.

v.11b

**“Should I not be concerned
about that great city?”**



**The book closes just as it
opened.**

**The book closes just as it
opened.**

... with a Word from the Lord

Final Growth Indicator (Message)

Final Growth Indicator (Message)

*A Life that is Growing Spiritually
is concerned about “that great
city”*

In Conclusion...

Please note there is not a response from the prophet

