

# General Word Studies in Jonah 3

## KEY HEBREW WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

The words marked in bold followed by a number indicates the Hebrew number to the word as organized by Strong in Strong's Concordance. Using a computer program or an online program you can click on that number and see the definition and use of that word in Hebrew and elsewhere in the Bible.

- 1 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying.
- 2 **Arise** <06965>, **go** <03212> unto Nineveh, that **great** <01419> city, and **preach** <07121> unto it the **preaching** <07150> that I **bid** <01696> you.
- 3 So Jonah **arose** <06965>, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an **exceeding** <0430> **great** <01419> city of three days' journey.
- 4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he **cried** <07121>, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be **overthrown** <02015>.
- 5 So the people of Nineveh **believed** <0539> God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on **sackcloth** <08242> from the greatest of them even to the least of them.
- 6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he **arose** <06965> from his throne and he **laid** <05674> his robe from him, and **covered** <03680>) *him* with **sackcloth** <08242>, and sat in ashes.
- 7 And he caused *it* to be **proclaimed** <02199> and **published** <0559> through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:
- 8 But let man and beast be covered with **sackcloth** <08242>, and **cry** <07121> mightily unto God, yea, let them **turn** <07725> every one from his **evil way** <01870>, and from the **violence** <02555> that *is* in their hands.
- 9 Who can tell *if* God will **turn** <07725> and **repent** <05162> and **turn away** <07725> from his fierce anger that we **perish** <06> not?
- 10 And God saw their works <04639>, that they **turned** <07725> from their **evil** <07451> **way** <01870>; and God **repented** <05162> of the **evil** <07451>, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

# Key words to understand:

## VERSE 1

*The word of the Lord came the second time... (see Jonah 1:2)*

*Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it;  
for their wickedness is come up before me.*

*This expression of “their wickedness is come before me is only used twice before 1) With the culture of Noah’s day, 2) Sodom and Gomorrah. Nineveh then was a very wicked city.*

## VERSE 2

*Arise <06965>, go <03212> unto Nineveh*

If he were spewed out on the closest shore of the Mediterranean Sea then the journey to Nineveh would have been about 500 miles, on foot, or perhaps he joined up with a caravan along the trade route to Nineveh. Perhaps his story preceded his arrival in Nineveh. Word on the trade routes traveled faster than people.

ARISE – get up, stand up also verse 3 – he arose

06965 קוּם quwm koom a primitive root; v

AV-(stood, rise, etc...) up 240, arise 211, raise 47, establish 27, stand 27, perform 25, confirm 9, again 5, set 5, establish 3, surely 3, continue 3, sure 2, abide 1, accomplish 1, misc 19; 628

1) to rise, arise, stand, rise up, stand up

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to arise

1a2) to arise (hostile sense)

1a3) to arise, become powerful

1a4) to arise, come on the scene

1a5) to stand

1a5a) to maintain oneself

1a5b) to be established, be confirmed

1a5c) to stand, endure

1a5d) to be fixed

1a5e) to be valid

1a5f) to be proven

1a5g) to be fulfilled

1a5h) to persist

1a5i) to be set, be fixed

1b) (Piel)

1b1) to fulfil

1b2) to confirm, ratify, establish, impose

1c) (Polel) to raise up

1d) (Hithpael) to raise oneself, rise up

1e) (Hiphil)

1e1) to cause to arise, raise

1e2) to raise, set up, erect, build

- 1e3) to raise up, bring on the scene
- 1e4) to raise up, rouse, stir up, investigate
- 1e5) to raise up, constitute
- 1e6) to cause to stand, set, station, establish
- 1e7) to make binding
- 1e8) to carry out, give effect to
- 1f) (Hophal) to be raised up

## GO – walk – also verse 3 – he went

03212 יָלַךְ *yalak yaw-lak'* a primitive root [compare 01980]; v  
 AV-go 628, walk 122, come 77, depart 66, ...away 20, follow 20, get 14, lead 17, brought 8,  
 carry 5, bring 4, misc 62; 1043

- 1) to go, walk, come
  - 1a) (Qal)
    - 1a1) to go, walk, come, depart, proceed, move, go away
    - 1a2) to die, live, manner of life (fig.)
  - 1b) (Hiphil) to lead, bring, lead away, carry, cause to walk

## PREACH

- Preach & Preaching –
  - Preach = calling/crying out, <07121> to utter a loud sound, a wail, cry!
  - Preaching = proclaiming <07150> similar but a proclamation, announcement

### **Preach = 07121 קָרָא *qara' kaw-raw'***

a primitive root [rather identical with 07122 through the idea of accosting a person met]; v

AV-call 528, cried 98, read 38, proclaim 36, named 7, guests 4, invited 3, gave 3, renowned 3,  
 bidden 2, preach 2, misc 11; 735

- 1) to call, call out, recite, read, cry out, proclaim
  - 1a) (Qal)
    - 1a1) to call, cry, utter a loud sound
    - 1a2) to call unto, cry (for help), call (with name of God)
    - 1a3) to proclaim
    - 1a4) to read aloud, read (to oneself), read
    - 1a5) to summon, invite, call for, call and commission, appoint, call and endow
    - 1a6) to call, name, give name to, call by
  - 1b) (Niphal)
    - 1b1) to call oneself
    - 1b2) to be called, be proclaimed, be read aloud, be summoned, be named
  - 1c) (Pual) to be called, be named, be called out, be chosen

### **Preaching - 07150 קִרְיָאָה *q@riy'ah ker-ee-aw'* from 07121; n f**

AV-preaching 1; 1

- 1) proclamation, preaching – declaring, didactic preaching/teaching/explaining

## **VERSE 3-4**

### **Nineveh was an exceeding great city**

How great was this city? How large? How many people? Nineveh was the largest city of the world at this time. It was a spectacular place, filled with riches unimaginable. They had conquered Babylon and Egypt and taken all its riches, and conquered much of the world and carried away every country's wealth. Today, now that the mounds around Nineveh (near Mosul) have been uncovered, that it spread out 18 miles long and 10-14 miles in width. It included not only the walled city but the surrounding neighborhoods. It easily encompassed 600,000 people.

## **VERSE 4**

### **4 And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey,**

Began = 02490 לָלַךְ *chalal khaw-lal'* - means to pierce the city, He just barely got started in his preaching through the streets of the city and there was an immediate response.

*He cried <07121>, and said,* - He is doing exactly what God commanded. This was emotional heart-felt preaching. There must have been passion in his voice. Seeing what the Lord God had done to him a prophet when he disobeyed must have accentuated the preaching. They probably thought, "If God does this to his servants when they disobey, what will he do to us?" Rabbis taught that his voice, his cry, was so loud it could be heard throughout the city.

### **Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown <02015>**

#### **Overthrown 02015 הָפַךְ *haphak haw-fak'*** a primitive root; v

AV-turn 57, overthrow 13, overturn 5, change 3, turn... 6, become 1, came 1, converted 1, gave 1, make 1, perverse 1, perverted 1, retired 1, tumbled 1; 94

1) to turn, overthrow, overturn

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to overturn, overthrow

1a2) to turn, turn about, turn over, turn around

1a3) to change, transform

1b) (Niphal)

1b1) to turn oneself, turn, turn back

1b2) to change oneself

1b3) to be perverse

1b4) to be turned, be turned over, be changed, be turned against

1b5) to be reversed

1b6) to be overturned, be overthrown

1b7) to be upturned

1c) (Hithpael)

1c1) to transform oneself

1c2) to turn this way and that, turn every way

1d) (Hophal) to turn on someone

## **VERSE 5**

### ***5 So the people of Nineveh believed <0539>***

The people truly believed, were totally and absolutely convinced that what he preached was true.

**Believed = 0539 אָמַן 'aman aw-man' a primitive root; v**

AV-believe 44, assurance 1, faithful 20, sure 11, established 7, trust 5, verified 3, steadfast 2, continuance 2, father 2, bring up 4, nurse 2, be nursed 1, surely be 1, stand fast 1, fail 1, trusty 1; 108

1) to support, confirm, be faithful

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to support, confirm, be faithful, uphold, nourish

1a1a) foster-father (subst.)

1a1b) foster-mother, nurse

1a1c) pillars, supporters of the door

1b) (Niphal)

1b1) to be established, be faithful, be carried, make firm

1b1a) to be carried by a nurse

1b1b) made firm, sure, lasting

1b1c) confirmed, established, sure

1b1d) verified, confirmed

1b1e) reliable, faithful, trusty

1c) (Hiphil)

1c1) to stand firm, to trust, to be certain, to believe in

1c1a) stand firm

1c1b) trust, believe

***They proclaimed <07121> a fast and put on sackcloth <08242>, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.***

Even before the king made the announcement and command the people themselves CRIED OUT for a fast, and dressed in SACKCLOTH – they put rough burlap rags, and sat in ashes weeping and throwing ash over themselves. This was an outward sign of an inward work of repentance. They humbled themselves. They admitted their evil deeds. They repented.

## **VERSE 6**

***For word came unto the king <04428> of Nineveh.***

The whole city must have been buzzing with the news and preaching of Jonah. Some commentators don't believe Jonah walked through the whole city, but conjecture that according to the customs of the day, he would have gone first to the king with the message, then the king would call in his nobles to hear the message, and finally to the people. BUT that is not what the word of God says. It says the people heard the word first and responded, then the word got to the king and nobles. This was a people movement of God. God was at work preparing and softening the hearts of the people. They were ripe for the message. The Spirit of God was at work.

***He (the king) arose <06965> from his throne and he laid <05674> his robe from him, and covered <03680> him with sackcloth <08242>, and sat in ashes.***

What humility on the part of the king. Who was this king? We do not know for sure but by studying events in Israel and the names of Assyrian kings that invaded Israel we can suppose that it was either Pul the king of Assyria also called, Ashur-nirai V (755-745) or Tilgathpilneser III king of Assyria (745-727 BC). These were powerful men of war and conquests. Yet he humbled himself. (see out study notes on Assyria in the Old Testament) This SACKCLOTH and ASHES were outward signs of an inward work of repentance.

Now contrast that to Israel's response to the preaching of the word of God. They rarely listened and often persecuted the prophets for declaring bad things from God.

## **VERSE 7**

***He caused it to be proclaimed <02199> and published <0559> through Nineveh by the decree...***

Probably referring to heralds who would walk the streets crying out (like town criers) announcing the decree of the king, as well as written postings of the king's decree in public places.

**Proclaimed** - 02199 זעק *za`aq zaw-ak'* a primitive root; v

AV-cry 50, cry out 11, assemble 3, called 3, gathered together 2, gathered 2, company 1, proclaimed 1; 73

1) to cry, cry out, call, call for help

1a) (Qal)

1a1) to call (to one's aid)

1a2) to cry, cry out (in need)

1b) (Niphal) to be assembled, be called together, be joined together

1c) (Hiphil)

1c1) to call, call out, call together, summon

1c2) to make a crying, proclaim

1c3) to have a proclamation made

1c4) to call out to, call out at

**Published** - 0559 אמר *'amar aw-mar'* a primitive root; v

AV-said 4874, speak 179, answer 99, command 30, tell 29, call 7, promised 6, misc. 84; 5308

1) to say, speak, utter

1a) (Qal) to say, to answer, to say in one's heart, to think, to command, to promise, to intend

1b) (Niphal) to be told, to be said, to be called

1c) (Hithpael) to boast, to act proudly

1d) (Hiphil) to avow, to avouch

***Let neither man nor beast, herd flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:***

So, why would animals be involved in this fasting decree? Perhaps because the animals were being used in animal sacrifices to false idols and gods, and this was a way of repenting on part of the animals. Can you imagine the bellowing and bleating of the animals after three days of fasting, let alone through the entire 40 days?

## **VERSE 8**

***8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth <08242>, and cry <07121> mightily unto God, yea, let them turn <07725> every one from his evil way <01870>, and from the violence <02555> that is in their hands.***

The word “TURN” here is often turn away from, to give it a clearer understanding. Repentance is best defined as a turning from something, to something else. It is making a decisive about-face from one’s direction and start moving in the opposite direction. The Ninevites turned away from their wicked lifestyles (evil ways). We know that sexual sins were one of the prevalent sins of their culture. They turned away from their violence (perhaps abortion was one of the great sins of Nineveh).

### **Turn 07725 שׁוּב *shuwb shoob* a primitive root; v**

AV-return 391, ...again 248, turn 123, ...back 65, ...away 56, restore 39, bring 34, render 19, answer 18, recompense 8, recover 6, deliver 5, put 5, withdraw 5, requite 4, misc 40; 1066

1) to return, turn back

1a) (Qal) 1a1) to turn back, return

1a1a) to turn back 1a1b) to return, come or go back 1a1c) to return unto, go back, come back 1a1d) of dying 1a1e) of human relations (fig)

1a1f) of spiritual relations (fig) 1a1f1) to turn back (from God), 1a1f2) to turn away (of God) 1a1f3) to turn back (to God), repent 1a1f4) turn back (from evil)

1a1g) of inanimate things

1a1h) in repetition

1b) (Polel) 1b1) to bring back

1b2) to restore, refresh, repair (fig) 1b3) to lead away (enticingly)

1b4) to show turning, apostatise

1c) (Pual) restored (participle)

1d) (Hiphil) to cause to return, bring back

1d1) to bring back, allow to return, put back, draw back, give back, restore, relinquish, give in payment

1d2) to bring back, refresh, restore 1d3) to bring back, report to, answer

1d4) to bring back, make requital, pay (as recompense)

1d5) to turn back or backward, repel, defeat, repulse, hinder, reject, refuse

1d6) to turn away (face), turn toward

1d7) to turn against 1d8) to bring back to mind 1d9) to show a turning away 1d10) to reverse, revoke 1e) (Hophal) to be returned, be restored, be brought back

1f) (Pulal) brought back

## **VERSE 9**

***9 Who can tell if God will turn <07725> and repent <05162> and turn away <07725> from his fierce anger that we perish <06> not?***

The King James Version often translates <05162> as REPENT. (see Jonah 4:2) So, the question before us is, does God repent. Does God change his mind? Is God making things up as he goes along? Does he not know the end from the beginning? Does he not have a plan and purpose that expresses his sovereignty over all?

When the Bible uses the word REPENT or CHANGE HIS MIND about God it is using an anthropomorphism, that is ascribing to God a human reaction so we can understand it better. In this case, as in all cases of God “REPENTING” of what he would do, it is not God changing his mind, but God fulfilling a new direction that he intended all along. In the case of the Ninevites God did not change his mind. He said in 40 days they would be destroyed IF they would repent. They did and God fulfilled his detailed plan to bring them to repentance and salvation.

*Numbers 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent <05162>: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or has he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*

**\* Do a word study of repent <05162> as it applies to God in the Old Testament.**

## **VERSE 10**

***And God saw their works <04639>, that they turned <07725> from their evil <07451> way <01870>; and God repented <05162> of the evil <07451>, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.***

In this case “they turned from their evil way, and God turned from the evil he would have done. Both terms, “evil” are used in the same verse, but each with a little difference of meaning. First, the Ninevites “evil” was wicked or bad things they did, while God’s “evil” is not moral evil but a bad thing, a miserable event, unpleasant thing.

**EVIL - 07451 רָעָה ra`rah from 07489;**

AV-evil 442, wickedness 59, wicked 25, mischief 21, hurt 20, bad 13, trouble 10, sore 9, affliction 6, ill 5, adversity 4, favoured 3, harm 3, naught 3, noisome 2, grievous 2, sad 2, misc adj

- 1) bad, evil 1a) bad, disagreeable, malignant 1b) bad, unpleasant, evil (giving pain, unhappiness, misery) 1c) evil, displeasing 1d) bad (of its kind-land, water, etc) 1e) bad (of value) 1f) worse than, worst (comparison) 1g) sad, unhappy 1h) evil (hurtful)
- 1i) bad, unkind (vicious in disposition)



1j) bad, evil, wicked (ethically) 1j1) in general, of persons, of thoughts 1j2) deeds, actions

n m

2) evil, distress, misery, injury, calamity

2a) evil, distress, adversity

2b) evil, injury, wrong

2c) evil (ethical)

n f

3) evil, misery, distress, injury

3a) evil, misery, distress

3b) evil, injury, wrong

3c) evil (ethical)