

1. Opening Prayer

2. Intro: Irony

a. Story of origin

*The word “irony” does not appear in English until 1502 and did not come into general literary use until the early eighteenth century.* – Douglas Colin Muecke, *Irony and the Ironic*, p. 16

Originated from Greek *eironeia*, which would mean *feigning*: “The term irony has its roots in the Greek comic character *Eiron*, a clever underdog who by his wit repeatedly triumphs over the boastful character *Alazon*. The Socratic irony of the Platonic dialogues derives from this comic origin. *Feigning* ignorance and humility, Socrates goes about asking silly and obvious questions of all sorts of people on all sorts of subjects, only to expose their ignorance as more profound than his own.” – Britannica.com

b. Irony in the Bible (from *Nave's Topical Bible*)

1 Kings 18:27, “At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said. "Surely he is a god!

Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened."

Ezekiel 28:4-5, “By your wisdom and understanding you have gained wealth for yourself and amassed gold and silver in your treasuries. By your great skill in trading you have increased your wealth, and because of your wealth your heart has grown proud.”

Amos 4:4, “Go to Bethel and sin; go to Gilgal and sin yet more.

Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three years.”

Can you find any other ironies in the bible? What about in Jonah?

c. Why Ironies? Educational purpose with criticism

“College is where we are supposed to find ourselves — who we really are...and what we love, as we prepare to contribute to our respective fields. Character development and career development, as universities propose, go hand-in-hand throughout one's time in college.... However, today's elite universities are creating intellectual environments where all that seems to matter is the perception of success, initiating competition among students to get the best grades...”

– Josh Solarz, “The Irony of College Education” from Univ. of Notre Dame

### 3. Structure of Jonah

Contents		Place	Characters
1:1-3	God's calling & Jonah's disobedience.	Israel and Joppa.	God and Jonah
1:4-16	A Violent Storm	Sea	Jonah and Sailors
1:17-2:10	Jonah's Prayer	In a Fish	Jonah (to God)
3:1-3a	God's calling & Jonah's obedience.	Out of Fish	God and Jonah
3:3b-10	Stormy Warning from God	Nineveh	Jonah and Ninevites
4:1-4	Jonah's Prayer	In Nineveh(?)	Jonah (to God)
4:5-11	God's Compassion (as a Lesson)	Out of Nineveh	God and Jonah

### 4. Jonah (793-753 B.C)

Read 2 Kings 14:25, "He (Jeroboam) was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hopher."

### 5. Nineveh

First appears in Genesis 10:11, "From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah"

A capital of Assyrian empire (Isaiah 37:37, "So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there.")

About 600 miles away from Jerusalem.



Figure 1 Map from <https://visualunit.me/2012/11/09/jonah-map-light/>

The Babylonian Nina was a place where fish were very abundant, and Ishtar or Nina, the goddess of the city, was associated with Nin-mah, Merodach's spouse, as goddess of reproduction. Fish are also plentiful in the Tigris at Mosul, the modern town on the other side of the river, and this may have influenced the choice of the site by the Babylonian settlers, and the foundation there of the great temple of Ishtar or Nina. The date of this foundation is unknown, but it may have taken place about 3000 BC. – from International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia

## 6. Read Jonah Ch. 1

## 7. Questions

- a. Why do you think Jonah ran away?
- b. Why do you think God chose Jonah?
- c. In this story, who was looking for a divine help to save them from the storm?
- d. Do you think the sailors hesitate to throw Jonah into the sea? Why or why not?
- e. Do you think Jonah's response "throw me into the sea" in verse 12 is a right solution to solve the problem? Would have been there any better solution?
- f. Why do you think Jonah believed "throwing himself into the sea" would be the solution?
- g. In verse 16, the sailors made vows to God. What kind of vows do you think they made?

## 8. Closing Prayer