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SUBMITTED AS A THESIS FOR GRADUATION
AT THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE

The Religious Spirit of the Book of Jonah.

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The book at times is well organized, and the material is presented in a logical and systematic manner. The following are the main points of the book: 1- The importance of the Bible in the life of the individual and the community. 2- The historical background of the Bible. 3- The literary aspects of the Bible. 4- The theological aspects of the Bible. 5- The practical and pedagogic aspects of the Bible. The book is written in a clear and concise manner, and it is well suited for use in the classroom. It is a valuable resource for teachers and students alike.

PREFACE

It is not the intention of the present writer to enter the much debated field on the Book of Jonah. Already there exists a vast ocean of literature discussing the question of the innumerable aspects of the book e.g. date of the book, whether or not Jonah was himself the author of the book which bears his name, whether or not the book is an allegory, pure myth, fiction or history. Frequently, a cheap sense of humor, makes this book a serio - comic thing. How tragic that such a noble and most enlightened bit of writing, should be known for its association with a great fish- The purpose of this presentation, is an attempt to answer several questions-- What does the book teach? What does it symbolize? What did the writer protest against? What did the writer want to advance?

Of course a treatment such as this, may be entirely independent of the prevailing controversies as to the book's historical character, but never-the-less, one can arrive at its historical aspect, even at the date of the book's origin, by a study of the literary characteristics, the style, the language, the religious spirit, the purpose and the significance of the book-

The Book of Jonah in this paper, will receive careful analysis from the following aspects: 1- Literary ^{with} a Supplementary Chapter discussing the prayer of supplication from a syntactical study 2- Religious spirit- 3- Date- 4- Historical purpose and significance- 5- Practical and pedagogic aspects or how it should be taught in the religious school. || It is this last aspect in which the writer is particularly interested because he feels that the teacher has an unusual fine opportunity in presenting one of the sublimest and inspirational of stories, if he grasps the pedagogic implications of this master stroke of art — the Book of Jonah.

LITERARY ASPECTS.

In dealing with a marvelous book such as The Book of Jonah, one feels impelled to approach it reverently, one needs take the shoes off his feet, for veritably the ground is holy. That this humble narrative, is the work of genius, no one can deny. It is beyond question, the spiritual high watermark of the Old Testament. Search where one may, a story with such a vital message, is nowhere to be found- Produce if you can, in any literature, an embodiment of truths so strikingly portrayed as in this simple, sublime book of four chapters. Why need one apologize for entering upon the pleasant task of once more calling forth the spiritual import of the singular lessons contained in this profound book?

The Book of Jonah is cast through-out in the form of a narrative, the only one of the twelve minor prophets among which it is placed. Could it not more appropriately be classed with such books as Ruth or Esther? The question might arise, was the narrative intended as one of fact? If not, why did the author build his truth in such tapestry? The fact that The Book of Jonah as a narrative should be found among the twelve prophets, is not so exceptional as it would seem to be. Parts of Amos and Hosea are narratives of personal experiences-Also in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, we can find touches of the narrative. What is peculiar of the Book of Jonah, is the absence of prophetic discourse and yet, from the beginning to the end, we find the prophetic spirit woven through it. This fact alone, regardless of whether the Book of Jonah is couched in the form of a parable or an allegory, would be sufficient support for its adoption among the twelve minor prophets. When the substance of the book, reveals itself to us, we perceive more clearly the full justification of its incorporation among the

prophets. ¹ Jonah overboard. The sea monster sheltering Jonah the
leader What is this book? Kalisch¹ suggests Jeremiah 18: 1-10 as the
possible theme for the Book of Jonah. The illustration gives way to calm

reflection. "Jeremiah relates that by God's command, he went into the
house of a potter, whom he found at his work, and who as
he noticed, whenever a vessel did not succeed to his
satisfaction, fashioned it at his pleasure, into another
utensil which seemed to him superior." Then the word of
God came to the prophet: "At one time I speak concern-
ing a kingdom or nation to uproot, to crush and to destroy
it, but if that nation against which I have pronounced,
turn from their wickedness, I will repent of the evil that
I thought to do them"-

Kalisch remarks that these words may be regarded as the theme or the
text of the Book of Jonah, if they did not actually prompt the author
to compose it-

Briefly put, the story recounts the adventures of a man who did
his best to escape the will of God but found this will irresistible-
It followed after him and would not let him go. It is a picture of a
man who had shut his heart within a narrow, sectarian view of God, in
which, he and his kin were favored by divine protection, yet lived to
see not only the heathens objects of God's care, but that little
children and even dumb animals had their own place in the universal
love.

2
According to Rev. J. Whiton² "the Book of Jonah is the
most intensely individualistic book in the Bible. The
theme is the experiences of a solitary man alone on the
sea amid heathen strangers, alone in the waves as a perish-
ing outcast amid the monsters of the deep, alone in a
foreign land among a people whom he hates- The experiences
of this lonely wanderer, are related as divine lessons to
him, recognized as such by his conscience, and recogniz-
able as such by every conscience, without any comment on
the part of the author- Jonah seems to give the impression
that he belongs to a race described by his own prophets as
a rebellious and stiff-necked people- And the very cor-
rections described by his experiences, epitomizes his
people's historical training."

The literary form in which his experiences are set forth, is at
once striking and simple- His speedy chartering of the boat, his deep
slumber in the hold of the ship, the storm, the frantically uttered
prayers of these heathen sailors, the uncanny casting of the lots, the
value from the point of view of loftiness of thought, of depth of

#1. Kalisch, Marcus M Bible Studies. Vol II P. 262. Longmans, Green
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#2. R. G. Moulton. The Bible as Literature- Thomas Cronwell & Co.
N. Y. P. 223. ff article. The Book of Jonah. Rev. J. W. Whiton.

flinging of Jonah overboard, the sea monster sheltering Jonah the tender gourd-- What pithiness of description and with what vivid abruptness the spectacle ends-- the vivid imagination gives way to calm reflection.--

"It is all passing strange," says Julius A. Bewer³ in his introduction to Jonah. "we are in wonderland! Surely this is not the record of actual historical events, nor was it ever intended as such. It is a sin against the author to treat as literal prose what he intended as poetry. The story is poetry, not prose. It is a prose poem, not history--"

"The ancient Jews, just as other oriental peoples, loved romance, and a story effectively told would carry home its own lesson where a simple straightforward address would have been useless-- Our author knew this well. Other prophets told parables and had gained a hearing where otherwise it would have been impossible. The great teacher of post-exilic Judaism made frequent use of stories as a means of teaching, compare only the stirring tales told in Daniel to mention no other." 4

The various interpretations given to The Book of Jonah--

The allegorical or symbolic interpretation. Some scholars, among them Kleinert, Cheyne, G. A. Smith, regard the story as an allegory not as a parable. To them it is an allegory of Israel's history-- Israel (= Jonah as God's servant and prophet and was to bring his truth to the nation-- But it evaded its duty and was in consequence, swallowed up,

"by the power of Babylon = (the great fish). In the Babylonian exile, it turned and prayed to Yahweh and was disgorged or liberated-- After the restoration, it was dissatisfied with Yahweh's long suffering with the nations and waited for their punishment." 5

Others have classified the Book of Jonah as: prophetic legend, parable, didactic tale, diactic phantasy, an apology, a midrash, a polemic, a satire, a myth. Our purpose at hand is to ascertain its literary value from the point of view of loftiness of thought, of depth of

#3. I.C.C. p. 4 in section on Jonah.

#4. Ibidem p. 7.

#5. I.C.C. Jonah P. 10- Brewer J.A.

The sailors sarcastically, we might say, were concerned about a single individual, but Jonah held out no loving hand to thousands. Jonah to the very end remains stubborn, unyielding, unloving. This unique story, lends itself very well to a dramatic presentation.- Prologue and Epilogue-

Act I. Scene 1. Jonah in Flight--

The Lord called upon Jonah. "Go to Nineveh that great city and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me"- Such a commission was a stern test upon even an experienced prophet's courage. What was it that made Jonah so reluctant to follow out, to acquiesce, to this behest. It becomes evident that Jonah detected in the tone of this command, a tender concern over Nineveh rather than a vindictive anger. It probably would have been very agreeable to Jonah to announce doom to the Ninevites but to call them to repentance- this Jonah was unwilling to do. He therefore turned his back on Nineveh and the Lord and he went down to the port of Joppa and chartered a ship "To flee unto Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord."

Scene 2. Suddenly there fell upon the sea a great hurricane which caught the ship in such a tempest of wind and storm that the sturdy boat was on the verge of destruction. Jonah was lying fast asleep as though a traveler of leisure and contentment. On board ship there is consternation, each man calls upon his god for salvation- The valuable cargo is thrown into the sea. Frantically the captain shook Jonah out of his deep slumber, commanding him to call upon his God to stay the impending destruction.

From the apparent deafness of the gods, to their cries, the sailors came to the conclusion that some Nemesis was pursuing one of their number, to the peril of all, and recourse is had to divination, to discover the miscreant who has provoked this wrath so unappeasable.

The lot is cast. It falls on Jonah. He recognizes the writ of divine justice and he manfully urges his shipmates to save themselves by surrendering him to his doom, and before they complied with his request, they rowed vigorously to reach a port of safety. Failing in this, they acceded, and fearsomely flung him overboard. Then their distracted cries, rose to the very heavens, that they be not held guilty of innocent blood, in casting Jonah into the sea. When the sea instantly ceased its turbulent agitations, these sailors were struck by the manifestation of Jahweh's mercy to them- Then the author in a free, inventive spirit of the midrash, invokes the marvelous, since his point is simply, that however hard we try to escape Him, God has all the means of His Almighty to outwit us and bring us back- The author had a great truth to present and nothing stood in his way. If a huge fish was necessary for his message, he proceeded to create one-

Act II. Jonah's Deliverance--

Means of rescue provided in the form of a sea monster-

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish"-

Instantly upon sinking into the depths of the sea, a huge monster's belly, became the haven of refuge for Jonah. For three days and three nights, Jonah remained buried alive in the strange grave of this deep sea creature- The recreant prophet now sought the presence which he had endeavored to escape. (The prayer of Jonah is introduced at this juncture as a lyrical interlude.) For the right appreciation of the Book of Jonah, one must attain to a correct translation and interpretation of this much abused prayer of Jonah. Therefore, I have singled out this poem for special treatment-

See supplementary section to Chapter I.

Jonah's prayer of confession, supplication, consecration and triumphant faith, was answered strikingly, as strikingly as he had been arrested in his fugitive course-

"And the Lord spoke unto the fish and it disgorged Jonah upon dry land".

Act III. (The scene now shifts from the lonely sea to the populace city of Nineveh.) Jonah finally became obedient to the call-

"Arise, go into Nineveh, that great city and preach unto it, the preaching that I bid thee".

Chap. III. verse 2. Without parley or demurring, he took his long journey unto Nineveh-

"Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days journey".

Without any introduction whatsoever, Jonah announced in the hearing of the populace, the Lord's ultimatum. The story of Jonah's previous call, and its seeming grotesque outcome, may have preceeded him and the proud city may have made sport of it all. But now when this quaint man appeared in the streets, and delivered his startling, terrifying message in such positive and authoritative terms, the populace was deeply moved. The attention of the throne was captured and the monarch for himself, at once assumed the attire and the aspect of utterest humiliation. A universal fast was proclaimed. Even the animals were required to be clothed in sackcloth and deprived of food. Although Jonah's ultimatum promised no amnesty from swift destruction under any circumstances, yet these extreme steps were taken, in the hope that the God of Jonah, would turn from his purpose of wrath and forgive them as a loving father.

Act IV. Jonah and the Gourd

(Jonah would rather die than have these penitents live. He frankly lets all of his badness out and makes confession to God that it was just because he knew that things would turn out in this way, that he attempted to flee to Tarshish. Unwilling that his prediction should be frustrated, even by divine forgiveness, Jonah however was not pleased by these works of the Ninevites, for they showed the workings of divine grace in their hearts and their very actions indi-

cated to the easy possibility that Jonah's message would fail.) In his lack of sympathy with Him, whose

"mercies are over all his creatures,"

and in his deep chagrin at the probability of being pronounced a false prophet, Jonah professed to prefer death to such humiliation. Gently came that tone of reproof

"Doest thou well to be angry?"

Somewhat uplifted from his depression, Jonah made a booth for himself outside of the city and sat down to see what would befall Nineveh. A gourd quickly sprang up and threw a grateful shade over Jonah's booth that he might find some comfort. Jonah almost forgot his grief through his gladness over the gourd-

But this relief was of short duration; a worm attacked this transitory plant and made it wither. The hot sun beat down mercilessly upon Jonah and again he uttered that cry

"It is better for me to die than to live"-

Once more came that gentle chiding to this true but thoroughly human prophet.

"Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?" Jonah replied not without a measure of truth- "I do well to be angry even unto death," The Lord does not contradict Jonah but he confronts him with a stunning comparison and contrast. "Thou hast pity on the gourd for which thou hast not labored neither madest it grow; which flourished in a night and perished in a night. Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city wherein there are six score thousand persons that cannot differentiate between their right hand and their left hand and also so much cattle?"

This question put, the story ends, for the question carried its own answer and anything else would be superfluous.

What Dr. Battenweiser said with regard to Job, may be suitably applied to the Book of Jonah.

"Such complete harmony of form and thought, must be the work of an individual genius of the highest order. The Job story is a product of reflective art, just as are the stories of Ruth and Jonah, two other masterpieces dating from the same period. In these as in Job, the vividness and lofty presentation, the depth and thought and the subtle harmony of thought and form, are the outstanding literary

features. In all three, psychological analysis, moral preachment, and literary ornament are so dexterously woven into the fabric, so made a vital part of it, that the reader is not aware of the process, but conscious of the effect." 6

1. And he prepared a table of spices,
And he set it in the temple of the Lord,
For seven days and seven nights.

2. And when the day was come,
When the sun was up in the morning,
He went up to the temple of the Lord.

3. And he saw the glory of the Lord,
And he saw the power of the Lord,
And he saw the majesty of the Lord.

4. And he saw the glory of the Lord,
And he saw the power of the Lord,
And he saw the majesty of the Lord.

5. And he saw the glory of the Lord,
And he saw the power of the Lord,
And he saw the majesty of the Lord.

6. And he saw the glory of the Lord,
And he saw the power of the Lord,
And he saw the majesty of the Lord.

7. The waters have compassed me about to suffocation,
The deep was round about me,
Sea weeds came about my head;

8. I have gone down to the land whose bars
Are everlasting bolts,

9. But thou wilt bring me up alive from the abyss,
O Lord my God.

Supplement to Chapter I with notes.

Prayer of Supplication-Arrangement of Jonah 2 :3-10

1. And God prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah
And Jonah remained in the bowels of the fish
for three days and three nights.

2. And Jonah prayed to the Lord his God out of the
bowels of the fish saying :

3. Out of my distress I call

Unto the Lord, that he may answer me;

From the womb of the netherworld, I cry out :

Hear thou my voice!

4. For thou didst cast me into the deep,

Into the heart of the seas,

⁷
The floods ever more engulfing me,

All thy waves and billows,

Passed over me.

5. And I thought "I am cast out

From thy sight;

How can I ever again gaze

Upon thy holy temple?"

6. The waters have compassed me about to suffocation,

The deep was round about me,

Sea weeds clung about my head;

7. I have gone down to the land whose bars

Are everlasting bolts,

But thou wilt bring me up alive from the abyss,

O Lord my God.

#7 See Is. 6 : 4 והבית ימלא עשן

The temple became ever more filled with smoke

8. Even though my soul is faint within me,

Yet I remember the Lord;

May my prayer come unto thee,

To thy holy temple.

9. They who worship the illusory

Reject thy love for them :

10. But I, with a prayer of thanksgiving,

Will offer sacrifices to thee;

What I now vow I will surely pay.

Salvation is the Lord's.⁸

11. Whereupon God gave order to the fish that it should

vomit Jonah forth upon dry land.

#8. This phrase is to be considered as a stock phrase, "It presents the sum and substance of the whole hymn." "And the force of which is heightened both by its unexpected suddenness and its concise form as a general maxim. It ought therefore not be connected with the preceding words nor should it be restricted to the writer alone."

M. Kalisch. Biblical Studies. Vol. 2. p. 219.

Notes on Jonah's prayer of supplication-

Verse 3-

Right here it might be stated that the writer of this thesis, has the strong feeling that the author of the Book of Jonah, fully intended to convey the thought that Jonah offered this prayer while in the belly of the fish. Were it otherwise, the spirit of the whole prayer would be lost. **וְהוֹדָה** does not allow any other translation but in a precativ sense. There we have a clear cut case of precativ perfect.

Verse 4-

See note on this verse on previous page.

Verse 5-

"I am cast out from thy sight". See psalm 31:23-

"Agitated I thought I am cast out from thy sight" (reading **אֶרְשָׁתִּי** for **אֶרְשָׁתִּי** as found in Jonah 2:5 Another translation-

"In my erstwhile agitation I thought I am cast out from thy sight, yet thou shalt (prophetic perfect) hear my supplication when I cry unto thee"

This phrase "cast out from thy sight" is not necessarily a plagiarism from Jonah 2:5 but it is more probable that this phrase in psalm 31:23 was taken from Jonah which is of much higher character in literary thought, and for proof we may cite the verbatim quotation from Jeremiah in psalm 31:14; verse 11 also as dependent upon Jeremiah 20:18 which though not directly quoted seems to be model for latter psalm verse (31:14). There are also other evidences in psalm 31 of borrowings.

Read with Theodotion **וְהוֹדָה** instead of **וְהוֹדָה**. Most translations give a supposed assurance that he (Jonah) will be saved. On account of missing the precativ sense in verse 3, the ordinary translations get off the track entirely; the KEY VERSE is in Verse 3. Upon it depends the interpretation of the whole prayer. Once this is established, then we cannot avoid the conclusion that verse 5b has been usually

The current translation of 2:2ff is therefore mistranslated, and accordingly, presented an inconsistent and false assurance that does not approach the true loftiness of the whole prayer, the pace of which is set in verse 3; because it injects into the current, interpretation of verse 5b and irrelevant note of shallow optimism which falls far short of the true spirit of fervent prayer and trust in God expressed by precativ perfects of verse 3. In this connection it might be interesting to note what Ibn Ezra says. His comments on Jonah 2:2ff are remarkable in light of the fact that he arrives at a true understanding of the precativ sense either through intuition or logic- He sees the difficulty and anticipates the mistake which later commentators made- namely, that Jonah composed the prayer after the fish vomited him forth. Unlike the later exegetes Ibn Ezra, is not disturbed by *ממעי* translated by many

"from out of the belly of the fish," "after having proceeded from belly."

To Ibn Ezra it is absolutely clear that Jonah prayed while IN the belly of the fish- He claims that commentators distort its true meaning because they do not happen to find *במעי* instead of *ממעי*; but they fail to note the words- *מבטן שואתי* - "From the innermost part of Sheol / cry for help."

"I cry out from the womb" like "I cry out from the depth"

ממעמקים קראתיך

Ibn Ezra To Jonah 2:2

המכרשים רצו למרש חדוש והוציאו הכתוב מפשוטו
כי יונה לא התפלל רק אחר צאתו אל היבשה בעבור
שמצאו ממעי ולא אחר במעי. והלא ראו שם הכתוב
מבטן שואתי, וכנה ממעמקים קראתיך ה' וצור כי
חלת שואתי לאות כיהתפלל ושוא אל השם שרם שיקיאנו
וכנה ותבוא אליך תפילתי והנה למה לא היה כתוב
יתפלל יונה אחרי צאתו ממעי הדרג וצור כי אחר תפילתו
כתוב ויאמר ה' לרג

The current translations of 5b are therefore untenable.

May I remark that having arrived independently at this interpretation of verse 5, the writer was most gratified subsequently, to find that Byewer in the I. C. C. was in complete accord with the writer's own conclusion. To a remarkable extent, the present writer arrived at the identical translation by attempting to apply the spirit of Biblical exegesis acquired in the class room with Dr. Bittenwieser.

5b must be included as a part of the speech of 5a which expresses the thoughts of despair that seized Jonah as he descended into the depths. We are to assume that the prayer is of one who is praying to be released.

Verse 6--

וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה has presented difficulty.

Verse 7--

7a is Bewer's translation. He, however, omits the first two words of the verse. I retain them and with Nowack in Kittel Bible read הָיָה instead of וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה. Haupt would omit b part of verse 7- It can be retained and by merely changing the Vav consecutive to a Vav conjunctive which change makes it possible to maintain a future tense in this prayer rather than the mistaken use of the past tense while Jonah is still in the belly of the fish and still unsaved.

Verse 8--

Bewer here arrives at a similar conclusion to which I have arrived in verse 7 with regard to וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה in verse 8, the Vav of וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה which he would change from its consecutive vocalization to a Vav conjunctive וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה which Vav becomes a mere connective and need not be translated.

Verse 9--

Illusory- means idols or false gods.

Symmachus tried to evade a difficulty of this verse by reading הָיָה

for D70h but this is unnecessary since by retaining the reading there is conveyed the objective relationship of God's love FOR THEM. These latter two words are significant. There is an alternative reading of D70h which is suggested by Kittel and Marti which word means "their refuge".

Verse 10--

By changing לִּי to לְךָ and considering הַיָּהוָה as direct object of הִלְלֵהוּ we might translate 10 a A, "but I amid loud prayer, Will offer up sacrifices of thanksgiving. לְךָ as it stands, is a construct but by changing it to לְךָ it becomes absolute with definite article.

The psychological assumption is that while in the belly of the fish, Jonah makes a vow to perform a certain act if God will deliver him. Therefore נִדְאַרְתִּי must be translated in the present tense and must be considered as a perfect of an act which is simultaneous with the statement- Cf. Gen. 14:22 $\text{הִנֵּה יָדִי מִלְּבָרָא}$. I lift up-- that is I have^{at} the moment, as I speak lifted up my hand to heaven. See Driver "Use of Tenses in Hebrew". p. 15. Here Driver compares this with the Greek "Aorist of immediate past".

II Sam. 16:4 "I bow myself down"- in act of bowing down-

II Sam. 17:11 I advise, II Sam 19:30 I say (in act of saying)

I Kings 1:35 $\text{וְהִנֵּנִי לְךָ$ and him do I appoint (to be a prince over Israel.)

Frederick Bleek 9 comes pretty close to a clearer understanding of Jonah's prayer of supplication in the following remarks:

"It is quite contrary to the tenor of the narrative to suppose, as many have thought, that the thanksgiving song of the prophet was composed and sung after the fish had vomited him up; for we are expressly told, in V. 1, that Jonah made this prayer out of the belly of the fish, and this, as his swallowing up and preser-

#9. Frederick Bleek. An introduction to the Old Testament Vol. 2 p. 184--- 1888

vation are spoken of immediately before, can only be intended to refer to the time during which he was in the stomach of the creature; and it is not related until after the communication of the psalm, that the fish at Jehovah's command, vomited Jonah up on the dry land."

And a few lines previous, he makes a statement, which to my mind, detracts from his fine interpretation.

"Least of all could this position of the prophet be felt to be a state of complete deliverance, as would appear from the song ch. u. 2-9; which song, however, does not appear at all suitable to his circumstances, as it is not a prayer of deliverance, but rather a thanksgiving for salvation experienced." 10

Bleek slips us when he call the prayer

"A thanksgiving for salvation experienced."

This is just what it is not. Jonah had not yet experienced salvation. I must repeated here that Jonah's prayer was in the nature of a supplication.

a noted biblical scholar, asserts that the Book of Jonah is not only historical but that Jonah did go to the Ninevetes - Reasoning as he does, he places the origin of the book between the years 606 and 586-¹² What purpose would such a book have had in the years 606¹² and 586?

#11. Vide. Theologie Studien und Kritiken Vol. 79 p. 188 Gotha 1906

#12. C. H. Gadd Chronicle has established date of fall of Nineveh at 612 B. C.

Religious Spirit-

It is quite conceivable that a clear grasp of the outward literary form of any work of art is essential to the understanding of its matter and spirit- Having made a literary study of the Book of Jonah, we are now better prepared to extract the religious spirit of this unique masterpiece of literature- What special note is woven through this book? Right at the outset, we find the book opening with the conception of accepting the Gentiles' repentance and God's recognition of it- The book terminates with this idea - In this connection, those famous Chapters of Deutero Isaiah (40-66) may be cited - This same idea may be found in Zechariah 8²³ and those days, ten men of all the tongues of the nations, shall seize the skirt of a Jew saying,

'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'

In the book of Jonah, we see the lofty conceptions as promulgated by the great literary prophets - a proclamation of universality of the divine plan of salvation to all peoples.

Viewed as a coherent whole, the book would seem to have been written with the dominant intention of proclaiming a bold and determined protest against the rigid, popular, narrow Jewish outlook upon the world of mankind, according to which God's interest was strictly confined to the family of Abraham, while the rest of humanity was accursed and irrevocably doomed to eternal rejection. And that which gives permanent value to this book, is the writer's clear understanding of how human and natural it is for one to contract his sympathy. This natural tendency of the human heart, he finds to be always in operation.

The mission of Moses e.g. was to deliver the Israelites, Elijah was to reclaim the chosen people of Jahweh, but Jonah was commanded

to go and preach repentance to a heathen people, the natural enemies of his own beloved Israel. When we remember that Jonah was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a nation taught and commanded by the law, not to have any intimate relations with the surrounding nations, it is not marvelous that he should not have heeded ~~to~~ his first summons.

What a grand step forward in the pageant of the religious spirit! And here is where the author strikes the highest spiritual note when he doesn't hesitate to use an Israelite as his hero, describing him in no flattering terms. His narrow mindedness and lack of charity are painted in dismal colors. There is no effort at concealment or palliation. In fact, Jonah's disobedience and revengeful spirit are made prominent. At what disadvantage does Jonah the prophet appear when compared with the heathen sailors or the wicked Ninevites! At this juncture, it is unnecessary to discuss whether the book is a mere fiction, but it is evident that the author brings out the religious spirit of the books sublimely when he assigns the hero of the story to such an ignoble position. It is very patent, that the writer ascribed to the heathen sailors, a nobility of character, far superior to that of Jonah, and to the idolatrous inhabitants of Nineveh, a readiness to accept the words of Jahweh and repent, which an ordinary Hebrew would hesitate to attribute to any people, outside the pale of Israel.

"The writer, "according to Kalisch, "lived at an epoch when the the Jews, feeble and imperfectly organized, hardly pretended to national importance and surveyed the history of the past from a religious rather than a political aspect. He was therefore unable to conceive any other object of Jonah's journey than moral reformation, and it was from this point of view that he endeavored to estimate its character and significance. He succeeded in his task, or at least in all essential points, to a degree which fully justifies the place his narrative occupies in the Hebrew canon; for in ideas and conceptions, it breathes the lofty spirit of the greatest and noblest of Hebrew prophets- The mighty force and beneficent sway of that spirit, are proved by the undeniable fact that even its echoes and last vibrations had the power to uplift and purify and enlarge the minds and to cement the sympathies between race and race, in an age which by all its

tendencies and a thousand influences, aimed at seclusion and isolation."

Only the strongest conviction of a writer, could represent the worldly and pitiless Assyrians as meekly listening to the denunciation of a total stranger, and with no other weapon than enthusiasm and eloquence. In short, we can see the main current of the religious spirit of the book to be -- Jahweh is God alone over all the sea and the dry land. Everywhere the mind of man, even of heathen men, is susceptible to the sense of sin. Jahweh's operations have only to be known, for all men to believe in him. The conclusion which the prophet sought to evade, hardly needs drawn. Israel's mission and destiny of mankind are plain- The book is a beautiful poem, whether it paints the humanity of the heathen sailors or the mourning of the prophet over the decay of the gourd, or particularly the divine tenderness in ministering to the diseased mind of the prophet with his imperfect conceptions or in pitying the little children of Nineveh. More than that, we see the author's love of mankind, his kindly appreciation of all that is good and beautiful in men everywhere.

Out of the life of Jonah, and out of the experience of a ship's crew of heathen sailors, and out of the Ninevite spectacle, the author establishes the great and fundamental truth of the immanence of the living of God -- always everywhere, with everybody from the mightiest monarch to the lowliest maid-servant behind the mill, whether separately or in casual groups or in the body of a whole kingdom or empire. Jonah proves the universal fact expressed in the language of the psalmist,

"Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I make my bed nether-world, thou art there." Ps. 139 : 7, 8.

There seems to be agreement among Biblical scholars, that the Book of Jonah was written for a very definite and distinct purpose- It therefore struck me with surprise when I found that Hans Schmidt,

Schmidt fails to take cognizance of the fact that the Book of Jonah had a distinct purpose. It was not written purely because a writer wanted merely to write a story- Only the exigencies of a certain age, could have prompted the formulation of such a book.

In language and style, the Book of Jonah may not possess the grandeur that the second Isaiah reaches, but the spirit pervading the Book of Jonah is without question a culmination of those lofty conceptions preached by the earlier literary prophets. The message in the Book of Jonah is succinctly put. The implications are precise and clear.

To sum up, we can see that the strong point of the Book of Jonah, does not lie in historical detail but in humanitarian and religious ideas. The book strikingly illustrates the beautiful doctrines of repentance, mercy and love. The heathens are "auch Menschen"-

CHAPTER III
DATE

There seems to be general agreement that the Book of Jonah was written after the exile, and yet not later than third century B. C. According to Dr. Bewer¹³ the book had its origin between 400 and 200 B. C. Sir George Adam Smith places the book at 300 B. C. one hundred and thirty years after the work of Ezra and Nehemiah¹⁴. Paul Haupt would place the book under the reign of Alexander Jannaeus 100 B. C. claiming that the book was a Sadducean protest against Pharisaic exclusiveness- Kalisch believes the book to have been written within Persian period 538 B. C. 332 B. C.¹⁵ The prose part of the Book of Jonah could not possibly have been written earlier than 7th century for Nineveh was not a great city before that time. The date of the fall of Nineveh - 612 B. C.¹⁶ must be considered.

Those who do not accept the book as pure history, think that they have some justification for their conclusions, inasmuch as this great event is not corroborated by any other prophet or O. T. writer. (This would bring strength to the argument that the book is of late origin.) Nor is there any reference on Assyrian monuments -apparently the Assyrians were not given to record religious events upon monuments.

Surely if anyone had written the book in the 8th C., it is conceivable that he would have said Nineveh IS a great city because in the 8th C. just prior to its destruction, Nineveh was a most powerful

city. Mr. C. J. Gadd in a paper read before the British Academy in

#13. Julius A. Bewer. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary I.C.C.p.13.

#14. Sir George Adam Smith. Expositor's Bible.

#15. M. M. Kalisch. Biblical Studies part 2 p. 222. London-1878.

#16. C. H. Gadd. Paper before British Academy July 1923.

July 1923, described a Babylonian tablet which dates the fall of Nineveh in the 14th year of Napolassar's reign 612 B. C. In any event, the book could not have been written sooner than 612 B. C. the time when Nineveh was considered as a

"great city".

"Kleinert assigns the book to the exile. Ewald to the 5th or 6th C., Driver to the 5th C., Orelli to the last Chaldean or first Persian age, Vatke to the 3rd C. These assign generally to after the exile. Cheyne (Theol. Review XIV. p. 218, König, Robertson Smith, Kuenen, Wildeboer, Budde, Cornill, Farrar. Hitzig brings it down as far as Maccabean age, which is impossible if the prophetic canon closed in 200 B. C. Nowack dates the book after Joel" 17

"If it could be proved that the Book of Jonah, quotes from Joel, that would indeed set it down to a very late date probably about 300 B. C. the period of the composition of Ezra and Nehemiah, with the language of which its own shows most affinity." 18

"But though it is evident that the book was written after the restoration of Babylon, there is nothing which can be fairly interpreted as an allusion to the episode of the marriage difficulty. The Book of Jonah, however, contains indications of having been composed at a time when the Jews had been expecting an overthrow of the Gentile power, and when their hopes were for a season disappointed. These indications point to its composition at some date shortly after the governorship of Zerrubbabel (Circa 537 B. C.)" 19.

Kent remarks, "The literary kinship of the Book is with Chronicles, Esther and other writings which come from the Greek period."

Furthermore, in Jonah 3-9, the author apparently quotes from Joel 2:14, and in Jonah 4:2, from Joel 2:13- The universalism in the book is also a protest against the Jewish particularism which characterizes Judaism in the post-exilic period- Its astonishing breadth of outlook which came to certain of the Jews as a result of the conquest of

#17. G. A. Smith. The Book of the Twelve Prophets-Note 2. P. 498. The Expositor's Bible N. Y. 1898.

#18. Ibidem p. 498 top.

#19. C. H. H. Wright-Biblical Essays p. 20 of introduction T, T. Clark Edinburg 1886.

Alexander and contact with Greek culture- Possibly its author was a Jew of the dispersion-----The book may be dated with considerable assurance in the light of this varied evidence somewhere about 300 B. C.²⁰

The Jonah mentioned in II. Kings 14:25 must have lived during the years 783-743 B. C.

Perowne says that "There is no reason to doubt that Jonah was himself the author of the book which bears his name."²¹

This view is untenable and there is little support for this contention. The author could not have been Jonah, the son of Amittai who lived in the 8th C. B. C. There is no evidence in the book that would indicate its authorship- It is not likely that if Jonah were the author he would have spoken in the first person? If that book were penned during the 8th C., surely the author would not have spoken of Nineveh as the "great city"

for Nineveh reached its height of glory just prior to 612 B. C.

In the days of Jonah, Nineveh did not possess the magnitude and importance assigned to it in the book. The book is skilful and artistic touch in a work of imagination. It becomes a gross misrepresentation if the work is to be judged strictly as history. It is clearly settled from the well attested evidence in the case, that the city of Nineveh was enlarged and embellished and fortified by Sennacherib (701-687 B. C.) who made it the capital of the empire. It had indeed served as such before 880 when Assurnazerpal on ascending the throne, made Calab the seat of government and royal residence- Calab remained the capital 880-701 B. C. Precisely in the days of Jeroboam 781-741 Nineveh had fallen into a secondary place. Sennacherib found it a

#20. Charles Foster Kent "The Sermons, Epistles, and Apocalypses of Israel's Prophets" p. 419-The Student's U. T. N. Y. 1910.

#21. Perowne- Cambridge Bible- "Obadiah and Jonah P. 45.

wretched place. Then again what conditions in 8th C. could have prompted the production of such a book with such a unique message? Anyone who asserts that the book finds its origin in the 8th C. holds to the old traditional notion that everything in the Bible is God revealed and whatever is in the Bible is the truth and nothing but the truth. Biblical criticism has shown the way to a clearer understanding of Scriptures and it is in this spirit that the date of the book of Jonah must be established. The character of the language of the book is that of the post exilic period, not that of the 8th C. B. C.

The silence of Hebrew records with reference to such a great event and signal triumph of the religion of Yahweh and its acceptance by the king of the Assyrians, is unaccountable. At the time the book was written, the greatness of Nineveh as was said before was a thing of the past הַיָּמִים הַהֵם.

The examination of the text may furnish some insight to the date of its composition. Traces of some Aramaisms, tend to convince us that the Aramaic language must have found its way into the Hebrew. This contact with the Aramaic did not happen until after the exile. In counting 50 years for the captivity, this would bring the first contacts with Aramaic around 537 B. C. It was after this date that Hebrew started on its decadent trend. So if we accept this reasoning, the book could not have been written earlier than 537 B. C. The linguistic characteristics are essentially different from that of the language of Hosea or Amos. I - WAS SO FOR MANY YEARS.

In the Book of Jonah we find a late syntax similar to that found in the book of Ezra and Nehemiah, books composed about 350 B. C. Psalm 31 which is post exilic, shows evidence of borrowings from the Book of Jonah Cf. ps. 31:7 Jonah 2:9. Take verse 11 of this same psalm, and we can see how it is dependent upon Jeremiah 20:18. Compare Jonah

2:10 with ps. 42:5, a well acknowledged post exilic psalm; similarly Jonah 2:8 with psalm 88:3.

Although Dr. Kalisch claims that the numerous Aramaisms scattered through the book, are no argument for its late origin, never-the-less, it is quite reasonable to assume that the Aramaisms are somewhat of a proof of the book's late production- Even if the syntax and the loan words were no argument, the religious tenor of the book would be sufficient proof. As we showed in Chapter 2 a great work of art does not spring up without cause. And we have conclusive proof that the condition of the times between the years 500 and 300 were such as to impel a genius to take an old tradition and use it as a vehicle for what is peculiarly his own great truth.

It would be well to take some of the peculiar words and probable Aramaisms and list them at this juncture. For the selection of these words, I am indebted to Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible p. 748 and to Hebrew and English Lexicon of O. T. by Brown, Driver, Briggs 1907. 1:4 נִשְׁחַח - not found in earlier literature. 1:5 נִשְׁחַח cf. 1 Kings 7:3, 7- נִשְׁחַח .

Sephina is a hapax legomenon. The word is frequently found in Aramaic but this does not necessarily imply that נִשְׁחַח is an Aramaic loan word.

1:5 דִּבְרֵי הַיָּם probably a loan word from Assyrian *Malahu*, also is Aramaic. Vide p. 572 B. D. Briggs. This word was not used accidentally since O. T. has so few sea stories.

1:6 חַלְלָה for Hebrew חָלַל is clearly an Aramaism Cf. Dan 6:4.

1:7 חַלְלָה although this occurs side by side with חָלַל occurs frequently in later writings Cf Aramaic חָלַל .

The discussion that the prayer is part of the unity of the Book of Jonah and consequently is as late as the book itself, can be found

in the supplementary portion of Chapter I of this paper. Consequently,
 חַיָּה in 2: ; 4:6, 7, 8 is a favorite word of our author for the earlier
 חַיָּה. The former is found elsewhere in I Chr. 9:29, ps. 61:8 Dan.
 1:5, 10, 18 and very frequently in the Aramaic. Aramaic used all the
 3:2 חַיָּה prophecy is a Hapox Segomenon not found in earlier litera-
 ture.
 3:7 דְּעִי-decision- used as such is purely an Aramaism- This is the
 only place in O. T. where it is used in this sense. In Ezra and
 Daniel דְּעִי possesses the meaning of "decision". Cf. Dan. 3:10
 4:6 חַיָּה a word which has given difficulty.
 Perowne²² like many others identifies kikayon with the castor
 oil plant- ricinus communis-, claiming that the name used in Heb-
 rew is akin to the Egyptian word kikeia or kika-
 Bewer²³ says that kikayon, etymologically appears to be connected
 with Egyptian kiki. The Assyrian Kukanitu has not been definitely
 identified.
 4:10 חַיָּה became common in later Hebrew under Aramaic influence-
 4:8 חַיָּה has earmarks of Aramaism.

A further note on kikayon.

Recently there appeared an interesting page:

"Was ist kikayon?"²⁴

The author of the monograph argues that if kikayon was derived
 from the Egyptian, then it cannot be explained how Jonah could have
 constructed a hut out of a plant-ricinus communis- which does not
 climb- The Greek rendered kikayon correctly as Efeu which has
 been rightly translated by Luther as Kürbis- squash-which is of

#22. Cambridge Bible p. 87. we may safely conclude that the Book of

#23. I. C. C. p. 61 of Jonah Section.

#24. Karl Ahrens. Zeitschrift für Semestik und Verwandte Gebiete Vol.

2. p. 99- Band 4. Seipzig 1926.

the cucumber family, which has the proclivity to climb. Consequently, the Hebrew kikayon, cannot come from the Egyptian word kiki which means castor oil plant. The word kikayon is either Greek or it possesses an Indo Germanic stem- This suggestion of part of Ahrens upset all the accepted notions that kikayon is from the word Egyptian kiki.

A more intensive study of the word might throw some light on the late date of the book.

The peculiarities in language with the entire tone coloring of narrative, leaves no doubt as to its recent date. Certainly no one imbued with the genius of Hebrew will assert that the language of the Book of Jonah belongs to the same age as that of Hosea or Amos.

It must be borne in mind that the Jonah narrative could not well have been written later than the beginning of the 4th C. because proof is furnished by its literary character- The book contains a number of Aramaisms; it is a work of high literary perfection; that it must have been produced while Hebrew Literature was at its height as Dr. Bittenwieser states with regard to Job:

"The close of the 4th C. however, marks the beginning of the encroachment of Aramaic on Hebrew-an encroachment which resulted first in the rapid decadence of the Hebrew language, and finally in its dying out altogether as a spoken tongue. If never-the-less the view is taken by some scholars that Job was written around 300 B. C., or even later, it is due to the fact that the dying out of Hebrew, though an event of extraordinary importance is commonly ignored in the historic surveys of post exilic times, mentioned only cursorily, as if it were a fact of little consequence. This event must be kept in mind in determining not alone the date of Job, but the date of many other post-exilic products." 25-

The opinion that the book in its present form was composed before the exile or immediately thereafter, is absolutely untenable - In light of the above study we may safely conclude that the Book of Jonah originated about 400 B. C.

HISTORICAL PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE.

Having established 400 B. C. as the reasonable date for the Book of Jonah, we are in a better position to ascertain the historical value and aim of the author's views. First, let us attempt to get a picture of the conditions of the time during which the book originated.

During the century and a half 537-400 after Nehemiah, the community in Judah was becoming more rigid in its exclusiveness and in its devotion to ritual. In Ezra, we find the impersonation of both these tendencies.- According to tradition, there was a man Ezra who became the hero of the introduction of the law and finally it attributed to him the abrogation of mixed marriages-

The ideal of holiness, that is of complete separation from all that is not consecrated to Yahweh, is most plainly, even brutally set before us in the account of the divorce of foreign wives. What coldness! The seed of Israel must be kept pure from intermixture- This view did not prevail without protest as can be seen by the production of a most delightful story - the book of Ruth, which most likely sprang up 400 B. C. or thereabouts.

During these years, the great spiritual truths of Deutero Isaiah were comprehended by very few of his countrymen. According to H. P. Smith,

"Deutero 'Isaiah's universalism lost sight of in the conflict between parties within the Jewish community. How bitter these conflicts were is made known by the Samaritan schism and by opposition to Gentile wives." 26

And here comes the striking polemic- The Book of Jonah. Only a man, bold and fearless, could write such a document. Who could escape the wrath of the people whose narrowness he rebuked? Who could escape

#26. Henry Preserved Smith- Religion of Israel p. 263, 264, Scribners N. Y. 1914.

their suspicion and hatred? To the stricter Jews, the Gentile had become objects of hatred only and the Jonah story purposely holds up the mirror, reflecting the Jewish tendency of the day. The author of the book believed God to be the God of not only the Jews but also of the Gentiles- In consequence, Jonah may be something more than a type of the narrow exclusiveness which the author abhorred. It is without presumption, I trust, to say that missionary ideas are invoked in the book. It is a likelihood that if Israel was in possession of the true religion, then it was Israel's duty to exercise this duty in enlightening those who were deprived of this knowledge of the true God.

Kohler claims, "The Book of Jonah is simply a refutation of the narrow nationalistic conception of Judaism, it holds forth the hope of the conversion of the heathen to the true knowledge of God."

However this is a general view. The more specific purpose of the book seems to have been for the proclamation of universality of the divine plan of salvation and to serve as a vigorous protest against the particularistic tendencies which now and then led many members of the people of Israel to strive to narrow the boundaries of the divine kingdom of grace- The book is consequently a brilliant example of the antithesis to the spirit that condemned the foreign wives.²⁷

The book desired to teach the narrow minded religious Jews of his age, to acknowledge divine capacity or potency in every human being. Duhm says that the book answers the question-why God did not root and the heathen and the sinner.

"Der Verfasser will seinen Zeitgenossen toleranz und Menschlichkeit predigen." ²⁸

The author directs the latter part of his story to the presentation of Jonah's resentment against the assurance of salvation of the Ninevites- For although after the return from Babylon, there were

#27. K. Kohler "Theology" p. 336- Macmillan Co.

stirrings of a gentler nature toward the ignorant heathen, yet the Jewish group as a whole looked upon them as some classes in India look upon others as the untouchables. ²⁹

Riehm ³⁰ feels that "the practical aim of this little book is to afford guidance in the proper treatment of the prophetic threatenings; that which the prophet predicts against his will is to be considered as the work of God, but man may be able to avert its fulfillment by means of repentance, and if this be done, objections must not be made that God's will is not fulfilled."

The splendid oracles contained in Is. 42, 43, 49, 52¹³, 53, 55, seemed to awaken few men to action. It seemed that as a moral force, prophetism was spent, was indeed bankrupt. Then in this epoch of religious narrowness and atavistic prophetism, the Book of Jonah might have been written as a satire upon the contemporary prophetic order and as an arraignment of nations whom prophets represented. The Book of Jonah was probably the work of a man of exceedingly fine literary culture and possessed of an outlook, broadened by travel and possessed of a heart whose affluence included humor and sympathy, as far reaching as that of any noble mind in O. T.

If the Book of Jonah were written as a satire upon the prophetic order of the day, it might very well be compared to Cervante's Don Quixote. Both possessed a serious moral purpose says, Prescott ³¹, in his essay on Cervantes, and in reviewing the intellectual and moral temper of Spain, of the 16th C, draws attention to the mischievous influence exerted by the books of chivalry then so widely current. He goes to to say that the mind of the Spanish people was debauched and their morals were inspired by foolish and impossible stories of knightly errantry. So much was this the case that Cortes petitioned the crown, but in vain,

#29. Mal 2 "Ez. 9 lff, 10 lff, Neh. 13²³ ff Esther 9¹³ #28. ZAW p. 200 1911

#30. Theologie Studien und Kritiken 1862 p. 413 ff.

#31. Prescott Wm. Hickling Biographical and Critical Miscellanies. Lippincott & Co. 1864.

to suppress the literature- The best minds in Spain deplored the patent degradation of popular tales but were helpless to stay it. Then it was that Cervantes wrote his immortal satire upon the knight errant. And like Jonah, the knight de la Mancha is not without elements of greatness. It is quite evident what Cervantes achieved with his effective criticism of a type of person who in previous years had fulfilled a real function, but whose figure had later become a nuisance and an injury to society.

Maybe the author of the Book of Jonah, was similarly prompted as was Cervantes, to satirize the society of his day. The Book of Jonah condemns a popular mood.

The historical purpose of the book is clear. In general, the author wanted to protest against the religious bigotry which prevailed among the mass of contemporaries. David Kimchi points out that the author wished to advance: How strange nations will hearken to prophetic message, whereas Israel requires frequent admonitions; How God's remarkable ways are manifested; How God is all too ready to forgive, especially when so multitudinous a people are concerned.

In conclusion, it might be stated, that while apparently the Book of Esther and Obadiah represent on the one hand, the demand for the overthrow of the heathen, the Book of Jonah on the other hand, represents Israel's mission as one of love and service to the world. The author of the Book of Jonah, cleverly sought to weave through his charming narrative, the doctrine of God's real will for nations, beyond the covenant. He took the ideas of a Deutero-Isaiah and carried them out to a logical conclusion- Jonah is Israel; often Israel flees from the duty of God laid upon him. Like Jonah, Israel is cast out upon strange waters, deep and treacherous, and for a set period, experiences a living death, and finally is rescued, to exhibit once more

the conception, that God holds out love to all of his children-

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last remarks: "Unfortunately the incident of Jonah's being swallowed by a great fish has largely obscured the real meaning and the message of the book. Many have been found, on the one hand, to defend the historicity of the story as a whole, while others, because of the grotesque character of the miracle, have rejected it as unworthy of credence or careful consideration."

#32. Felix Adler "Moral Instruction of Children" p. 110 Appleton N. Y. 1898.

433. Kent, Chas. Foster "Ezra. Epist-Apoc." p. 419, 420.

Pedagogic Aspect:

There are several books in the Bible that might be singled out for special studies in the field of pedagogy. The books of Ruth, Jonah and Hosea are but a few examples. Here are books which are unlimited in their possibilities, as vehicles for moral and religious truths, if only approached pedagogically.

Felix Adler in his book "Moral Instruction of Children" has paved the way.

He says: "Those who teach the biblical stories mostly because it has been customary to regard the Bible as the text book of morals and religion, without however, being clear as to the place which belongs to it, in a scheme of moral instruction will always, I doubt not, achieve a certain result. The stories will never entirely fail of their beneficial effect, but I cannot help thinking that this effect would be greatly heightened if their precise pedagogic value is distinctly apprehended, and if the preparatory steps have been taken in due course." ³²

As a rule, most teachers gloss over the fascinating story of Jonah. They are at a loss how to explain the great fish episode. Quite frequently a cynical teacher treats this book very lightly. It were better for such a teacher to omit the story entirely; the serious teacher, unable to account adequately, for the miraculous touch of the story, omits it and thus one of the grandest pieces of literature, remains unnoticed, unrecognized.

Kent remarks: "Unfortunately the incident of Jonah's being swallowed by a great fish has largely obscured the real meaning and the message of the book. Many have been found, on the one hand, to defend the historicity of the story as a whole, while others, because of the grotesque character of the miracle, have rejected it as unworthy of credence or careful consideration." ³³

#32. Felix Adler "Moral Instruction of Children" p. 110 Appleton N. Y. 1898.

#33. Kent, Chas. Foster "Serm. Epist-Apoc." p. 419, 420-

And this very "fish story" if rendered properly breathes forth one of the sublimest lessons that ever was. In fact the story is not so preposterous or imaginary. There are numerous instances where large objects even horses, have been found whole in the stomachs of large fish. Dr. Thomas Beale claims that the spermaceti whale has a throat large enough to give passage to a full sized man. Ruysch mentions one case where the complete body of a man in armor was found in a shark. Whether Jonah actually lived in the belly of a fish for three days and three nights, is not the question; the point is that this incident is merely a poetic figure, a figure inspired by the grandest truth. No doubt questions about the miracle will be asked by the children. It might be well for the teacher to be posted on the following illustrations:

"Fish large enough to swallow a man have doubtless been found occasionally in the Mediterranean Sea. The white shark swallows what it takes into its mouth whole. It is physically unable to divide its food piecemeal. Otto Fabricius tell us "its wont is to swallow down dead or living men at a gulp"

In 1758, a sailor fell overboard in the Mediterranean, when a shark took him in its wide throat; but the captain shot the shark and the sailor was rescued from his perilous condition without injury. The captain gave the man the fish which was exhibited throughout Europe. It was 20 ft. long, with fins 9 ft. wide and it weighed 3924 lbs. Blumenbach makes mention of a white shark which weighed 10,000 lbs. and tells us that horses have been found whole in the stomachs of these monsters of the deep.

A writer of the 17th C. "On the Fish of Marseilles" says that men of Nice assured him they once took a fish of the Canes Carcharias family 4000 lbs. in weight in the belly of which, a man whole was found.

Arion being cast into the sea, was swallowed by a dolphin. Arion of Lesbos was very rich and greatly beloved of Periander, King of Corinth.

#34. A Dictionary of Miracles. p. 212, Rev. E. Cobham Brewer quoting Dr. Pusey. Minor Prophets- Philadelphia T. B. Lippincott 1895.

One day being out at Sea, the mariners agreed to drown him and take possession of his money; so they cast him overboard. But a dolphin allured by the music of his lute had followed the ship and when the poet was cast into the waves, swallowed him up, and cast him forth alive, on Taenaros, a town, Laconia (Herodotus, History 1:23,24).

Hercules being shipwrecked, was swallowed by a fish. Lycophron, the Greek poet, relates that Herclues, on his home voyage, after the adventure of the Golden Fleece was shipwrecked; and being swallowed by a monstrous fish was disgorged alive on shore after the space of three days.

A perusal of the narrative reveals a picture, not of a great military power, kings, nobles, and armed battalions but merely the vision of those monotonous thousands. The narrator strips his country's foes of everything foreign, everything provocative of envy and hatred and unfolds them to Israel only in their teeming humanity. Out there beyond the covenant in the great wide world, there is a people lying in spiritual darkness. They are not created for ignorance and hostility to God, elect for destruction but men and women with consciences and hearts ready to turn to God. Even to the very farthest ends of the earth and even on the high places of unrighteousness, God's word and mercy are just as effective as within the pale of Israel.

A modern writer would unquestionably describe in full detail, the feelings and thoughts of his heroes; the ancient Biblical writers however, bring action instead of words. They paint pictures in pithy language. For example, the writer of Genesis says nothing of the thoughts of Adam when Eve gave him the apple but merely "He ate it". The scriptural writer of the Abraham cycle does not say that Abraham was hospitable but merely that he went forth to greet his three guests, bowed himself to the ground. In the Joseph story, we do not find that Joseph had

compassion with his brothers but he turned aside to cry. And the same economy of words we find in the Jonah narrative—overboard. The

Now if the teacher tells the story of Jonah in simple biblical language, she need have no apprehension as to the effect this story will have. Everything is so concise, so vivid, so dramatic.

Let us come to the main theme. We are not told that the command of Yahweh to go to Nineveh, displeased Jonah but that he fled. Not that Yahweh was vexed over Jonah's obstreperous attitude but merely that he disturbed the sea. Not that the captain asked him why he had fled from the presence of Yahweh but: What is thy occupation? And whence comest thou? What is thy country? And of what people art thou? Jonah did not attempt to evade these questions but answered simply,

"I am a Hebrew, I fear Yahweh, the God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land."

At this juncture, the teacher might ask what effect his confession had on the sailors. The effect of his bold confession is strikingly couched.

"Then the men were exceedingly afraid" and said unto him: "Why has thou done this?"

We are not told that the men hesitated to cast Jonah overboard, but they asked him what to do.

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights,"

is a striking conclusion to chapter one.

In this chapter of seventeen verses, we have been with Jonah down at the Joppa port, fleeing from Yahweh to his descent into his subterranean abode. The speedy chartering of the boat bound for Tarshish, the great storm at sea, the sailors battling with a most harrowing storm, feverish excitement on board; Jonah is found asleep in the hold of the ship. Bag and baggage ordered to be flung overboard. Every man is commanded to pray to his God. The sea becomes more and more

tempestuous. Casting of lots is resorted to. Jonah is the victim. Jonah's bold confession and brave suggestion that he be cast overboard. The hopefulness of the men to reach port of safety, but all in vain. The sea is master. To save the ship and all aboard, Jonah disappears amid the mountainous waves. The sea is calm. A huge fish swallows Jonah. The remainder of the narrative is replete with other such graphic and arresting pictures.

We have no lengthy description of how Jonah fared in the belly of the great fish, not a single word about his regret for having fled from the presence of Yahweh, but simply that Jonah prayed to God. Again imagination comes into play.

The author purposely omits telling whether or not Yahweh forgave Jonah but only

"that God spoke unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land"

Was Jonah pleased to go to Nineveh when he received his second commission? Not a word! Merely,

"Jonah arose and went to Nineveh according to the word of the Lord."

When Jonah reached the city were the people prepared for his message? Apparently he did not prepare them for his message. He merely went about the city uttering that doleful note.

"Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

The writer makes no charges against the Ninevites. The question: Why should the city be destroyed? must come up. The child might ask and might not. It is conceivable however, that the people must have been exceedingly perverse to have such a fate in store for them. How did the Ninevites receive Jonah's proclamation? The next verse tells us:

"To the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them."

What significance there is in such a verse. Is not this a marvelous picture of penitence?

Without much ado, they marked their self humiliation by divesting themselves of every ornament and exchanged their ordinary costly garments for coarse and hairy sackcloth. The teacher has marvelous opportunity with the very next verse.

"And God saw their WORKS. 35. That they turned from their evil, and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do to them and he did it not"

What a fine delineation of reformation and God's real forgiveness.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart."

Children might do well to memorize such a verse in this connection. This is the charming conclusion to Chapter 3.

Whereas the third chapter ends with that grand line

"God saw their works" etc., the fourth opens up with a picture of Jonah's displeasure. "And it annoyed Jonah exceedingly and he was very angry."

Why was it necessary to depict Jonah's chagrin over his unfulfilled prophecy? Did not the author accomplish the task he set out to achieve?—to show the power of true repentance. No the writer would yet complete his picture. From this point on to the end, he must show the long suffering of God and the impatience of man. Jonah was smitten by the stigma of being labeled a false prophet. He preferred death.

"I pray Thee O Lord, was not this saying when I was yet in my own country? Therefore I fled before^{unto} Tarshish for I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness and repentest of the evil." This verse brings out the pettiness too, of Jonah. It reveals Jonah as an "I Told you so."

#35. In Mishna Taanith 1:3-2:4: there is a beautiful description of the manner in which the rabbinical authorities used to proclaim a fast. It is small wonder that the synagogue chose the Book of Jonah as an appropriate reading for the day of atonement.

Even the youngest child will readily understand the folly of such an attitude. Poor Jonah expressed his vexation indirectly, yet is so obviously clear that he was displeased because of offended vanity and mortified pride because his predictions were not fulfilled. Without any attempt to moralize, the teacher can extract the hidden truths of the balance of the narrative by adhering to the simple language of the Bible.

When impetuous Jonah pleads in the following strain:

"O Lord I beseech Thee, take my life from me,
for it is better for me to die than to live,"

note the charming reply in the form of a mild question:

"Doeest thou well to be angry?"

Jonah is yet hopeful that the city will be destroyed, so

"he goes out of the city and there made himself
a booth and sat under it in the shadow till he
might see what would become of the city."

The kikayon served as a shade for Jonah against the tropical heat, but Jonah was disturbed when the vine perished so quickly. And immediately follows that touching line with its significant admonition:

"Doeest thou well to be angry over the gourd vine?"
The prophet retorted: "I do well to be angry
even unto death."

In this subtle manner, the author conveys this thought which the children will indubitably grasp: If such a perishable and comparatively valueless plant has its appointed purpose and usefulness, how much more A LARGE AND MIGHTY EMPIRE? A gentle but forceful rebuke. What is equal to the dignity of man? And yet Jonah had more compassion over AN INSENSIBLE PLANT THAN OVER MYRIADS OF MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN."

"Thou hast pity on this gourd plant which thou
hast not made to grow, which came up in a night
and perished in a night. And should I not have
pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein are
more than twelve myriads of persons that cannot
discern between their right hand and their left
hand and also many beasts."

This conclusion is a unique piece, of artistic workmanship. To the

author, the Ninevites were infinitely precious because they were men. God knows no chosen ones, he knows people as his children. The teacher by digesting the narrative, must come to the conclusion that there is a wealth of pedagogic material compact in these four short chapters. And that the apologue is effective and rounds out the entire narrative, and that the enthusiastic teacher can produce moral effects by using the materials herewith set forth, I entertain no doubt.