

# THE PROPHETE IONAS WITH AN INTRODUCCION

by William Tyndale

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*William Tyndale's exposition of the prophet Jonah with an introduction addressing the proper interpretation of Scripture, warning against false traditions and allegorical misuse of the Bible.*

8 Chapters

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## The Prophete Ionas With An Introduccion

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## {Transcriber's note:

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The spelling and word divisions are inconsistent throughout the original. No changes have been made, but some possible typographical errors are listed at the end of the etext. There are two places in the original where paragraphs start with a decorative initial capital letter, instead of the usual ¶ sign. These paragraphs are preceded in this etext with a row of asterisks. Several contractions are used in the original.

- Vowels with a line over them, usually indicating an omitted m or n. These contractions have been expanded in this etext. - The words "the" and "that" are often printed in the original as a y with a very small e or t over the top. These contractions are represented in this etext by "[the]" and "[that]".

- The word "with" is sometimes printed in the original as a w followed by a superscript t. This contraction is represented in this etext by "[with]".

- The word "thus" is once printed in the original as a y followed by a superscript s. This contraction is represented in this etext by "[thus]".

} The prophete Ionas/ with an introduccion before teachinge to vnderstonde him and the right vse also of all the scripture/ and why it was written/ and what is therin to be sought/ and shewenge wherewith the scripture is locked vpp that he which readeth it/ can not vnderstonde it/ though he studie therin neuer so moch: and agayne with what keyes it is so opened/ that the reader can be stopped out with no sotilte or false doctrine of man/ from the true sense and vnderstondynge therof.

## W. T. vn to the Christen reader.

As [the] envious Philistenes stopped [the] welles of Abraham and filled them vpp with erth/ to put [the] memoriall out of minde/ to [the] entent [that] they might chalenge [the] grounde: even so the fleshly minded ypocrites stoppe vpp the vaynes of life which are in [the] scripture/ [with] the erth of theyr tradicions/ false similitudes & lienge allegories: & [that] of like zeale/ to make [the] scripture theyr awne possession & marchaundice: and so shutt vpp the kingdome of heven which is Gods worde nether enteringe in them selues nor soferinge them that wolde. ¶ The scripture hath a body with out/ and within a soule/ sprite & life. It hath [with] out a barke/ a shell and as it were an hard bone for [the] fleshly mynded to gnaw vppon. And within it hath pith/ cornell/ mary & all swetnesse for Gods electe which he hath chosen to geve them his spirite/ & to write his law & [the] faith of his sonne in their hertes. ¶ The scripture conteyneth .iii. thinges in it first [the] law to condemne all flesh: secondaryly [the] Gospell/ [that] is to saye/ promises of mercie for all [that] repent & knowlege their sinnes at the preachinge of [the] law & consent in their hertes that the law is good/ & submitte them selues to be scolers to lerne to kepe the lawe & to lerne to beleue [the] mercie that is promised them: & thridly the stories & liues of those scolers/ both what chaunces fortuneth them/ & also by what meanes their scolemaster taught them and made them perfecte/ & how he tried the true from the false. ¶ When [the] ypocrites come to [the] lawe/ they put gloses to and make no moare of it then of a worldly law which is satisfied with [the] outwarde worke and which a turke maye also fulfill. When yet Gods law never ceaseth to condemne a man vntill it be written in his herte and vntill he kepe it naturally without compulsion & all other respecte saue only of pure love to God and his neyboure/ as he naturally eateth when he is an hongred/ without compulsion & all other respecte/ saue to slake his hongre only. ¶ And when they come to the Gospell/ there they mingle their leuen & saye/ God now receaueth vs no moare to mercie/ but of mercie receaueth vs to penaunce/ that is to wete/ holy dedes [that] make them fatt belies & vs their captiues/ both in soule and body. And yet they fayne theyr Idole [the] Pope so mercifull/ [that] if thou make a litle money glister in his Balams eyes/ there is nether penaunce ner purgatory ner any fasting at all but to fle to heven as swefte as a thought and at the twinkellynge of an eye. ¶ And the liues stories and gestes of men which are contayned in the bible/ they reade as thinges no moare perteyninge vn to them/ then a take of Robin hode/ & as thinges they wott not wherto they serue/ saue to fayne false discant & iuglinge allegories/ to stablish their kingdome with all. And one [the] chefest & fleshliest studie they have/ is to magnifie [the] sayntes aboue measure & aboue [the] trueth & with their poetrie to make them greater then euer God make them. And if they finde any infirmite or synne asscribed vn to [the] saintes/ that they excuse with all diligence/ diminishinge the glorie of [the] mercie of God & robbinge wretched sinners of all theyr comforte/ & thinke therby to flater the sayntes and to obtayne their fauoure & to make speciall aduocates of them: even as a man wold obtayne [the] fauoure of wordely tirantes: as they also fayne the saintes moch moare cruell then ever was any heathen man & moare wrekefull and vengeable then [the] poetes faine their godes or their furies [that] torment [the] soules in hell/ if theyr euens be not fasted & their images visited & saluted wyth a Pater noster (whych prayer only oure lippes be accoynted with oure hertes vnderstandinge none at all) and worsheped [with] a candell & [the] offeringe of oure deuocion/ in

[the] place which thei haue chosen to heare [the] supplicacions & meke petitions of their clientes therin. ¶ But thou reader thinke of [the] law of God how [that] it is all to gether spirituall/ & so spirituall [that] it is neuer fulfilled [with] dedes or werkes/ vntill they flow out of thyne herte [with] as greate loue toward thy neyboure/ for no deseruinge of his ye though he be thine enimie/ as Christ loued [the] and did for the/ for no deseruinge of thyne/ but even when thou wast his enimie. And in [the] meane time/ thoroute all our infancie & childhod in Christ/ tyll we be growen vpp in to perfecte men in the full knowlege of christ & full loue of christ agayne & of oure neyboures for his sake/ after [the] ensample of his loue to vs/ rembenbir that [the] fulfillynge of [the] law is/ a fast fayth in christes blood coupled [with] our profession & submyttinge our selues to lerne to doo better. ¶ And of [the] Gospell or promises which thou metest in [the] scripture/ beleue fast [that] God will fulfill them vn to [the]/ and that vn to [the] vttemost lott/ at the repentaunce of thyne herte/ when thou turnest to hym & forsakest euell/ even of his goodnesse & fatherly mercie vn to the/ and not for thy flatteringe hym with ypocritish workes of thyne awne fayninge. So [that] a fast faith only with out respecte of all workes/ is the forgeuenesse both of the synne which we did in tyme of ignoraunce with luste and consent to synne/ & also of all the synne which we doo by chaunce & of frailte/ after [that] we are come to knowlege and have professed [the] law out of oure hertes. And all dedes serue only for to helpe oure neyboures & to tame oure flesh that we fall not to synne agayne/ & to exercise oure soules in vertue/ & not to make satisfaction to Godward for [the] synne [that] is once paste. ¶ And all other stories of [the] bible/ with out excepcion/ are [the] practisinge of [the] law & of the Gospell/ and are true and faitfull ensamples & sure erneste [that] God will euen so deale with vs/ as he did with them/ in all infirmities/ in all temptacions/ & in all like cases & chaunces. Wherin ye se on [the] one syde/ how fatherly & tenderly & with all compassion god entreateth his electe which submitte them selues as scolers/ to lerne to walke in the wayes of his lawes/ & to kepe them of loue. If they forgatt them selues at a time & went astraye/ he sought them out & sett them agayne with all mercie. If they fell & hurte them selues/ he healed them agayne with all compassion & tendernesse of hert. He hath ofte brought greate tribulation & aduersite vppon his electe: but all of fatherly loue only/ to teach them & to make them se their awne hertes & [the] sinne [that] there laye hid/ that they might affirwarde feale his mercie. For his mercie wayted vppon them/ to rid them out agayne/ assone as they ware lerned & come to [the] knowlege of their awne hertes: so that he neuer cast man awaye how depe so euer he had sinned/ saue them only which had first cast [the] yocke of his lawes from their neckes/ with vtter diffiaunce & malice of herte. Which ensamples how comfortable are they for vs/ when we be fallen in to sinne & God is come vppon vs with a scorge/ [that] we dispeare not/ but repent with full hope of mercie after [the] ensamples of mercie [that] are gone before: And therefore they were written for our lerninge/ as testifieth Paul Ro. xv. to comforte vs/ [that] we might [the] better put oure hope & trust in God/ when we se/ how mercifull he hath bene in tymes past vn to our weake brethern [that] are gone before/ in all theyr aduersities/ neade/ temptacions/ ye & horrible synnes in to which they now & then fell. ¶ And on [the] other side ye se how they [that] hardened their hertes & synned of malice & refused mercie [that] was offered them & had no power to repent/ perished at [the] later ende with all confusion & shame mercilessely. Which ensamples are very good & necessary/ to kepe vs in awe & dreade in tyme of prosperite as thou maist se by Paul. j. Cor. x. that we abyde in the feare of God/ & wax not wild and fall to vanities and so synne and prouoke God and bringe wrath vppon vs. ¶ And thridly ye se in that practise/ how as god is mercifull & longesoferynge/ euen so were all his true prophetes & prechers/ beringe the infirmities of their weake brethern & their awne

wronges & iniuries with all pacience & longesoferinge/ neuer castinge any of them of their backes/ vn tyll they synned agenst [the] holygost/ maliciously persecutinge [the] open & manifest trouth: contrary vn to the ensample of [the] Pope/ which in sinninge agenst God & to quench [the] trueth of his holy spirite/ is euer chefe captayne and trompetblower/ to sett other awerke/ and seketh only his awne fredome/ liberte/ priuilege/ welth/ prosperite/ profite/ pleasure/ pastyme/ honoure & glorie/ with [the] bondage/ thraldome/ captiuite/ miserie/ wretchednesse & vile subiection of his brethern: & in his awne cause is so feruent/ so steffe & cruell/ that he will not sofre one word spoken agenst his false magiste/ wily inuencions and iuglynge ypocrisie to be vnaduenged/ though all christendome shuld be sett to gether by the eares/ and shuld cost he cared not how many hundred thousande their lives.\* \* \* \*Now [that] thou mayst reade Ionas frutefully & not as a poetis fable/ but as an obligacon betwene God and thy soule/ as an ernist peny geuen [the] of God/ [that] he wil helpe [the] in time of nede/ if thou turne to him and as the word of god [the] only fode and life of thy soule/ this marke & note. First count Ionas the frend of god and a man chosen of god to testifie his name vn to [the] worlde: but yet a younge scolar/ weake & rude/ after [the] facion of [the] appostles/ while Christ was yet with them bodyly. Which though Christ taught them euer to be meke & to vmble them selues/ yet oft stroue amonge them selues who shuld be greatest. The sonnes of Zebede wold sitt/ the one on the right honde of Christ and the other on [the] lifte. They wold praye/ that fire might descende from heuen/ and consume the Samaritanes.¶ When Christ axed who saye men that I am/ Peter answered/ thou arte the sonne of the lyuinge God/ as though Peter had bene as perfecte as an angell. But immediatly after/ when Christ preached vn to them of his death & passion/ Peter was angre & rebuked Christe & thought earnestly [that] he had raued & not wist what he sayde: as at a nother time/ when Christ was so feruently busied in healinge [the] people/ [that] he had not leysar to eate/ they went out to holde him/ supposinge that he had bene besyde him selfe. Ande one [that] cast out deuels in Christes name/ they forbade/ because he wayted not on them/ so glorious were they yet.¶ And though christ taughte all waye to forgeue/ yet peter after longe goenge to scole/ axed wether men shuld forgeue .vij. tymes/ thynkinge [that] .vij. tymes had bene to moch. And at [the] last soper Peter wold have died with christe/ but yet within fewe howres after/ he denied hym/ both cowardly & shamefully. And after [the] same maner/ though he had so longe herd that noman might auenge him selfe/ but rather turne [the] other cheke to/ then to smyte agayne/ yet when Christ was in takinge/ peter axed whether it were lawfull to smyte with [the] swerde/ and taried none answeere/ but layed on rashly. So that though when we come first vn to [the] knowlege of the trueth/ and the peace is made betwene God & vs/ & we loue his lawes & beleue & trust in hym/ as in oure father & haue good hertes vn to him & be born anew in [the] sprite: yet we are but childern and younge scolars weake & foble & must have leysar to grow in [the] spirite/ in knowlege/ loue & in [the] dedes therof/ as younge childern must have tyme to grow in their bodies.¶ And God oure father & scolemaster fedeth vs & taught vs accordinge vn to the capacite of oure stomakes/ & maketh vs to grow & waxe perfecte/ & fineth vs & trieth vs as gold/ in [the] fire of temptacions & tribulations. As Moses wittneseth Deutero. viij. sayenge: Remember all [the] waye by which [the] lord thy God caried [the] this .xl. yeres in [the] wilderness/ to vmble the & to tempte or proue the/ [that] it might be knowen what were in thine hert. He brought the in to aduersite & made [the] an hongred/ & then feed [the] with man which nether thou ner yet thi fathers euer knew of/ to teach [the] that a man liueth not by bred only/ but by all that proceadeth out of the mouth of God. For [the] promises of god are life vn to all [that] cleaue vn to them/ moch moare then is bred & bodyly sustinaunce: as [the] journey of [the] childern of Israel out of egypte in

to [the] londe promised them/ ministreth the notable ensamples & [that] abundantly/ as doeth all [the] rest of the bible also. How be it/ it is impossible for flesh to beleue & to trust in [the] trueth of gods promises/ vntyll he haue lerned it in moch tribulacion/ after that God hath deliuered him out therof agayne.¶ God therefore to teach Ionas & to shew him his awne hert & to make him perfecte & to enstructe vs also bi his ensample/ sent him out of [the] lande of Israel where he was a prophete/ to goo amonge [the] heathen people & to [the] greatest & mightiest citie of [the] world then/ called Niniue: to preache [that] within .xl. dayes they shuld all perish for their sinnes & that [the] citie shuld be ouerthrowen. Which message [the] frewil of Ionas had as moch power to doo/ as the weakest herted woman in the world hath power/ if she were commaunded/ to leppe in to a tobbe of lyuinge snakes & edders: as happely if God had commaunded Sara to haue sacrificed hir sonne Isaac/ as he did Abraham/ she wold haue disputed with him yer she had done it/ or though she were stronge ynough/ yet many an holy seint coud not haue found in their hertes/ but wold haue disobeyed and haue runne awaye from [the] presens of [the] commaundement of god [with] Ionas if thei had bene so strongly tempted. ¶ For Ionas thought of this maner: loo/ I am here a prophete vn to Gods people the Israelites. Which though they haue gods word testified vn to them dayly/ yet dispice it & worshepe God vnder [the] likenesse of calues & after all maner facions saue after his awne worde/ & therefore are of all nacions [the] worst & most worthy of punishment. And yet god for loue of few [that] are amonge them & for his names sake spareth them & defendeth them. How then shuld god take so cruell vengeaunce on so greate a multitude of them to whome his name was neuer preached to and therefore are not [the] tenth parte so euell as these? If I shal therefore goo preach so shall I lye & shame my selfe & God therto and make them the moare to dispice god and sett the lesse by him and to be the moare cruell vn to his people.¶ And vppon that imaginacion he fled from the face or presens of God: that is/ out of [the] contre where God was worsheped in & from prosecutyng of Gods commaundement/ and thought/ I wyll gett me a nother waye amonge [the] hethen people & be no moare a prophete/ but lyue at rest & out of all combraunce. Neuer [the] lesse the god of all mercie which careth for his electe childern & turneth all vn to good to them & smiteth them to heale them agayne & killeth them to make them aliue agayne/ & playeth with them (as a father doth some tyme with his younge ignoraunt childern) & tempteth them & proueth them to make them se theyr awne hertes/ prouided for Ionas/ how all thinge shuld be.¶ When Ionas was entered in to the sheppe/ he layed him downe to slepe and to take his rest: that is/ his conscience was tossed betwene the commaundement of God which sent him to Niniue/ & his fleshly wisdome that dissuaded & counseled hym [the] contrary & at [the] last preualed agenst [the] commaundement & caried hym a nother waye/ as a sheppe caught betwene .ii. streames/ & as poetes faine the mother of Meliager to be betwene diuers affections/ while to aduenge hir brothers deeth/ she sought to sle hir awne sonne. Where vppon for very payne & tediousnesse/ he laye downe to slepe/ for to put [the] commaundement which so gnaw & freate his conscience/ out of minde/ as [the] nature of all weked is/ when they haue sinned a good/ to seke al meanes with riot/ reuell & pastyme/ to driue [the] remembrance of synne out of their thoughtes or as Adam did/ to couer their nakednesse with aporns of pope holy workes. But God awoke hym out of his dreame/ and sett his synnes before his face.¶ For when [the] Lott had caught Ionas/ then be sure [that] his synnes came to remembrance agayne & that his conscience raged no lesse then [the] waues of the se. And then he thought that he only was a sinner & [the] hethen that ware in [the] shepp none in respecte of him/ ad thought also/ as verily as he was fled from god/ that as verily god had cast him awaye: for [the] sight of [the] rod maketh [the] natural child not only to se & to

knowlege his faulte/ but also to forgett all his fathers olde mercie & kindnesse. And then he confessed his synne openly & had yet leuer perish alone then [that] [the] other shuld haue perished with him for his sake: and so of very desperacion to haue liued any lenger/ bad cast him in to [the] see betymes/ excepte they wold be lost also.¶ To speake of lottes/ how ferforth they are lawfull/ is a light question. First to vse them for the breakinge of strife/ as when partenars/ their goodes as equally diuided as they can/ take euery man his parte by lott/ to auoyde all suspicion of disceytfulnesse: & as [the] appostles in [the] first of [the] Actes/ when they sought a nother to succede Iudas the traytoure/ & .ii. persones were presentes/ then to breake strife & to satisfie all parties/ did cast lottes/ wheter shuld be admitted/ desiryng god to teper them & to take whom he knew most mete/ seyng they wist not wheter to preferre/ or haply coude not all agre on ether/ is lawfull ad in all like cases. But to abuse them vn to [the] temptinge of God & to compell him therewith to vtter thinges wherof we stond in doute/ when we haue no commaundement of him so to do/ as these hethen here dyd/ though God turned it vn to his glorie/ can not be but euell.¶ The hethen scepmen asstonied at [the] sight of [the] miracle/ feared God/ prayed to him/ offered sacrifice & vowed vowes. And I doute not/ but that some of them or haply all came therby vn to the true knowlege & true worshapinge of God & ware wonne to God in theyr soules. And [thus] God which is infinite mercifull in all his wayes/ wrought their soules health out of [the] infirmite of Ionas/ euen of his good will & purpose & loue wherewith he loued them before the world was made/ & not of chaunce/ as it appereth vn to the eyes of the ignoraunt.¶ And that Ionas was .iii. dayes & .iii. nightes in the bely of his fish: we can not therby proue vn to te lewes & infideles or vn to any man/ [that] Christ must therfore dye and be buried & rise agayne. But we vse [the] ensample and likenesse to strength the faith of the weake. For he that beleaueth the one can not doute in [the] other: in as moch as the hand of God was no lesse mightie in preseruinge Ionas aliue agenst all naturall possibilite & in deliueyng him safe out of his fish/ then in reysyng vpp Christe agayne out of his sepulchre. And we maye describe [the] power & vertue of [the] resurreccion therby/ as Christ him selfe boroweth [the] similitude therto Mat. xij. sayenge vn to [the] lewes that came aboute him & desyred a signe or a wonder from heuen to certifye them that he was christ: this euell & wedlockebreakinge nacion (which breake [the] wedlocke of faith wherwith they be married vn to God/ and beleue in their false workes) seke a signe/ but there shal no signe be geuen them saue [the] signe of the Prophete Ionas. For as Ionas was .iiij. dayes and iiij. nightes in the bely of the whale/ euen so shall the sonne of man be .iiij. dayes & .iiij. nyghtes in the herte of the erth. Which was a watch word/ as we saye/ & a sharpe threateninge vn to [the] lewes & as moch to saye as thus/ ye harde herted lewes seke a signe: loo/ thys shalbe youre sygne/ as Ionas was reysed out of the sepulchre of his fishe & then sent vn to the Niniuites to preach [that] they shuld perish/ euen so shall I ryse agayne out of my sepulchre & come & preach repentaunce vn to you. Se therfore when ye se [the] signe that ye repent or else ye shal suerly perish & not escape. For though the infirmities which ye now se in my flesh be a lett vn to youre faythes/ ye shall yet then be with out excuse/ when ye se so greate a miracle & so greate power of god shed out vppon you. And so Christe came agayne after [the] resurreccion/ in his spirite & preached repentaunce vn to them/ by the mouth of his appostles & disciples/ & with miracles of [the] holy gost. And all that repented not perished shortly after and were for [the] most parte slayne with swerde and [the] rest caried awaye captiue in to all quarters of the world for an ensample/ as ye se vn to this daye. ¶ And in lyke maner sens the world beganne/ where soeuer repentaunce was offered and not receaued/ there God toke cruell vengeance immediatly: as ye se in [the] floud of Noe/ in the

ouerthrowenge of Sodom & Gomor & all the contre aboute: & as ye se of Egipte/ of the Amorites/ Cananites & afterwarde of the very Israelites/ & then at the last of the Iewes to/ and of the Assyriens and Babyloniens and so thorout all the imperes of the world.¶ Gyldas preached repentaunce vn to [the] olde Britaynes that inhabited englond: they repented not/ & therfore God sent in theyr enimies vppon them on euery side & destroyed them vpp & gaue the lond vn to other nacions. And greate vengeance hath bene taken in that lande for synne sens that tyme.¶ Wicleffe preached repentaunce vn to oure fathers not longe sens: they repented not for their hertes were indurat & theyr eyes blinded with their awne Pope holy rightwesnesse wherwith they had made theyr soules gaye agenst the receauinge agayne of [the] weked spirite that bringeth .vii. worse then hym selfe with him & maketh [the] later ende worse then the beginninge: for in open sinnes there is hope of repentaunce/ but in holy ypocrisie none at all. But what folowed? they slew their true & right kinge and sett vpp .iii. wronge kinges arow/ vnder which all the noble blood was slayne vpp and halfe the comens therto/ what in fraunce & what with their awne swerde/ in fightinge amonge them selues for [the] crowne/ & [the] cities and townes decayed and the land brought halfe in to a wyldernesse in respecte of that it was before.¶ And now Christ to preach repentaunce/ is resen yet once agayne out of his sepulchre in which the pope had buried him and kepte him downe with his pilars and polaxes and all disgysinges of ypocrisie/ with gyle/ wiles and falshed/ and with the swerd of al princes which he had blynded with his false marchaundice. And as I dowte not of [the] ensamples that are past/ so am I sure that greate wrath will folow/ excepte repentaunce turne it backe agayne and cease it.¶ When Ionas had bene in te fishes bely a space & the rage of his conscience was somewhat quieted and swaged and he come to him selfe agayne and had receaued a lytle hope/ the qualmes & panges of desperacion which went ouer hys hert/ halfe ouercome/ he prayed/ as he maketh mencion in the texte sayenge: Ionas prayed vn to the lord his god out of the bely of the fishe. But the wordes of that prayer are not here sett. The prayer [that] here stondesth in the texte/ is the prayer of prayse & thanksgeuenge which he prayed and wrote when he was escaped and past all ieopardie.¶ In the end of which prayer he sayth/ I will sacrifice with the voyce of thanksgeuenge and paye that I haue vowed/ that sauinge cometh of the lorde. For verely to confesse out of the herte/ that all benefites come of God/ euen out of the goodnesse of his mercie and not deseruinge of oure dedes/ is the only sacrifice that pleaseth God. And to beleue that god only is the sauer/ is the thyng that all the Iewes vowed in theyr circumcision/ as we in oure baptim. Which vowe Ionas now tawght with experience/ promiseth to paye. For those outward sacrifices of bestes/ vn to which Ionas had haply asscribed to moch before/ were but feble & childish thinges & not ordeyned/ that the workes of them selues shuld be a seruice vn to god/ but vn to the people/ to put them in remembraunce of this inwarde sacrifice of thanks & of faith to trust and beleue in God the only sauer. Which significacion when was awaye/ they were abhominable and deuellysh ydolatrie and imageseruice: as oure ceremonies and sacramentes are become now to all that trust & beleue in the werke of them and ar not taught the significacions/ to edifye theyr soules with knowlege and the doctrine of God.¶ When Ionas was cast vppon lond agayne/ then his will was fre and had power to goo whother God sent him & to doo what God bade/ his awne imaginacions layed a parte. For he had bene at a new scole/ ye and in a fornace where he was purged of moch refuse & droshe of fleshly wisdom/ which resisted [the] wisdom of god & led Ionases wil contrary vn to [the] will of god. For as ferre as we be blynd in Adam/ we can not but seke & will oure awne profit/ pleasure & glorie. And as ferre as we be taughte in the sprite/ we can not but seke & wyll the pleasure and glorie of God only.¶ And as for

the .iij. dayes iourney of Niniue/ whether it were in length or to goo rounde aboute it or thorow all the stretes/ I committe vn to the discrecion of other men. But I thinke that it was then the greatest citie of the world.¶ And that Ionas went a dayes iourney in the citie/ I suppose he did it not in one daye: but went fayre & easily preachinge here a sermon & there a nother & rebuked the synne of the people for which they must perishe.¶ And when thou art come vn to the repentaunce of the Niniuites/ there hast thou sure earnest/ that how soeuer angre god be/ yet he remembreth mercie vn to all that truly repent and beleue in mercie. Which ensample oure sauioure Christ also casteth in the teeth of the indurat lewes sayenge: the Niniuites shall rise in iudgement with this nation and condemne them/ for they repented at the preachinge of Ionas/ and beholde a greater then Ionas here/ meanyng of hym selfe. At whose preachinge yet/ though it were neuer so mightie to perce the herte/ & for all his miracles therto/ the hard herted lewes coude not repent: when the heathen Niniuites repented at the bare preachinge of Ionas rebukinge theyr synnes with out any miracle at all. ¶ Why? for [the] lewes had leuended the spirituall law of God and with theyr gloses had made it all to gether erthie and fleshly/ and so had sett a vayle or coueringe on Moses face/ to shodowe and darken [the] glorious brightnesse of his contenance. It was synne to stele: but to robbe wedowes howses vnder a coloure of longe prayenge/ & to polle in the name of offeringes/ and to snare [the] people with intollerable constitucions agenst all loue/ to ketch theyr money out of theyr purses/ was no synne at all.¶ To smyte father and mother was synn: But to withdraw helpe from them at theyr nede/ for blynde zeale of offeringe/ vn to the profytt of the holy phareses/ was then as meritorious as it is now to let all thy kynne chose wheter they will synke or sweme/ while thou byldest and makest goodly fundacions for holy people which thou hast chosen to be thy christe/ for to sowple thy soule with the oyle of theyr swete blessinges/ & to be thy Iesus for to saue thy soule from [the] purgatory of the bloud that only purgeth synne/ with theyr watchinge/ fastinge/ wolward goinge & rysyng at mydnyght etc. where wyth yet they purge not them selues from theyr couetousnesse/ pryde/ lechury or any vyce that thou seyst amonge the laye people.¶ It was greate synne for Christ to heale the people on the sabboth daye vn to the glorie of God hys father/ but none at all for them to helpe theyr catell vnto theyr awne profett.¶ It was synne to eate wyth vnwashen handes or on an vnwashen table/ or out of an vnwashen dish: but to eate out of that purifyed dysh that which came of brybery/ theft & extorsion/ was no synne at all.¶ It was exceedyng meritorious to make many dyscyples: But to teach them to feare God in hys ordynaunces/ had they no care at all.¶ The hye prelates so defended the ryght of holy church and so feared the people with the curse of God & terreble paynes of hell/ that no man durst leaue the vilest herke in hys gardeyne vntythed. And the offeryng and thynges dedycat vn to God for the profitt of hys holy vycars where in soch estymacion and reuerence/ that it was moch greater synne to sweare truly by them/ then to forswere thy selfe by God: what vengeaunce then of God/ and how terreble and cruell damnacion thynke ye preached they to fall on them that had stolen soch holy thinges? And yet sayth Christ/ that ryghtwesnesse and faith in kepyng promise/ mercie and indyfferent iudgement were vtterly troden vnder fote and cleane dispysed of those blessed fathers/ whych so mightely mayntened Arons patrimony and had mad it so prosperous and enuironed it and walled it aboute on euery syde with [the] feare of god/ that noman durst twech it.¶ It was greate holynesse to garnysh [the] sepulchres of [the] prophetes & to condemne their awne fathers for sleynge of them: and yet were they them selues for blinde zeale of their awne constitucions/ as ready as their fathers to sle whosoeuer testified vn to them/ the same trueth which the prophetes testified vn to theyr fathers. So that Christ compareth all the rightwesnesse of those holy patriarkes

vn to the outwarde bewtye of a paynted sepulchre full of stench and all vn clenness wythyn. ¶ And finally to begyld a mans neyboure in sotle bargeninge and to wrappe and compase him in with cauteles of the law/ was then as it is now in the kingdome of [the] Pope. By the reason where of they excluded the law of loue out of theyr hertes/ and consequently all true repentaunce: for how coude they repent of [that] they coude not se to be sinne? ¶ And on the other syde they had sett vpp a rightwesnesse of holy workes/ to clense theyr soules with all: as the Pope sanctifieth vs with holy oyle/ holy bred/ holy salt/ holy candels/ holy dome ceremonies and holy dome blessinges/ and with what soeuer holynesse thou wilt saue with the holynes of Gods worde which only speaketh vn to the herte and sheweth the soule hir filthynesse and vnclennesse of synne/ and leadeth hir by [the] waye of repentaunce vn to [the] fountayne of Christes bloude to washe it awaye thorow faith. By the reason of which false rightwesnesse they were dysobedient vn to the rightwesnesse of God/ which is the forgeuenesse of synne in Christes bloude and coude not beleue it. And so thorow fleshly interpretynge the law and false imagined rightwesnesse/ their hertes were hardened and made as stony as clay in an hote furnace of fire/ that they coude receaue nether repentaunce ner faith or any moyster of grace at all. ¶ But the hethen Niniuites/ though they were blynded with lustes a good/ yet were in thofe .ii. poyntes vncorrupte and vnhardened/ & therefore with the only preachinge of Ionas came vn to the knowlege of their synnes and confessed them & repented truly & turned euery man from his euell dedes & declared their sorow of hert & true repentaunce/ with theyr dedes which they dyd out of faith & hope of forgeuenesse/ chastysinge their bodies with prayer & fastinge & with takinge all pleasures from the flesh: trustyng/ as god was angre for their wekedness/ even so shuld he forgeue them of hys mercye/ yf they repented & forsoke their mysse lyuinge. ¶ And in the last ende of all/ thou hast yet a goodly ensample of lernyng/ to se how erthye Ionas is styll for all hys tryenge in the whales bely. He was so sore displeased because the Niniuites perished not/ that he was wery of hys lyfe and wished after the death for very sorow & payne/ that he had loost the glorie of his prophesieng/ in that his prophesie come not to passe. But god rebuked him with a likenesse sayenge: it greueth thyne hert for the losse of a vile shrobbe or spraye/ wheron thou bestoweddest no loboure or cost/ nether was it thyne handwerke. How moch moare then shuld greue myne herte/ the losse of so greate a multitude of innocentes as are in Niniue/ which are all myne handes werke. Nay Ionas/ I am God ouer all/ and father as well vn to the hethen as vn to the lewes and mercifull to all and warne yer I smyte: nether threte I so cruelly by any prophete/ but that I wyll forgeue yf they repent and ax mercie: nether on the other syde/ what soeuer I promyse/ wyll I fulfill it/ saue for theyr sakes only whych trust in me and submitte them selues to kepe my lawes of very loue/ as naturall chyldern.\* \* \* \* \*On thys maner to read [the] scripture is [the] right vse therof & why [the] holy gost caused it to be written. That is [that] thou first seke out [the] law/ what god will haue the to doo/ interpretinge it spiritually with out glose or coueringe the brightnesse of Moses face/ so [that] thou fele in thyne hert/ how that it is damnable synne before god/ not to loue they neyboure that is thyne enimie/ as puerly as Christ loued the/ and [that] not to loue thy neyboure in thyne herte/ is to haue committed all ready all synne agenst him. And therefore vn tyll that loue become/ thou must knowlege vnfaynedly that there is synne in the best dede thou doest. And it must earnestly greue thyne hert and thou must washe all thy good dedes in christes bloude/ yer they can be pure and an acceptable sacrifice vn to God/ and must desire god [the] father for his sake/ to take thi dedes aworth & to pardon [the] imperfectnesse of them/ & to geue the power to doo them better and with moare feruent loue. ¶ And on the other syde thou must serch diligently for

the promises of mercie which God hath promised the agayne. Which .ii. poyntes/ that is to wete/ [the] lawe spiritually interpreted/ how that all is damnable synne that is not vnfayned loue out of the grownde and botom of the herte after the ensample of Christes loue to vs/ because we be all equally created and formed of one god oure father/ and indifferently bought & redemed with one bloud of oure sauioure Iesus Christe: and that the promises be geuen vn to a repentyng soule that thursteth and longeth after them/ of the pure and fatherly mercie of god thorow oure faith onely with oute al deseruinge of oure dedes or merites of oure werkes/ but for Christes sake alone and for the merites and deseruinges of his werkes/ deth and passions that he sofered all to gether for vs & not for him selfe: whych .ii. poyntes I saye/ if they be written in thine herte/ are the keyes which so open all the scripture vn to the/ that no creature can locke the out/ and with which thou shalt goo in and out/ and finde pasture and fode euery where. And yf these lesons be not writtten in thyne herte/ then is all the scripture shutt vpp/ as a cornell in the shale/ so that thou mayst read it and comen of it and reherse all the stories of it and dispute sotilly and be a profoude sophister/ and yet vnderstond not one lot therof.¶ And thridly that thou take the stories & liues which are conteyned in the bible/ for sure and vndowted ensamples/ [that] God so will deale with vs vn to the worldes ende.¶ Here with Reader farewell and be commended vn to God/ and vn to the grace of hys spryte. And first se that thou stoppe not thyne eares vn to the callynge of god/ and that thou harden not thine herte begyled with fleshly interpretinge of the law & false imagined and ypocritical rightwesnesse/ and so the Niniuites ryse with the at [the] day of iudgement & condemne the.¶ And secondarily if thou finde ought amisse/ when thou seyst thy selfe in the glasse of Gods worde/ thyinke it compendious wisdom/ to amende [the] same betymes/ moneshed & warned by the ensample of other men/ rather then to tary vntill thou be beten also.¶ And thridly if it shall so chaunce/ that [the] wild lustes of thy flesh shall blynd the and carie the cleane away with them for a tyme: yet at the later ende/ when [the] god of all mercie shall haue compased the in on euery syde with temptacions/ tribulacions/ aduersities & combraunce/ to bringe [the] home agayne vn to thyne awne herte/ & to set thy synnes wich thou woldest so fayne couer & put out of mynd with delectacion of voluptuous pastymes/ before [the] eyes of thy conscience: then call [the] faithfull ensample of Ionas & all lyke stories vn to thy remembraunce/ and with Ionas turne vn to thi father that smote [the]: not to cast [the] away/ but to laye a corosie and a freatinge playster vn to [the] pocke that laye hid & fret inwarde/ to draw [the] disease out & to make it appere/ [that] thou mightest feale thy seckenes & [the] daunger therof & come & receaue the healyng playster of mercie. ¶ And forget not [that] what soeuer ensample of mercie god hath shewed sens [the] beginninge of [the] world/ the same is promised the/ yf thou wilt in like maner turne agayne and receaue it as they dyd. And with Ionas be aknowen of thy synne & confesse it & knowlege it vn to thy father.¶ And as [the] law which freteth thy conscience/ is in thyne herte & is none outwarde thinge/ even so seke within in thine herte/ [the] playster of mercie/ the promyses of forgeuenesse in oure sauioure Iesus Christe/ accordinge vn to all the ensamples of mercie that are gonne before.¶ And with Ionas let them that wayte on vanities & seke god here & there & in euery temple saue in their hertes goo/ & seke thou [the] testament of god in thyne hert. For in thyne hert is the worde of [the] law/ & in thyne hert is [the] worde of fayth in the promises of mercie in Iesus Christe. So that yf thou confesse with a repentyng herte & knowlege and surely beleue [that] Iesus is lorde ouer all synne/ thou art saffe.¶ And finally when the rage of thy conscience is ceased and quieted with fast faith in the promises of mercie/ then offer with Ionas the offeringe of prayse and thankesgeuinge/ & paye the vowe of thy baptim/ that God only saueth/ of his only mercie &

goodnesse: that is/ beleue stedfastly & preach constantly/ that it is God only that smyteth/ and God only that healeth: ascribynge [the] cause of thy tribulation vn to thyne awne synne/ and [the] cause of thy deliuerance vn to the mercie of God.¶ And be ware of the leuen [that] saith we haue power in oure fre will before [the] preachinge of [the] Gospell/ to deserue grace/ to kepe [the] law/ of congruite/ or god to be vnrightwesse. And saie with Ihon in the first/ [that] as [the] law was geuen by Moses/ euen so grace to fulfill it/ is geuen by christe. And when they saye oure dedes with grace deserue heuen/ saye thou [with] Paule Ro. vj. [that] euerlastinge life is the gifte of god thorow Iesus Christ oure lorde/ & [that] we be made sonnes by faith Ihon. j. & therefore heyres of god with christ Ro. viij. And saye that we receaue al of god thorow faith that foloweth repentaunce/ & [that] we doo not oure werkes vn to god/ but ether vn to oure selues/ to sley [the] sinne that remayneth in [the] flesh & to waxe perfecte/ ether vn to oure neyboures which doo as moch for vs agayne in some other thinges. And when a man exceedeth in giftes of grace/ let him vnderstonde that they be geuen him/ as wel for his weake brethern/ as for him selfe: as though all the bred be committed vn to the panter/ yet for his felowes with hym/ which geue the thankes vn to theyr lorde/ and recompence the panter agayne with other kynde seruice in theyr offices. And when they saye that Christ hath made no satisfaccion for the synne we doo after oure bapty m: saye thou wyth the doctrine of Paule/ that in oure bapty m we receaue the merytes of Christes deeth thorow repentaunce and fayth of which two/ bapty m is the sygne. And though when we synne of frailtie after oure bapty m we receaue the sygne no moare/ yet we be renewed agayne thorow repentaunce and fayth in Christes bloude/ whych twayne/ the sygne of bapty m ever contynved amonge vs in bapty sy nge oure younge childern doeth euer kepe in mynde and call vs backe agayne vn to oure profession if we be gonne astraye/ & promiseth vs forgeuenesse. Nether can actuall synne be washed away with oure werkes/ but with Christes bloude: nether can there be any other sacrifice or satisfaccion to Godward for them/ saue Christes bloude. For as moch as we can doo no werkes vnto God/ but receaue only of his mercie with oure repenty nge fayth/ thorow Iesus Christe oure lorde and only sauer: vnto whom & vn to God oure father thorow him/ and vn to hys holy spirite/ that only purgeth/ sanctifieth & washeth vs in the innocent bloude of oure redemption/ be prayse for ever AMEN.

## The first Chapter.

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The worde of the lorde came vn to the prophete lonas [the] sonne of Amithai sayenge: ryse & gett the to Niniue that greate citie & preach vn to them/ how that theyr wekednesse is come vpp before me. ¶ And lonas made him ready to fle to Tharsis from the presens of [the] lorde/ & gatt hym downe to loppe/ and founde there a sheppe ready to goo to Tharsis/ & payed his fare/ & went aborde/ to goo with them to Tharsis from the presens of the lorde. ¶ But [the] lorde hurled a greate winde in to [the] se/ so that there was a myghtie tempest in the se: in so moch [that] the shepp was lyke to goo in peces. And the mariners were afrayed & cried euery man vn to his god/ & cast out [the] goodes [that] were in [the] sheppe in to [the] se/ to lighten it of them. But lonas gatt him vnder the hatches & layed him downe and slombrede. And [the] master of the sheppe came to him & sayd vn to him/ why slomberest thou? vpp! & call vn to thy god/ that God maye thinke on vs/ that we perish not. ¶ And they sayde one to a nother/ come & lett vs cast lottes/ to know for whose cause we are thus troublede. And they cast lottes. And [the] lott fell vppon lonas. ¶ Then they said vnto him/ tel vs for whose cause we are thus trowbled: what is thine occupacion/ whence comest thou/ how is thy contre called/ & of what nacion art thou? ¶ And he answered them/ I am an Ebrue: & the lord God of heuen which made both se and drie land/ I feare. Then were the men exceedingly afrayd & sayd vn to him/ why diddest thou so? For they knew that he was fled from the presens of the lorde/ because he had told them. ¶ Then they sayd vn to hym/ what shall we doo vnto the/ that the se maye cease from trowblinge vs? For the se wrought & was trowblous. And he answered them/ take me and cast me in to the se/ & so shall it lett you be in reste: for I wotte/ is is for my sake/ that this greate tempest is come oppon you. Neuerthesse the men assayed wyth rowenge to bringe the sheppe to lande: but it wold not be/ because the se so wrought & was so trowblous agenst them. Wherefore they cried vn to the lorde & sayd: O lorde latt vs not perih for this mans deeth/ nether laye innocent bloud vn to oure charge: for thou lorde even as thy pleasure was/ so thou hast done. ¶ And then they toke lonas/ & cast him in to [the] se/ & the se left ragynge. And [the] men feared the lorde excedingly: & sacrificed sacrifice vn to the lorde: and vowed voves.

## But [the] lorde prepared a greate fyshe

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But [the] lorde prepared a greate fyshe/ to swallow vp Ionas. And so was Ionas in [the] bowels of [the] fish .iij. dayes & .iij. nightes. And Ionas prayed vnto [the] lord his god out of [the] bowels of the fish. ¶ And he sayde: in my tribulacion I called vn to the lorde/ and he answered me: out of the bely of hell I cried/ and thou herdest my voyce. For thou hadest cast me downe depe in the middes of the se: & the floud compased me aboute: and all thy waues & rowles of water went ouer me: & I thought [that] I had bene cast awaye out of thy sight. But I will yet agayne loke towarde thy holy temple. The water compased me euen vn to the very soule of me: the depe laye aboute me: and the wedes were wrappte aboute myne heed. And I went downe vn to the botome of the hylles/ and was barredin with erth on euery syde for euer. And yet thou lorde my God broughest vp my life agayne out of corrupcion. When my soule faynted in me/ I thought on the lorde: & my prayer came in vn to the/ even in to thy holy temple. They [that] obserue vayne vanities/ haue forsaken him that was mercifull vn to them. But I wil sacrifice vn to the with the voce of thankesgeuinge/ & will paye that I have vowed/ that sauinge cometh of the lorde. ¶ And the lorde spake vn to the fish: and it cast out Ionas agayne vppon [the] drie lande.

## Then came the worde of the lorde vn to Ionas agayne

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Then came the worde of the lorde vn to Ionas agayne sayenge: vpp/ and gett [the] to Niniue that greate citie/ & preache vn to them the preachynge which I bade [the]. And he arose & went to Niniue at [the] lordes commaundment. Niniue was a greate citie vn to god/ conteynge .iiij. dayes iourney. ¶ And Ionas went to & entred in to [the] citie euen a dayes iourney/ and cried sayenge: There shall not passe .xl. dayes but Niniue shalbe ouerthrowen. ¶ And the people of Niniue beleued God/ and proclaymed fastynge/ and arayed them selues in sackcloth/ as well the greate as the small of them. ¶ And [the] tydinges came vn to the kinge of Niniue/ which arose out of his sete/ and did his apparell of & put on sackcloth/ & sate him downe in asshes. And it was cried and commaunded in Niniue by [the] auctorite of [the] kinge and of his lordes sayenge: se that nether man or beest/ oxe or shepe tast ought at al/ & that they nether fede or drinke water. ¶ And they put on sackcloth both man and beest/ & cried vn to God mightily/ and turned euery man from his weked waye/ and from doenge wronge in which they were acustomed/ sayenge: who can tell whether god will turne & repent/ & cease from his fearece wrathe/ that we perish not? And when god saw theyr workes/ how they turned from theyr weked wayes/ he repented on [the] euell which he sayd he wold doo vn to them/ and dyd it not.

## Wherefore Ionas was sore discontent and angre

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Wherefore Ionas was sore discontent and angre. And he prayed vn to the lorde and sayd: O lord/ was not this my sayenge when I was yet in my contre? And therefore I hasted rather to fle to Tharsis: for I knew well ynough that thou wast a mercifull god/ ful of compassion/ long yer thou be angre and of great mercie and repentest when thou art come to take punishment. Now therefore take my life from me/ for I had leuer dye then liue. And the lorde said vn to Ionas/ art thou so angrie? ¶ And Ionas gate him out of the citie and sate him downe on the est syde theroffe/ and made him there a bothe and sate thervnder in the shadowe/ till he might se what shuld chaunce vn to the citie. ¶ And [the] lorde prepared as it were a wild vine which sprange vp ouer Ionas/ that he might haue shadowe ouer his heed/ to deliuer him out of his payne. And Ionas was exceedynge glad of the wild vine. ¶ And the lorde ordeyned a worme agenst the springe of [the] morow morninge which smote the wild vine/ that it wethered away. And assone as the sonne was vpp/ God prepared a feruent eest winde: so that [the] sonne bete ouer the heed of Ionas/ that he fainted agayne and wished vn to hys soule that he might dye/ and sayd/ it is better for me to dye then to liue. ¶ And god sayd vn to Ionas/ art thou so angre for thy wild vine? And he sayde/ I am angrie a goode/ even on to the death. And the lorde sayde/ thou hast compassion on a wild vine/ wheron thou bestoweddest no laboure ner madest it growe/ which sprange vp in one night and perished in a nother: and shuld not I haue compassion on Niniue that greate citie/ wherin there is a multitude of people/ euen aboue an hundred thousande that know not theyr right hand from the lyfte/ besydes moch catell?

## {Transcriber's note:

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During transcription, a number of possible typographic errors and doubtful readings were found, as listed below. No changes were made. "then a take of Robin hode" possible error for

"then a tale of Robin hode" "rembenbir that [the] fulfillynge of [the] law" possible error for "remenbir that [the] fulfillynge of [the] law" "agenst [the] holygost" possible error for

"agenst [the] holy gost" "thongh all christendome" possible error for

"though all christendome" "an obligacon betwene God and thy soule" possible error for "an obligacion betwene God and thy soule" "younge scholars weake & foble" possible error for

"younge scholars weake & feble" "He brought the in to aduersite" possible error for

"He brought the in to aduersite" "the commaudemnt of God" possible error for

"the commaudemnt of God" "none in respecte of him/ ad" possible error for

"none in respecte of him/ and" "did cast lottes" possible error for

"did cast lottes" "to teper them" possible error for

"to temper them""is lawfull ad in all like cases." possible error for "is lawfull and in all like cases.""proue vn to te lewes" possible error for

"proue vn to the lewes""lonas had bene in te fishes bely" possible error for "lonas had bene in the fishes bely""for [the] lewes had leuended" possible error for

"for [the] lewes had leuened""leauē the vilest herke" possible error for

"leauē the vilest herbe""in thofe .ii. poyntes vncorrupte" possible error for "in those .ii. poyntes vncorrupte""to loue they neyboure" possible error for

"to loue thy neyboure""writtten in thyne herte" possible error for

"written in thyne herte""contynved amonge vs" possible error for

"contynued amonge vs""latt vs not perih for this mans deeth" possible error for "latt vs not perish for this mans deeth""& sacrificed sacrificice" possible error for

"& sacrificed sacrifice" (hyphenated over line break)"and was barred in" possible error for

"and was barred in"}  
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