

Week before Fast – The Book of Jonah between Science and Religion

Objective:

Refuting the scientific oppositions and arguments on the validity and genuineness of the Bible.

Memory Verse:

"For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation"
(Luke 11:30).

References:

1. The Holy Bible is a Miracle. - The Diocese of Al Minya.
2. Our Holy Bible and Our Holy Christ. - Bishop Youanis.
3. Conformity Between Modern Science and the Holy Bible. St. George Church, Sporting, Alexandria

Lesson Outline:

Much opposition have been raised against the Book of Jonah considering the story as a superstition and the Holy Bible is accused of containing scientific mistakes and fables.

But we now use the same story to prove that the Bible is true and right and that the prophecies it mentioned are accurate. Then we will take from them the symbols and miracles for our own personal benefit.

I. The Internal Evidence

- ✠ The recording of this story, and Jonah's frankness in confessing his iniquities, is the evidence that proves the truth of this book. The Jews accepted it on the list of their holy books although it disagrees with their ethnic fanaticism.
- ✠ The Book of Kings recorded the story of Jonah in detail (2 Kings 14:25).
- ✠ There is evidence of the truth of the story in Matthew 16:4 and in Luke 11:29-30.

II. External Evidence

- ✠ Archeologists excavated the site where Nineveh was and they found evidence indicating that the City was an exceedingly great city. The excavated pottery indicates Sumerian origin which supports the biblical facts..

III. Modern Discoveries

- ✠ Here is a true story to prove the whale (a great fish) swallowed Jonah and that Jonah stayed alive inside the belly of the fish. In 1758 a man fell out of a ship into the Mediterranean Sea. A whale swallowed the man and the mariner of the ship saw the sight. He shot the whale and the whale vomited out the man, who was still alive. They caught the whale and took it with them and exhibited it all around Europe.

IV. Physical Sciences

- ✠ Whales are of two kinds. One of them has sharp teeth with which it tears up its prey. The other kind has no teeth but it has thin foils in the back part of its teeth that form a net when

the whale closes its mouth. It feeds itself in this way: It rushes in the water at a great speed with its mouth open, then it closes its mouth compressing the water with its tongue through the net of foils. The water rushes out leaving food behind. The stomach of the whale is a complicated organ containing five to six caves in which a man can live.

V. What to say to those who mock the Book?

- ✠ The Lord Jesus referred to this Book and considered it an evidence to prove His Resurrection (Matthew 12:39-40). He also mentioned the repentance of Nineveh (Matthew 12:41). As believers, we believe that the Lord incarnated, became Man and rose from the dead, so it is easy for us to believe that the Lord made ready a whale to swallow Jonah.

VI. Science and the Holy Bible

A. There are no scientific mistakes in the Holy Bible

If you read a book that was issued one hundred and fifty years ago you will see that many data and suppositions mentioned in that book have been changed and altered. For example: The Ancient Egyptians believed that the earth came out of a winged egg in the same way a chicken comes out of an egg. But Isaiah said, “It is he who sits above the circle of the earth” (Isaiah 40:32) although he was a contemporary of the Egyptian and Babylonian Civilizations. Isaiah, Moses and Daniel were never affected by the views of such civilizations because the Spirit of the Lord directed and guided them.

B. Examples of scientific facts included in the Bible

- ✠ In the Book of Ecclesiastics we read “All streams run to the sea, but the sea is not full; to the place where the streams flow, there they flow again” (Ecclesiastics 1:7). This refers to the theory of vapor, where clouds gather and cause floods in the rivers.
- ✠ What Moses recorded concerning the order of creation agrees with modern science in the appearance of simple plants first, then plants yielding seeds then sea animals and birds, then animals and finally man.
- ✠ Moses wrote that the Lord gathered the waters under the heavens together into one place. This is true because the seven oceans have one ocean bed bottom.

C. Some of the scientific discoveries that prove the truth of the Bible

- ✠ In Geology:
There is a soft layer of clean silt or alluvial deposit resulting from water that once covered that land. This confirms the story of the great Flood.
- ✠ In Chemistry:
The soil of the region of Sodom and Gomorrah is saturated with sulfur and volcanic lava. This is the result of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and burning sulfur.
- ✠ In Archeology:
The wide chariot cities (1400 Chariots) in the days of King Solomon. The Holy Bible states this fact in the days of Solomon (1 Kings 10:26-29, 2 Chronicles 1:1-17).
- ✠ In Medicine and Anatomy:
The shrouds of the Lord Jesus Christ and the picture printed on them; this indicates crucifixion and resurrection.