

The glory of the passage lies however in the "conversion" of Jonah and in the way in which he meets the truth from which he was fleeing, and reached the point when he is willing to lay down his life for those whom he had despised. In these heathen he sees men turning to God, and he gladly becomes their sacrifice. This is the same doctrine that we have in Isaiah liii.—the servant of God becoming a sacrifice for others. God and life are the only postulates we require for revelation.

We now come to the incident of the great fish, and this strikes us at first as grotesque. But we must remember that the popular mythology of the Semite had peopled the sea with great monsters. We must also remember that entombment in a dragon or great fish was a recognized allegorical manner of alluding to the Babylonish captivity. This we see from Jeremiah li. 34, 44, where we have the same nature-myth in an intermediate form. Having now learned through suffering his moral kinship with the heathen, and offered his life for some of them, Jonah, strange to say, again refuses to do the will of God. The first part of the book has no results in the second, and so it was with Israel. After the discipline of the captivity they were no more tolerant of the heathen than before.

We have no description of the prophet's journey to Nineveh, or of the city itself, further than that it is set before us as a seething mass of human beings with just one capacity allowed to them, the primal human power of repentance. This is the real treasure left in Pandora's box—this power to turn from evil, and this is all that our author claims for Nineveh. Jonah's anger at the mercy of the Lord to the great city is frequently attributed to personal pique, because his word was not fulfilled. This would hardly have been strange had it really been so, for it was an accepted rule that prophets were to be judged by the success of their predictions; but we

have no hint of it in the story. Jonah is depicted as being quite above any anxiety about his professional reputation; his distress is caused by the fact that he could not master his conviction that the heathen ought to be destroyed, and he is angry at God's forbearance with them. The one thing that troubled the Jews after the exile was the continued prosperity of the Gentile. The knowledge that God was infinitely haunted their pride.

As for Jonah, so angry and displeased was he at the love of God to Nineveh, that he withdrew and took no further interest in the matter. There is both humor and pathos in the treatment he is made to receive at the hands of Jehovah. A little leaving to himself, a little caustic gentleness, and then comes the half humorous piece of fault finding, "Art thou so *very* angry about the gourd?" And so the story ends with dramatic fitness at the climax of the argument, leaving us with the scene of the vast and pitiful multitude stretching before us, like Christ's parable of the "Ninety and Nine," and suggesting the thought of the joy over the sinner that repented. The high honor of this author is not that he has given us real history, but that he has been, both in the message and in the form of literary art with which he clothes it, the closest forerunner of Christ, and that he leaves with us the picture of the whole world ready to return to God.

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OLD QUAKER DAYS IN RHODE ISLAND.

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