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JONAH – PART 1

Jonah Was an established prophet in Israel known for his accuracy on a prophecy he gave that seemed very unlikely at the time it was given. We usually think of him in relation to his story in the Book of Jonah, a story of which is presumably dated by Ussher at about 862 B.C. This would indicate that his ministry might have been in the range of 880 to 840 B.C.

Jonah was the son of Amittai, who was also a prophet himself. Prophet Jonah, son of prophet Amittai, was of the tribe of Zebulun in the Northern Kingdom (ten tribes) of Israel, and from the town of Gath-hepher.

During his ministry, he prophesied that the land taken from Israel by its oppressors would be restored back to Israel's ownership. This seemed very unlikely because Israel's enemies were stronger and had possessed those lands for about 100 years already.

Many years later, Jeroboam II became Israel's king, around 785 B.C. If we were to measure time from the Book of Jonah (862 B.C.) to the time Jeroboam II ascended to the throne (785 B.C.) Jeroboam came into power approximately 75-80 years later. It is almost certain that Jonah had deceased quite a few years before Jeroboam II. Jeroboam's reign lasted from about 785 to 744 B.C.

It is obvious that Jonah's prophesy that the land's restoration had been recorded and not forgotten. During this king's reign all the land was restored to Israel as the evil king regained the land by military conquest.

It is recorded in II Kings 14:25 that *he "restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plan, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of His servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher."*

Years after Jonah had died, his bold prophecy was fulfilled. He was a true prophet of God, not a cowardly person as some people have made him out to be. Jonah was not perfect; he had issues. We will look more at those issues tomorrow as we begin the study of the Book of Jonah.