

**THE PROPHET JONAH:
HIS CHARACTER AND
MISSION TO NINEVEH**

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The Prophet Jonah: His Character and Mission to Nineveh by Hugh Martin

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HUGH MARTIN

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JAMES GEMMELL, PRINTER, EDINBURGH.

PREFATORY NOTE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

My explicit acknowledgments of help in the composition of this volume, are due to Calvin; whose Commentaries on the Minor Prophets, as well as his other works, it would be presumption in me to praise. I have no doubt, also, that traces will appear of my having read Principal Fairbairn's book on Jonah. I have a distinct recollection of deriving much pleasure and profit from the perusal of it at the time of its publication. But as that is now about seventeen years ago, I am unable to specify my obligations.

Some of my readers may think that I have—to use the language of an intelligent friend—“taken Jonah's part too much.” I can scarcely think that I have. It is a tacit tribute of honour that we pay to prophets and Apostles, as still *living* powers in the Church, when we deny them the benefit of the maxim, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. But for that reason we ought to be all the

more careful to do them no injustice. And when I think of his wonderful prayer in the depths,—of his perfect candour with the mariners,—of his magnanimity in prescribing his own death as the means of their deliverance,—and of his perfect candour with God also, in laying open to Him to the last even all that was wrong in his startling and most sinful state of mind, I cannot help thinking that the memory of Jonah deserves more of esteem and affectionate regard than has fallen to his lot. To the last we find his gracious Lord “not silent to him;” so that we see the prophet not left to “become like them that go down into the pit.” And though Jonah has closed the book of his prophecy without telling us what effect the Lord’s gracious remonstrance had in respect of bringing him to a better frame of mind,—thus, in manifest humility, I think, consenting to disappear from our view as under a cloud,—Divine charity, “believing all things,” will have little difficulty in believing that Jonah’s silence, like that of Job, would have its meaning expressed by the protestation:—“Once have I spoken; but I will not answer; yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.”

I wish my book had been greatly better than it is. For one thing, it would have allowed me to say something on what I hold to be the yet unexhausted resources, in respect of variety, and versatility, and literary construction,—of the kind of expository exercise of which

this form, in so far, a specimen. But I forbear. Such as it is, I desire to leave the volume with Him who, by His ministry within the veil, can render it of sweet smelling savour unto God, and by His ministry of the Spirit in the heart, can render it a savour of life unto life to the reader.

H. M.

Edinburgh, 1st June 1866.

There being a constant demand for Dr. Hugh Martin's Works and this one having become scarce, the Publisher has reprinted it, and will shortly reissue Dr. Martin's work entitled "The Shadow of Calvary."

July 1189.



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