

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 1: *“What city was Jonah supposed to go to when he fled and was eaten by the big fish?”*

Answer: Jonah 1:1-3 says, *“Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me.’ But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.”*

There are three cities mentioned in these verses: Nineveh, Joppa, and Tarshish. God wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh. Jonah decided to go to Joppa to find a ship heading to Tarshish. His purpose was to escape from the presence of the Lord. Obviously, it didn’t work. Nineveh was where God wanted him to go before the big fish swallowed him and Nineveh was the city to which Jonah would go after the fish spit him up (Jonah 3:1-3).

Question 2: *“What does pagan mean?”*

Answer: 1 Corinthians 5:1 says, *“It is actually reported that there is sexually immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife.”*

The action under consideration here is incest—clearly showing that God considers it sinful. Interestingly enough, so did the pagans. Mounce says of the word, *“...it can refer more generally to groups of people (non-Jews), thus meaning “Gentiles” or in some contexts “pagans.”* (*Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words, page 495*).

Consistently throughout Scripture we find the immorality and ungodliness of the Gentile (non Jewish) world held up for reproach. Thus, the word “pagan” is sometimes used in place of the word “Gentile.”

Question 3: *“Is sage burning and “smudging”, such as is practiced by the Hopi Indian tribes, considered a form of witchcraft or sorcery?”*

Answer: This was an interesting one as I had never heard of “smudging.” In researching the answer it is clear that “smudging” is considered an act of magic and witchcraft. Apparently “smudging” is a practice in which one uses smoke from burning herbs or incense to cleanse the body or an object before a magical ritual. It is important to note that God considers sorcery and the like to be a “desire of the flesh,” opposing the Spirit, and enough to condemn one’s soul (Galatians 5:17-21).