



## SERMON OUTLINE

NOTES

### I. WHO IS JONAH THE PROPHET? (JONAH 1:1)

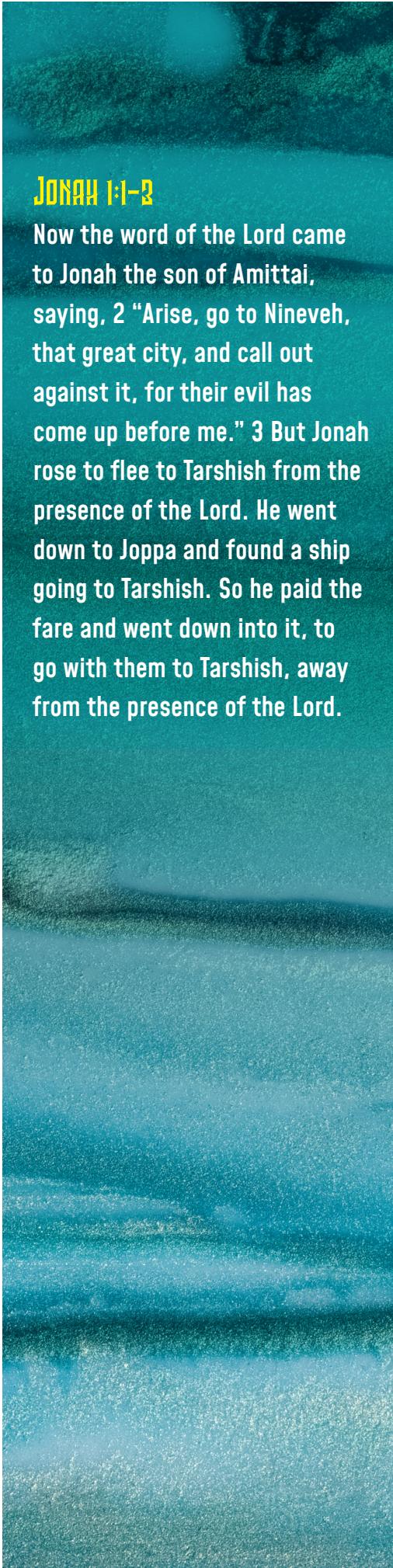
- A. The office of prophet in the Old Testament
  - 1. Authority based on a carried word (Ezekiel 2:7-3:4)
  - 2. Usually they come from nowhere of note (Jonah 1:1; 2 Kings 14:23-25)
- B. Jonah knew the mercy, grace, love, and power of God (2 Kings 14:25-27)

### II. GOD'S MISSION FOR JONAH (JONAH 1:2)

- A. God calls Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh
  - 1. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria and infamously wicked
  - 2. Jonah is called to the heart of wickedness and paganism
- B. Jonah is commissioned to call out against the evil of the city

### III. JONAH'S RESPONSE TO THE COMMAND OF GOD (JONAH 1:3)

- A. Jonah rises only to flee from God, not follow God
  - B. He sought to flee the presence of God and his obligation to God.
    - 1. Tarshish was the furthest city from Israel
    - 2. But God fills heaven and earth (Jeremiah 23:23-24; Psalm 139:7-12)
- C. Jonah's rebellion spirals downward (Jonah 4:2)
  - 1. He went to a gentile city where he could be anonymous
  - 2. The circumstances aligned perfectly for him to succeed in rebellion
  - 3. He goes down further into the inner part of the ship
- D. What can we learn about ourselves from Jonah?
  - 1. Our disobedience to God's command is an act of rebellion against the authority of God by substituting ourselves as supreme (Romans 1:21-25)
  - 2. When we give ourselves permission to sin, our hearts grow hardened because we deceive ourselves through rationalization (Hebrews 3:12-13)
  - 3. When we do not love our enemies but love our comfortable lifestyle then our enemies are viewed as threats rather than people in need of grace (Romans 12:17-21)
  - 4. Jesus is the better Jonah who fully obeyed, never gave in to sin, truly loved even his enemies, and came full of grace and truth to give us sinners grace upon grace (John 1:14, 16; 1 Peter 2:22-25)



# SERMON REFLECTIONS

## JONAH 1:1-3

**Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me." 3 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 down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.**

1. Have you ever read or studied the book of Jonah? What kind of reputation does the prophet Jonah have based on your experience with this book of the Bible?
2. How does God's call for Jonah to go to Nineveh as a prophet compare to God's call for Christians to go into the world as ambassadors for Christ? How does it differ?
3. What does our rebellion reveal about our heart towards God and His authority? What happens to our hearts if we continue to give ourselves permission to sin?
4. How does the Gospel strengthen and give hope to those who are in a downward spiral of rebellion?
5. What happens when we rebel against God's command to love our enemies? What are some practical ways that we can joyfully serve our enemies to the glory of God?



Jonah

WEEK ONE

# THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF REBELLION

JONAH 1:1-3

## READING THE STORY

Making observations is the first step in becoming familiar with a passage and to help understand what is being said. In a notebook (or separate piece of paper), make the following observations about this passage...

- List any **People/Places**—

- List any important **verbs** (actions), **repeated words/phrases**, or other **theological/special terms**—

# OBSERVATIONS

1 What are the locations mentioned here (and can you find them on an Old Testament map)?

2 What are the action words (verbs) in these sentences? How do they help color in the story?

3 What do you think is meant by "the presence of Yahweh"?

## SUMMARY SENTENCE

In your own words, summarize this passage in 1 sentence—

# JONAH'S WORLD

**Jonah the son of Amitai [1:1]** See 2 Kings 14:25 for more background.

**Arise, go [1:2]** This is a command (imperative) given by Yahweh. God isn't asking Jonah to think or pray about this; He's ordering!

**Nineveh [1:2]** Located in modern-day Iraq, it was over 500 miles northeast of Israel and was an important city in Assyria. In the mid-800s B.C., Assyria begun fighting with Israel and had become one of its vicious enemies, even conquering Samaria in 722 B.C. Many Israelites would have felt a great sense of hatred (and ethnic bigotry) towards the Assyrians.

**Call out against it [1:2]** Jonah is commissioned to "preach/proclaim/announce" judgment against Nineveh. We only find out later what the message is [3:4], and the reason why Jonah didn't want to do preach this message [4:2].

**Tarshish [1:3]** An unknown city, probably to the west of Israel, in modern-day Spain.

**Joppa [1:3]** A significant harbor northwest of Jerusalem.

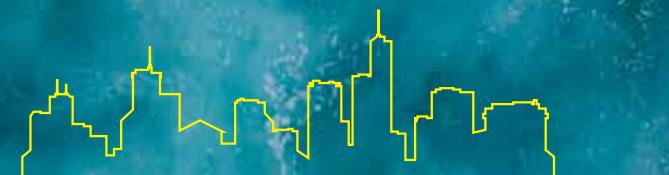
**The presence of Yahweh [1:3]** God is omnipresent, and so Jonah's not literally able to escape Yahweh. Jonah, rather, is demonstrating his opposition to serving God.

# WORLDS COLLIDE

## LOVING OUR ENEMIES

On September 11, 2001, nineteen Islamic-extremists, fifteen of which were from Saudi Arabia, hijacked planes and flew them into the World Trade Center. Imagine that you lived in New York at the time: your oldest son worked on the 75th floor of the World Trade Center, your youngest son was a fireman, and your husband was a policeman. Within the course of two hours, all three of these loved ones perished because of this evil act. A few months later, as you are still dealing with the grief, pain, and trauma of this life-altering event, you hear from God. He clearly tells you to immediately travel to Saudi Arabia and preach the gospel of grace and forgiveness to the Saudis. Rather than traveling east, you instead ignore God, drive to San Francisco, and take a cruise to Hawaii. There's no way you want to see God's grace extended to "those people"—as justified anger and grief has made way for unrepentant bigotry.

This situation is analogous to what Jonah and Israel faced. The Assyrians were a brutal (literally) society that had caused much destruction upon Israel. So, when Jonah received the call from God to preach repentance to Nineveh, one could understand his fleeing response. But unlike Jonah, we have the gospel. Understanding the gospel challenges our own bigotry and hatred towards others, even to those who have caused personal pain. While preaching the good news of God's grace might sometimes seem like an impossible feat, this is exactly what the spirit of God residing in us allows us to do—especially in impossible situations.



# GOING TO NINEVEH

*The book of Jonah challenges us to view others—especially our enemies—in a way that only the gospel can empower us to do. It is our hope that you would pray about, and be open to, the mission that God has for you as you serve in His Kingdom.*

## RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 1 If God called you to preach the gospel to a group of people, is there that "one group" you'd have an issue with (ethnically, socio-economically, politically, etc.)? Maybe, because of unrepentant bigotry, or ever because of grief, pain, or trauma that was unjustly inflicted on you?

Who are the "Ninevehs" of your lives? Who are you being called to "arise and go" to? How can you pray for God to work in you, to reveal any hatred you have towards other people groups, for Him to grant you repentance, and for His spirit to produce gospel-fruit in your life?

## RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 2 How can you rely on those in the local church (starting with your Small Group) to help you grow in this area? Have you ever asked for accountability for something like this? Do you feel like your group is safe enough to have a transparent discuss about this?