

## The Disobedient Prophet

### *Jonah, Part I*

Jonah 1:1-3

Stuart W. Bryan

#### An Outline of Jonah

1:1-3	<i>Jonah Disobeys God</i>
1:4-17	<i>God Pursues Jonah</i>
2:1-10	<i>Jonah Turns to God</i>
3:1-4	<i>Jonah Obeys God</i>
3:5-10	<i>God Delivers Nineveh</i>
4:1-11	<i>Jonah Complains Against God</i>

## I. Introduction

## II. Historical Setting

### A. Israel under Jehu's Dynasty (c. 841-753 BC)

Jonah ministered in the northern kingdom of Israel, during the reign of Jeroboam II, the great-grandson of King \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel. While the kingdom of Israel expanded under Jeroboam's reign, it declined quickly thereafter, falling to Assyria in 722 BC.

### B. Assyria in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC

\_\_\_\_\_ was the capital city of the Assyrian empire. The Assyrians were a ruthless people. During Jeroboam's reign, Assyria declined in power and influence. Jonah preached during that period of decline.



## III. The Disobedient Prophet

### A. Jonah's Prophetic Call (2 Kgs 14:23-27)

<sup>23</sup>In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. <sup>24</sup>And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. <sup>25</sup>He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hopher. <sup>26</sup>For the LORD saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter; and whether bond or free, there was no helper for Israel. <sup>27</sup>And the LORD did not say that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash. (2 Kgs 14:23-27)

### B. Jonah's Disobedience

<sup>1</sup>Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, <sup>2</sup>"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." <sup>3</sup>But Jonah arose 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 from the presence of the LORD. (Jonah 1:1-3)

All people, believer and unbeliever, live *coram Deo*, before the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and thus their wickedness is not hidden from God. As Psalm 10 teaches us to sing:

<sup>11</sup>[The wicked] has said in his heart, "God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see." <sup>12</sup>Arise, O LORD! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget the humble. <sup>13</sup>Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, "You will not require an account." <sup>14</sup>But You have seen, for You observe trouble and grief, To repay it by Your hand. The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless. <sup>15</sup>Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man; Seek out his wickedness until You find none. <sup>16</sup>The LORD is King forever and ever; The nations have perished out of His land. <sup>17</sup>LORD, You have heard the desire of

*the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear, <sup>18</sup>To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.*

Jonah fled from Nineveh to Tarshish in the western Mediterranean. Like Adam before him, Jonah endeavors to flee from God and His Word. Why does Jonah flee?

*<sup>1</sup>But it displeased Jonah exceedingly [that God had shown mercy to Nineveh], and he became angry. <sup>2</sup>So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm." (Jonah 4:1-2)*

There are two ways that God *prevents the man of earth from oppressing any longer* (Ps 10:18). Sometimes God acts in judgment, overthrowing the wicked in their wickedness. Other times, God acts in \_\_\_\_\_, humbling sinners and teaching them His ways.

#### IV. The Temptation to Disobey God

##### A. Jonah Turned from God's Word (cf. Gen 3:1-7; Mt 4:1ff)

God told Jonah what to do, the word of the Lord came to Jonah, and Jonah turned away from that word. In this, he imitates our first father \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 3:1). If we only obey God's word when it says what we want it to say, then it is not God's word we are obeying but ourselves! Hence, the Second Adam, Jesus, resisted the temptations of the evil one by declaring, "*It is written... It is written... It is written...*" (Mt 4:4, 7, 10).

##### B. Jonah Flees from God's Presence (cf. Gen 3:8)

Jonah teaches us that *to turn from God's word is to flee from God's presence*. God's word is invested with His own authority. Thus, the Apostle John writes:

*<sup>3</sup>Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. <sup>4</sup>He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a \_\_\_\_\_, and the truth is not in him. <sup>5</sup>But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. <sup>6</sup>He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (1 Jn 2:3-6)*

To attempt to flee from God's presence is folly. As David sings in Psalm 139:

*<sup>7</sup>Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? <sup>8</sup>If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. <sup>9</sup>If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, <sup>10</sup>Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. <sup>11</sup>If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; <sup>12</sup>Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You. (Ps 139:7-12)*

##### C. Jonah Abandons God's Calling (cf. Gen 1:26-28; Col 3:17)

To turn from God's word and flee from His presence is to abandon our calling. Adam's calling was to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. But he abandoned his calling. So, likewise, God has called each of us. Like Adam, we are to exercise dominion to the glory of God and the good of humanity. As Paul commands, "*\_\_\_\_\_ you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him*" (Col 3:17). You cannot do that when you disobey God.

#### V. Conclusion