Jonah 1 — The Reluctant Prophet and the Pursuing God

Passage: Jonah 1 (with an overview of Jonah 1–4)

Key verse (KJV): “But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.” — Jonah 1:3

Objective: See God’s sovereign mercy pursue a rebellious servant and reach sinful nations, and understand that no one can flee from God’s presence or evade His will.

Outline

1. Jonah belongs in _____, not merely a moral tale.
2. God called Jonah to _____, the great Assyrian city.
3. The book asks whether we share God’s _____ for sinners.
4. Jonah fled from God’s _____, refusing assigned service.
5. No place is beyond God’s _____.
6. Jonah traveled in the _____ direction from God’s command.
7. God’s discipline is a merciful call to _____.
8. His descent pictures the downward path of _____.
9. God’s correction calls His servant back to _____.
10. The LORD was _____ over the storm.
11. Chastening is loving _____, not abandonment.
12. The sailors showed growing _____ for the true God.
13. Our disobedience _____ people around us.
14. The great fish was divine _____.
15. Salvation is received by God’s _____, not human effort.
16. God calls His people to share His _____ for those needing mercy.

Discuss

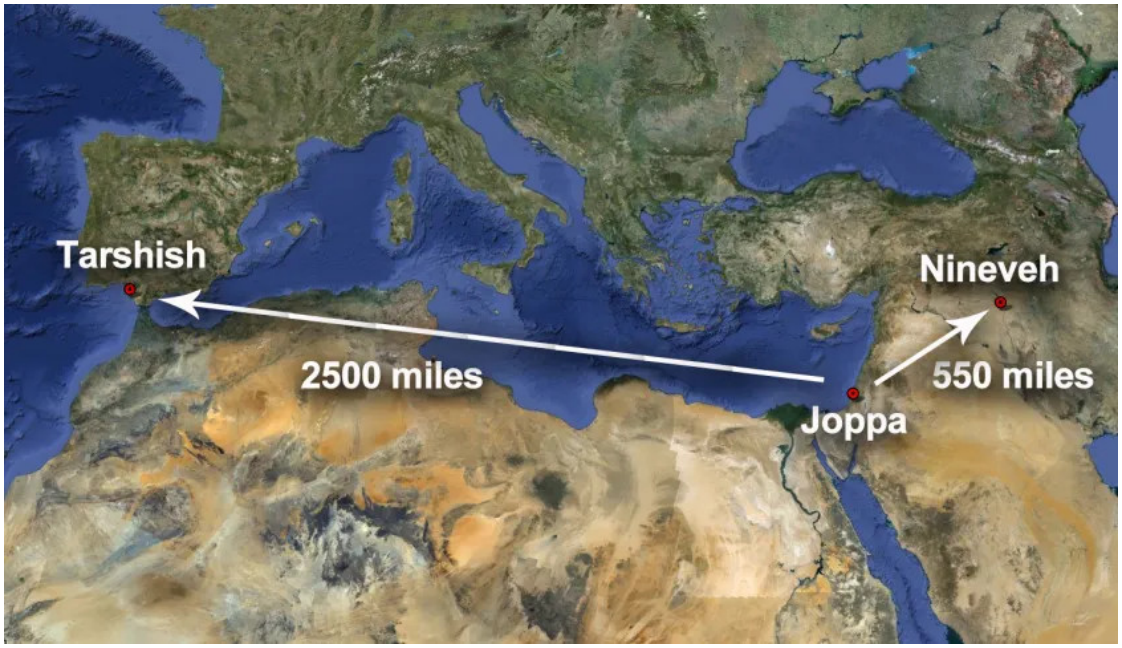
1. What does Jonah 1:1–3 reveal about Jonah’s choice?
2. Why might Jonah have objected to preaching in Nineveh?

3. What evidence shows the sailors were changing?
4. What clear command might we be tempted to avoid?

For further study

2 Kings 14:23–27; Jonah 4:2; Psalm 139:7–10; Hebrews 12:5–11; Matthew 12:39–41

Visual aid — Jonah’s direction of travel



The map illustrates Jonah’s westward flight from a command to go east or northeast. Distances are approximate, and Tarshish’s exact location is uncertain.

Notes