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JONAH PART 2 vs. 1-2

We established yesterday that Jonah was a well-known prophet in Israel known for his prophetic accuracy. He has not been highly regarded today among Old Testament prophets due mainly to the fact that he did not write books that held prophecies as did the others listed from Isaiah to Malachi; he only wrote the story of his experience on the call to Nineveh, not exactly considered to be “prophetic” in the normal sense.

Jonah 1:1-2 says, ***“Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of (the prophet) Amittai, saying, ‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.’ ”***

God gave Jonah a very specific call, and he knew it. He was accustomed to hearing the voice of God and knew it was a true call with a specific job to accomplish. He had the “ears to hear” what the Spirit spoke to him.

But why go to Nineveh in particular? Why should he not just preach to the people of his own nation? He lived in the Northern kingdom of Israel, from Zebulun which was one of the ten tribes. It was the region generally known as Samaria, but long before Samaria gained a bad reputation among Jewish people.

Nineveh, a huge expansive city of about 120,000 people, was the capitol of the Assyrian empire. Assyrians dated back before 2,000 B.C. primarily as traders. Genesis 10: 11 says that Asshur builded Ninevah which was to become the capitol of Assyria.

It wasn't until around 1,000 B.C., around the time of King David's reign that Assyria became a very powerful nation. They became an empire by conquering numerous other nations around them. Their empire lasted until 612 B.C.

Assyria was a very fierce and war-like nation known for their cruelty. They had clearly shed much innocent blood by attacking other nations unprovoked. This would be the reason for God's judgement against them.

Nevertheless, Jehovah, being the merciful God that He is, would give them a chance to repent and change their ways. This is the reason He chose Jonah to go preach to them.

God always desires that the sinner repents. In fact, that is why He would eventually send Jesus. John 3:17 says, ***“For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”*** God was willing to spare Nineveh and Assyria if they would repent.

That opportunity for repentance is available to every person today; they need to hear God's word, and you are the messenger. You are God's "Jonah" to the world around you. Ask God to give you the "holy boldness" to be His mouthpiece.