

S.O.H.L.

WEEKLY MINISTRY MEDITATIONS

Pronounced "Soul"

Running from Responsibility

August 8, 2016

JONAH 1:1-3 NKJV – (1) Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, (2) "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." (3) 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.

The word of the Lord came to Jonah with the command to preach against the wickedness of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Kingdom (**Jonah 1:1-2**). Instead, Jonah chose to flee from the presence of the Lord (**Jonah 1:10**). In his flight, Jonah left his home of Gath-hepher, near Nazareth in Israel (**2 Kings 14:25**), and traveled to Joppa (Jonah 1:3), a coastal city. There he boarded a ship bound for Tarshish, a city near Gibraltar in the southern part of Spain.

The contrast between Nineveh and Tarshish was vast. Nineveh was located east of the Tigris River in modern-day Iraq. It was more than 500 miles east of Jonah's hometown. Tarshish, in contrast, was west of Gath-hepher. In fact, Tarshish stood more than 2,500 miles from Israel in the opposite direction of Nineveh. It was the most remote destination available to Jonah. Jonah was trying to put as much distance as he could between himself and the Assyrians. Not only that, he was also trying to put as much distance as possible between God's instructions and his responsibility.

SCRIPTURE READING

GALATIANS 6:4-5

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

"Ninety-nine percent of all failures come from people who have a habit of making excuses."