

## Introduction

*Is mercy ever a tough pill to swallow?*

The Book of Jonah

- Features

- Characters

God, the sailors, the Ninevites

Jonah, the son of Ammitai, a prophet of God (during 793-753 BC)

2 Kings 14:23-27

Matthew 12:39-41; 16:4

- Theme

The Mercy of God

God's concern for nations *against* Israel, His chosen people  
God's justice, in relation to His mercy

- Structure

### Chapters 1-2 = God's Mercy to Jonah

1:1 "the word of the LORD came to Jonah"

### Chapters 3-4 = God's Mercy to Others

3:1 "the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time"

#### Chapter 1 = Jonah and Gentiles (the sailors)

1:1-3 = Jonah's response to God's commission

1:4-17 = God's mercy to Jonah

#### Chapter 2 = Jonah and God

2:1-10 = Jonah's prayer to God

#### Chapter 3 = Jonah and Gentiles (the Ninevites)

3:1-4 = Jonah's response to God's commission

3:5-10 = God's mercy to Nineveh

#### Chapter 4 = Jonah and God

4:1-11 = Jonah's prayer to God

**No. 1 – Jonah’s Commission**

1:1-4a

*Why would a prophet of God flee from God?*

**God’s servant refuses God’s commission and receives God’s correction**

**God tells Jonah to go (1:1-2)**

“Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying...”

‘Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city’

**Nineveh** = a city in Assyria, near modern Mosul

**great city** = size, wickedness **great**

‘...and call out against it’

prophet

outside Israel

‘...for their evil has come up before me’ **evil**

*Why would God send His word to Nineveh?*

**Jonah silently says no (1:3)**

“But Jonah rose...”

...to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD

**Tarshish** = a city far west of Israel, in modern Gibraltar

...he went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish

Joppa

...he paid the fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD

**the presence of the LORD**  
cf. Psalm 139:7-10 with Isaiah 66:19

What did he think about...

- ...the message
- ...the recipients
- ...his job
- ...his God

**God goes after Jonah (1:4a)**

“But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea...” **hurled**

*Why would God pursue His fleeing prophet?*