**Jonah**

*The Steps Downward*

*Jonah 1*

Background

* gotquestions.org
* 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. Whatever happened to Nineveh, Jonah would not be there to see it.
* Joppa is 70 miles southwest of Gathhepher (near Nazareth)
* Nineveh is more than 500 miles east of Gathhepher
  + Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire
* Tarshish (a city near Gibraltar in Spain) is more than 2,500 miles from Israel in the opposite direction of Nineveh.
* Jonah’s father’s name means “my truth”
* Jonah lived in the northern kingdom
  + Kingdom of Israel split in about 930 BC
  + Events in Jonah likely occurred between 793 BC – 758 BC during the wicked reign of Jeroboam II.

Jonah Served a Little God

* He thought God was limited to a location

Jonah Did Not Respect God

* Not enough to obey Him

Jonah Did Not Love People

Jonah Was at Peace with His Sin (v 5)

* NOTE: Notice the actions of those who do not know God
  + Cried every man unto his god (v 5)
  + Tried to fix things themselves (v 5)
  + Had no allegiance to any one god – told Jonah to cry out to his God
    - Any religion will do….
  + Superstitiously cast lots (v 7)
    - The fact that God used this to identify Jonah does not justify it

Jonah Only Cared about Himself

* He was not worried about the wellbeing of the crew of the ship
* Even suggesting they throw him overboard was self centered.
  + NOTE: The lost sailors valued life more than Jonah (v 13)
* The best thing Jonah could have done is repent