

16 – JONAH: INTRODUCTION

I. Historical Background



- Jonah prophesied during the eighth century B.C., which is pre-exilic.
- The writing of the prophecy occurred around 780 B.C.
- He prophesied in the days of Jeroboam II's reign in Samaria (793-753 B.C.).
- He is mentioned by name in 2 Kings 14:23-27 as having prophesied the military successes of the Northern Kingdom.
- The Assyrian Empire, with its capital Nineveh, was the dominant military power at the time.

II. The Prophet

A. His Name

- The name "Jonah" means "dove."

B. His Home

- Jonah was from the Northern Kingdom in the town Gath Hopher in the tribe of Zebulun.

C. His Ministry

The Voices of God to Israel: The Minor Prophets

- Jonah is one of four Old Testament prophets who were referred to by Christ.
- His ministry was primarily to the Northern Kingdom.
- He was sent to prophesy to Nineveh.

III. The Occasion, Purpose & Themes of the Book

- The book of Jonah is not just a historical record of his ministry to Nineveh.
- The book conveys God's concern for Gentile people.
- The book very clearly shows God's sovereignty in accomplishing his will.
- The Gentile response to the prophet is contrasted to Israel's lack of response to the prophet.

IV. Lessons From Jonah

- National sin demands national repentance.
- One cannot run away from God and his purpose for your life.
- God is able to use all incidents in the life of his servants for their good and his glory.