

**Research: Jonah 3:1 (to 1st); 4 and he, 5, 10 (to 1st ;)
Jonah is obedient**

1 the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

“God employs Jonah again in his service. His making use of us is an evidence of his being at peace with us. Jonah was not disobedient, as he had been. He neither endeavoured to avoid hearing the command, nor declined to obey it. See here the nature of repentance; it is the change of our mind and way, and a return to our work and duty. Also, the benefit of affliction; it brings those back to their place who had deserted it” (Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary).

“Attention shifts from Jonah to Nineveh, a city ‘great to God,’ a walk of three days (3:3). It suggests divine perspective: the greatness of Nineveh impresses even God. It suggests divine ownership: God rules over Nineveh. It suggests divine favor: God has ordained the greatness of Nineveh. And it suggests divine abode: The greatness of Nineveh qualifies as a residence for God” (*NIB*.7.511).

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.

“And Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh - ready to obey, as before to disobey. Before, when God said those same words, "he arose and fled;" now, "he arose and went." (Barnes’ Notes).

4 . . . and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

“These five words in Hebrew are probably the briefest of all prophetic utterances. Yet they abound in problems. Nowhere in the story has Yahweh given Jonah this particular message to speak. Whereas the narrator has verified Jonah’s arrival in Nineveh ‘according to the word of the Lord,’ the narrator fails to so verify his speech. . . . Jonah does not tell the Ninevites why they will be overturned.

The idiom ‘forty days,’ which most often signifies a long, though unspecified, time of trial and testing, seems incongruous with the urgency of Jonah’s prediction” (*NIB.7.511-512*).

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

“Although Jonah never claimed divine authority for his ambiguous pronouncement, in the first incident the Ninevites make a theological response: ‘they believed in God.’ Coming from the Hebrew root, this verb puns on the name of Jonah’s father, Amittai (‘Belief’ or ‘Truth,’ 1:1). The ‘calling’ by the son of Belief elicits belief in God. New to the story, the verb ‘believe’ was not even used for the sailors who prayed to Yahweh, vowed vows to Yahweh, and sacrificed sacrifices to Yahweh. . . . Verse 5 shows that Nineveh has indeed begun to ‘overturn’ ” (*NIB.7.513*).

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

“At the beginning the king ‘rose from his throne;’ at the end he ‘sat in ashes.’ In the middle he ‘removed his robe,’ and he ‘covered himself with sackcloth.’ These inverted movements provide a striking picture of a monarch. He has ‘overturned’ in dwelling, dress, and dignity” (*NIB.7.513-514*).

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way;

“ ‘Because they turned’ not only reports their repentance but also supplies the motivation for God’s subsequent move. In addition to the verb ‘turn,’ the words ‘way’ and ‘evil’ draw from the last instruction (v. 8) to relate that the Ninevites have done more than perform deeds of penance. They have changed inwardly; they have overturned (but not as Jonah had intended). Motivated by their turning, God ‘repented’ about the evil. Like the verb *sub*, the verb *naham* comes from the conclusion of the edict (v. 9), from the royal expression of hope. . . . Unlike the Ninevites, God does not do evil. God abolishes it from the divine vocabulary” (*NIB.7.514-515*).