

**Episode:** Kings and Prophets Series No. 13

**Narrator:** Jonah and Gomer

**Primary Scriptures:** *Jonah, 2 Kings 17, Amos, Hosea*

**Story Summary:** Jonah and Ninevah; end of the Northern Kingdom

**Location:** Ninevah, Northern Kingdom

**Time:** 780-722 BC

**Suggested Memory Scriptures:** Jonah 3:5, 10; 4:9. 2 Kings 17:7-8, 18, 41. Amos 4:13. Hosea 11:1

As shown in previous episodes, the Northern Kingdom did not turn away from its idolatry and disobedience to God. In 722 BC, God finally had enough. He allowed the Assyrians to completely destroy the Northern Kingdom and scatter its survivors among the other nations it dominated. That final end of the Northern Kingdom resulted in its ten tribes losing their identity and becoming known as the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel.

The demise of the Northern Kingdom could have been averted if its kings and people had listened to the prophets God sent them. The last of those prophets were Jonah, Amos and Hosea. They prophesied during the times of the last five kings of the Northern Kingdom, from Joash to Hoshea. Except for a brief respite under King Jeroboam II, the Northern Kingdom suffered economically and politically during these times.

Jonah was a unique Jewish prophet, because God sent him to preach to the Assyrians, not the Jews. Although he took a three-day detour in the belly of a big fish, Jonah eventually reached Ninevah, the capital of Assyria and the biggest, most powerful city in the known world. When Jonah preached his simple message, the people of Assyria responded so well that God chose not to destroy them.

It's easy to read the story of Jonah and miss a big picture. If Jonah had remained a faithful preacher to the Assyrians, they might not have chosen to destroy the Northern Kingdom several decades later!

Amos was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom even though he was a shepherd and fig farmer from Tekoa, a small village less than ten miles south of Bethlehem. Amos wrote during the brief time of prosperity of Jeroboam II's kingship. His major themes were social justice, judgment, and God's omnipotence.

Hosea was the last well-known prophet to the Northern Kingdom. Through Hosea, God tried a last-ditch effort to reclaim the Northern Kingdom. God had Hosea marry an unfaithful prostitute, Gomer, in an effort to show Israel their unfaithfulness. Hosea's sad story is a reflection of God's final relationship with the Northern Kingdom.

### Discussion Questions:

1. 2 Kings 17:6 summarizes the end of the Northern Kingdom because of its defeat by the Assyrians. What happened to the population of the Northern Kingdom?
2. According to 2 Kings 17:7-8, why did God put an end to the Northern Kingdom?
3. According to 2 Kings 17:24-41, what happened to the lands included in the Northern Kingdom?
4. Why did God require Hosea to both marry a prostitute and have children by her?
5. What is the significance of Amos being from Tekoa? What was one of his main themes?

1. The Assyrians took the people into exile and settled them in various locations. It was the custom of the Assyrians to do this to lessen the chances of rebellion. By widely dispersing them, the Israelites could not keep their identity as a separate people. 2. Because they worshiped false gods and followed the practices of other countries. 3. The Assyrians resettled people groups from other countries into the lands of the Northern Kingdom. These people worshiped their foreign gods along with some worship of God. This corrupt form of worship continued until at least the time of the writing of 2 Kings 17 according to verse 34. 4. To symbolize the unfaithfulness of the Israelites toward God, and to demonstrate the forgiving nature of God. 5. He was from the Southern Kingdom, but preached to the Northern Kingdom. His main themes were social justice, God's omnipotence, and divine justice.

### Application Questions:

1. God was patient with the Northern Kingdom for about two centuries before he allowed it to be destroyed. How is God's patience demonstrated in your life? In the history of your country?
2. Jonah tried to run away from God by getting on a boat. How do you tend to run away from God when you don't want to do what He calls you to do? Do you do it physically or mentally? What sorts of "big fishes" has God sent to bring you back to Him?
3. If God wanted you to symbolize the nature of the sins of your community, what might he have you do?

### Application Questions for Teens:

1. Jonah initially refused to go to the Assyrians because he wanted them to be destroyed instead of being forgiven if they repented. How do you feel about those you perceive as your enemies? Do you tend to want them to be punished?
2. When God forgave the Assyrians, Jonah greatly resented it. How are Christians supposed to feel toward their enemies?
3. Amos lived in the Southern Kingdom, but God had him go to the Northern Kingdom to warn them of their impending destruction if they did not quit sinning. What group might God want you to be a good example to by how you live or by what you say?