

country was menaced by Nineveh. As a matter of fact, it was from Nineveh that the Assyrians eventually came when they conquered the kingdom of Israel and carried its people into captivity. If Jonah should go and help these people, he might strengthen them, and make them all the more dangerous an enemy to Israel.

As these thoughts coursed through the heart of Jonah, he found it difficult to think of carrying out God's command. How easy it is for us to find excuses not to do what God desires! Jonah was a prophet to whom God had frequently spoken in the past. He knew God's voice. Only something drastic could keep him from doing what God wanted. Here we find him rising up and fleeing in the opposite direction. Do we sometimes do this? Do we know the clear duty that God has for us to do, and then start working vigorously in some other direction in order to distract our mind from thinking of what God wants?

Jonah rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord and went down to Joppa, and there found a ship going to Tarshish. Tarshish was in the southern part of Spain. It was a long way off. There would be people there to whom he could preach. There would be a work there that he could do, but would he ever get back to speak to the people to whom God had called him to speak, the people of Nineveh?

Jonah went down to Joppa, the sea port, found a ship going to Tarshish, paid his fare, and started out, going in the exact opposite direction to God's command.

Many a person today has been called of the Lord into His ministry as a young man, but has gone into something else.