

At other times, the Lord allowed Assyria to wage war against the backslidden Israelites, to judge them, or to chastise them in order to bring them back to Him.

Why did Assyria despise the children of Israel? Isaiah 52:4 tells us that Assyria oppressed God's people *without cause*.

Today, Nineveh is Mosul, Iraq - a city that is still warring against God and His people. Mosul gave Christians three choices in July, 2014:

1. Convert to Islam.
2. Pay a large protection tax in gold.
3. Be killed.

The leaders of Mosul have named their law against Christianity, "**The Nineveh Decree**".

6. What did God command Jonah to do in Nineveh? _____

7. Why? _____

8. Who did Jonah flee from? _____

* The prophet should have known that it is impossible to flee from God. No one can hide from God! Listen to His words, in Jeremiah 23:23-24: "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."

Psalms 139:7-12 shows the futility to try to hide from our omnipresent God. (**Omnipresent** means **present at all times, in all places**.)

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, **thou art there**. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; **even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me**. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; **even the night shall be light about me**. Yea, **the darkness hideth not from thee**; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

Nineveh, Assyria's capital city, was one of the last places on earth that Jonah, an Israelite, wanted to go. In the view of the Assyrians, an Israelite was to be crushed, without even a thought of remorse.

Put yourself in his place. What would you do if God told you, a Christian, to go on a mission trip to Mosul, a city of nearly 2,000,000 people; a city that is determined to rid itself of every Christian - and deliver a message from the God they despise?

Every true Christian, who has been a resident of modern day Nineveh, has been stripped of his belongings, has been killed, or has fled the city with nothing but the clothes on his back. (Those who took money, a phone, or a radio, were robbed.)

Would you run *from* God's voice - or run obediently *to* Mosul to prophesy its judgment?

9. As Jonah sailed away, hoping to escape God, what did the Lord send into the sea?

_____ * How foolish to run from God, who uses wind as one of His tools! Matthew 8:27 tells us that Christ's disciples " marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"

10. Who was afraid and began to pray? _____ * These seasoned sailors knew this was a storm that would break their ship into pieces. Their only hope was prayer.