

## *People of the Bible*

### Jonah

A singular prophet among many in the Old Testament, Jonah the son of Amittai was born about an hour's walk from the town of Nazareth. The focus of his prophetic ministry was the call to preach at Nineveh, the capital of pagan Assyria (Jonah 1:2).

His reluctance to respond and God's insistence that His call be heeded is the story of the book that bears Jonah's name. Although the swallowing and disgorging of Jonah by the great fish is the most remembered detail of his life, it is addressed in only three verses of the book (Jonah 1:17; 2:1, 10).

Throughout the book, the important theme is how God deals compassionately with sinners. Jonah's three-day sojourn in the belly of the fish is mentioned by Jesus as a sign of His own death, burial, and resurrection (Matthew 12:39-41).