

JONAH – CHAPTERS 3 & 4 – Jonah Preaches at Nineveh and the People Believe; Jonah’s Anger and God’s Kindness!

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

Jonah, the name means “Dove” – Jonah had a very short prophecy – A single story- A drama. Nineveh had only one prophet of God to speak to them, and he was not a loving, friendly prophet. He was an angry prophet. He didn’t have a lot of messages interspersed with psychology, and all kinds of titillating things to tickle their ears. His message was 8 words! - “**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!**”, and they repented! **What a merciful God!** So Jonah really is a drama, a play in two acts:

Jonah Preaches at Nineveh; 3:1-4:

Jon 3:1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying,

Jon 3:2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you."

Jon 3:3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent.

Jon 3:4 And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

Act 1 – Scenery - the Great Sea– **Jonah Forsaking His Mission—**

Chap. 1 – God’s Patience while Jonah was protesting;

Chap. 2 - God’s Pardon when Jonah was praying

Act 2 (Chaps. 3&4) – Scenery or setting - the Great City, Nineveh –

Jonah Fulfilling His Mission

v. 1 Peter was not only forgiven, but restored to his office; so also was Jonah again sent to Nineveh. Thank God for our second chances! There was no hesitancy this time. The prophet arose and went. The story of his deliverance seems to have reached Nineveh and to have prepared its people to receive his word, Luk 11:30. We must deliver God’s messages and preach only as He bids us. He will tell us what to say.

v. 2 God says to Jonah the self-same words which He had said before; only perhaps He gives him an intimation of His purpose of mercy, in that he says no more, “cry against her,” but “preach to it the message that I tell you.”

v. 3 Jonah is now doing things "according to the word of the LORD." The first time he had set sail for Tarshish, which was *not* according to the word of the Lord; now he is going into Nineveh according to the word of the Lord.

v. 4 As soon as he came to Nineveh, Jonah proclaims what he was told to do. Before he could finish one day's journey, he had no need to proceed any further, the whole city was alarmed with his preaching, was terrified with it, and brought to repentance by it: *and he cried*; as he went along; he lifted up his voice like a trumpet, that everyone might hear; met, and there, as a herald, proclaimed what he had to say: *and said, yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*; not by a foreign army besieging and taking it, which was not probable to be done in such a space of time, but by the immediate power of God;

Jonah was a real man! Probably prophesied about 780 B.C.

Historically ...2 Kings 14:25 *He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hopher.*

Our God is the God of the Second Chance!

v. 1 Our God is the God of the second chance. How thankful we should be! Jonah is not an exceptional instance. Consider the following:

Abraham – Gen. 12:15;20:21 – Sarah’s is my sister!

Moses – Ex. 2:12 – killed a man

Aaron – Ex. 32:4 – fashioned a golden calf

David – 2 Sam. 11:4; 15 – adultery, murdered Uriah

Peter – Mt. 26:74 – denied Jesus

John Mark – Acts 13:13 – left Paul and Barnabas

Which is the more costly? – obedience to the Lord or disobedience to Him?

Jonah teaches us how important to us regarding God’s call on our lives! ?

“yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” - - one of the greatest messages ever preached by man! Nowhere do we read in the Bible or outside of it that one message from a servant of God was used of God to so great an extent. For the whole city of Nineveh believed God! Nothing remotely approximating that has every taken place in the history of revivals.

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The People of Nineveh Believe; 3:5-10

Jon 3:5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

Jon 3:6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

Jon 3:7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water.

Jon 3:8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.

Jon 3:9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

Jon 3:10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

vs. 5 "So the people of Nineveh believed God"—that is a marvelous statement to find in the Old Testament. All God has ever asked any person, any sinner, to do is simply to believe Him. What does He ask you to believe? Believe what He has done for you. Believe that Christ died for you—that He died for you and for your sins. Believe that He was raised again and is now at God's right hand. The people of Nineveh *believed* God—that is still the important thing today.

vs. 6 When people start doing these things they no longer will be committing sin. They are in deep repentance before God and are asking God for mercy. And when you ask God for mercy, you are going to find out that He is merciful. **In the hour of repentance the king and the pauper were on the same level. God is interested in the broken and contrite heart, not the position of men.**

vs. 7 *Taste anything* - Man and beast are to forbear to eat and drink, that the fast might be most solemn, that the cry of man, seconded with the cry of hungry cattle, might enter the ears of God, who preserves man and beast.

vs. 8 *And beast* - Their horses and camels, both which they adorned with rich and costly clothing, they must. In their hands - Which are practiced by them. now in testimony of an hearty repentance, clothe with sackcloth; the clothing of beasts must witness for men. The violence - Oppression and rapine

vs. 9-10 - Nineveh is not destroyed! Jonah went to the city of Nineveh, and the entire city turned to God. This was something that had never happened before. Certainly Noah didn't have this kind of experience!—but Jonah did. What will God do now that the city has turned to Him? The king himself asks the question— We have come to what is probably the strongest statement in Scripture about God repenting. One of the attributes of God is that He is immutable, which means that He never changes. There is no reason for God to change. He knows the end from the beginning.

Nineveh Repented on a Slim Hope!

Now, when God speaks to you, God gives His promise of forgiveness. “**1Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**” Over, and over, God promises that if you will repent, and if you will turn from your sin, that He will have mercy upon you, and He will abundantly pardon your sins. You hear the message that God is going to judge sin, and that is a true message.

Judgment is going to come upon the sinner, that is a true message. That's the message that Nineveh heard.

“Judgment is going to come upon the sinner.” But with the men of Nineveh, there was no promise. There was no hope that was offered to them, if they repented. But they repented anyhow, just on the basis of, “Maybe, who can tell? Perhaps God will be gracious and merciful”. We know that He'll be gracious and merciful to us. The scripture promises the forgiveness. “Though your sins be as scarlet, they can be as white as snow.”

That is why the condemnation on us will be much greater than the men of Nineveh. **Because, they repented on just the slim hope of, “Who knows? Maybe God will be gracious. Who can tell if God will turn and change, and turn away from the fierce anger, and that we will not perish? Who knows?” Mat 12:41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.**

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Jonah’s Anger and God’s Kindness; 4:1-11

Jon 4:1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.

Jon 4:2 So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.

Jon 4:3 Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!"

Jon 4:4 Then the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

Jon 4:5 So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city.

Jon 4:6 And the LORD God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant.

v. 1 It didn't simply displease Jonah a little bit; it displeased him *exceedingly*. He wasn't angry just a little bit; he was *very* angry. What is this man angry about? He's angry because the city of Nineveh turned to God—he didn't like that. **Mat 20:15** *Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?*

v. 2 *he prayed to the Lord* - Jonah did not murmur or complain of God. He complained to God of Himself. *I knew that Thou art a gracious God* - He repeats to God to the letter His own words by Joel **Joe 2:13**. God had so revealed Himself anew to Judah. By sending him as a preacher of repentance, He implied that He would do the same to the enemies of his country. God confirms this by the whole sequel.

v. 3 *Therefore now, O Lord, please take life from me* - He had rather die, than see the evil which was to come upon his country. Impatient though he was, he still cast himself upon God. By asking of God to end his life, he, at least, committed himself to the sovereign disposal of God. "Jonah had discharged his office faithfully now. He had done what God commanded; God had done by him what He willed. Now, then, he prayed to be discharged.

v. 4 Dr. G. Douglas Young has given us a good translation here: "Is doing good displeasing to you?"—that's what God meant. God says, "Jonah, I have saved Nineveh because I'm in the saving business and I save sinners. I wanted you to bring them the message of judgment to see whether or not they would turn to Me. If they turned to Me, I would save them. They did turn to Me, and I have saved them." Is this displeasing to you that I have saved these Ninevites?"

v. 5 Jonah got himself a good spot where he could look out over the city, probably because he didn't trust the Ninevites. He thought they would go right back into their sinning; and if they did, he knew God would destroy them because God never changes. Jonah wanted to be up there if the fire fell. That's the kind of man we are dealing with here—and he's the man who had brought God's message. One thing is sure: Jonah didn't love the Ninevites.

v. 6 This gourd was prepared in the same way that God prepared the fish-Jonah had nothing to do with it. That it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd." Jonah is made happy at last by this little green gourd growing up.. He sat under the shade of it, and he became very attached to it.

Why Would God Ever Use a Jonah? - Oh man what a guy! Why would God ever use a Jonah? Well, I'll ask you another question. **Why would God ever use you, or me?** You know He has His problems with all of us! Jonah was angry! Exceedingly! Jonah was displeased, and he was very angry! Mat 20:15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?"

SUMMARY:

- **GOD’S LOVE FOR ALL NATIONS – HIS GRACE AND MERCY FOR ANY WHO WILL REPENT!** We believers and Israel have no exclusivity on being saved. God loves the whole world! Jonah’s story was to teach the tenderness of God toward a repentant nation and thus to rebuke the false exclusiveness of Israel
- **REPENTANCE!** Thank God for the power in repentance which releases the power of God to work as He delights. He is much more willing to bless than to judge!
- **DON’T FIGHT WITH GOD OR RUN FROM HIM – YOU WILL NEVER “WIN” AN ARGUMENT OR A FIGHT AGAINST GOD! - YOU’RE ONLY RUNNING FROM WHAT IS BEST!**
- **OUR SELFISHNESS AND SELF CENTEREDNESS – JONAH WAS ANGRIER ABOUT HIS OWN COMFORT-LOVING HIMSELF MORE THAN THE LOST NINEVEHITES.**
- **“AND SHOULD I NOT PITY NINEVEH?”** The key to the Book of Jonah is here. Yes, more than that, the key to the heart of missions is here. It was written to reveal the heart of a servant of God, whose heart was not touched with the passion of God in missions. Does that strike home? GOD, INDEED, HAS PITY (COMPASSION) ON THE LOST! DO WE?

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Jon 4:7 But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered.

Jon 4:8 And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

Jon 4:9 Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"

Jon 4:10 But the LORD said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night."

Jon 4:11 And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?

THE LOVE OF GOD!

The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell. It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell. The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win; His erring child He reconciled and pardoned from his sin.

O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong! It shall forevermore endure the saints' and angels' song.

Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made; Were every stalk on earth a quill, And every man a scribe by trade; To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry; Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky. (*Refrain*)

v. 7 "God prepared a worm"—this worm is just as miraculous as the fish. "And it damaged the gourd that it withered." This worm cut the vine down because worms just don't fall in love with gourds—they like to eat them.

v. 8 east wind - A dry, scorching, blasting wind. Fainted - Overcome by the heat. Better to die - But Jonah must be wiser, and humbler, and more merciful too, lest he die. Before God hath done with him, he will teach him to value his own life more, and to be more tender of the life of others. Here he goes again, *wishing death*—but it won't do him a bit of good.

v. 9 - Jonah says, "The only thing that I had that was living and that I cared for was this little gourd vine that grew up here and that You gave to me. And now the worm has cut the thing down, and here I am all alone."

v. 10 God says to Jonah, "Jonah, a gourd is nothing." A pet cat is nothing, a little dog is nothing, but a human being has a soul that is either going to heaven or hell. And God didn't ask you to *love* the lost before you go to them. He said, "I love the lost, and I want you to go to them." That is what He is saying to Jonah: "Jonah, I love the Ninevites."

v. 11 God says, "I have spared this city." What does He mean by "120,000 persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand"? He means little children. God says, "You wouldn't want Me to destroy that city, would you, Jonah? If you can fall in love with a gourd vine, can't you at least fall in love with Ninevite children?" Jonah cares more about the plant than about the great city and the death of all the people! Is your concern about the daily things – that can be here today and gone tomorrow – take you out of being concerned about the lost – the 100 million children living on the streets? Any accumulation of things that takes me away from God's call, we must be careful to avoid! It's easy to allow that to happen! His own comfort and no concerns for those dying on planet earth! Be careful of nationalism and materialism! Mat 18:2-5.

WHAT MAKES ME ANGRY ON A DAILY BASIS? NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, UNDERESTIMATE THE MERCY OF GOD! HE LOVES THE WHOLE WORLD!!

Chap 2:9 "SALVATION IS OF THE LORD"!

(Partial list of Salvation Scripture verses)

- JACOB BLESSING HIS SONS - Gen_49:18;

RED SEA PARTING - Exo_14:13;

MOSES' SONG - Exo_15:2

HANNAH'S SONG - Isa_2:1;

DAVID'S SONG OF DELIVERANCE - 2Sa_22:47;

DAVID'S SONG OF THANKS - 1Ch_16:23 (Psalm 96);

DAVID, WHEN FLEEING FROM ABSALOM - Psa_3:8;

DAVID – ROYAL PSALM – RESCUED FROM SAUL

& ALL HIS ENEMIES - Psa_18:2; Psa_18:46;

DAVID - Psa_27:1;

DAVID – CRY FOR HELP AGAINST PURSUERS - Psa_35:9;

DAVID – GLADNESS WHEN GOD ARISES - Psa_68:20;

DAVID - MESSIANIC PSALM - Psa_69:13;

SONS OF KORAH - Psa_85:7;

SONS OF KORAH - Psa_88:1;

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE TO THE LORD - Psa_98:2;

I LOVE THE LORD BECAUSE - Psa_116:13;

GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE - Psa_118:14;

Psa_119:41; Psa_119:166; Psa_119:174; ISAIAH -

12:2; Isa_45:8; Isa_45:17; Isa_49:8; Isa_52:10;

Isa_61:10; Isa_62:11; Jer_3:23; Jon_2:9; Mic_7:7;

Hab_3:8; Hab_3:18

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY – CYPRUS

- Act_13:47; 1Th_5:9; 2Th_2:13; 2Pe_3:15; Rev_19:1