

Jonah 3

Jonah 3.1-4

V1 – Significance of “second time”? A chastened prophet

- **Read Matthew 21.28-31** – The parable of the two sons (one repented and did what his dad requested)

- **Can you think of real-life characters in the New Testament who were given a second chance?**
Apostle Peter, John Mark, Apostle Paul

- Many times today we fail, but God does not give up on us – he gives us a second chance

- **Read Hebrews 12.7-12** – God disciplines those whom he loves

- God takes us back to the point where we failed and gives us the opportunity to start over

V2 – Instructions of God? Go to Nineveh and preach what I tell you to preach

- Forgiveness does not mean that we can just ignore God; it means that we must still carry out his commands (real repentance)

- Jonah had to preach what God would tell him – **Read 1 Peter 4.11**

In raising children, some parents will correct a child, and then let the child go right back to doing what he wants to do

- That does absolutely no good whatsoever – we must redirect his actions in the right course

V3 – Response of Jonah? “He arose” – a powerful statement

- **The size of Nineveh?** It took three days to walk across it

- According to commentaries, the walls were 100’ thick, three chariots could drive side by side, and the walls of Nineveh were eight miles in circumference

- **In what sense was Nineveh a “great city”?** Great potential for repentance

Lessons from the fact that God was sending Jonah to Nineveh:

1. God does not like exterminating people

2. He wants to give everyone an opportunity to repent - **Read 2 Peter 3.9**

- even the Gentiles in the Old Testament could repent

3. We should not ignore great cities for evangelism

V4 – “One day’s walk”? The time he spent preaching

- He probably stopped at various places to preach

- **The message of Jonah?** They had 40 days to repent

- Not popular to preach that way – we are told today to please the audience, say the soothing things, have the best rock band in the area, the most dramatic-looking building, etc.

- But the faithful gospel preacher must present God’s message faithfully

- Noah warned the people about the flood - Jonah did the same thing

- **Why would the people have listened to Jonah?** A prophet from the “enemy” - he must have made an impact

Jonah 3.5-10 – the result

V5 – What amazing thing happened? They believed in God – they probably could not fully understand the God of the Israelites, but they did come to believe in him

- What did the Ninevites do?** Put on sackcloth (sort of like burlap today) – a sign of repentance
- Who did this?** The greatest to the least of them

V 6– **Who else repented?** King of Assyria

- How did he repent?** He sat in sackcloth and ashes

V 7– **What decree did the king issue?** No person or animal was to eat or drink (a sign of great sorrow)

V 8– Notice the reference to the one God (not the many pagan gods)

- What did the people repent of?** Their wicked ways and the violence they had planned

V 9– Very interesting question – God’s mind can be changed

- Other examples of God’s mind being changed?** Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis 18.22-33*)/Moses persuaded God not to destroy the Israelites (*Numbers 14.11-14*)/Hezekiah having his life extended by 15 years (*Isaiah 38*)

- Luke 5.32* – Jesus came to save the sinners, not the righteous

V 10– **God’s direction?** Not to destroy Nineveh

We have a greater responsibility today to obey the gospel – **Read Matthew 12.41**

- In other words, we have more truth revealed to us today than the people of Nineveh did

God’s goal for Nineveh had been achieved

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