

“The Greatest Revival in History”

Jonah 3

IMAGINE WALKING Beautiful BEACH - Hawaii??

See huge fish come near shore – very near – Spits something onto the Beach

GO AND SEE - TERRIBLE SMELL – WRAPPED IN SEAWEED

A Man!! Living and Breathing

?? GREETING PARTY FOR THE PROPHET JONAH?? – REAL EVENT!

HIGH POINT of story of Jonah

SERIES OF GREATER MIRACLES OF GOD

- of Fish – swallowed and preserved a man
- inside Fish – man’s heart changed - stubbornness to servanthood
- Nineveh – Hearts of many Thousands WONDERFULLY Changed by God

GREATEST Revival in History – Whole city BOW to LIVING GOD in 3 Days

Number?? – NO CERTAINTY – 4.11 120,000 R/L?? – kids? Or SLOW??

Kids – SMALL KIDS – perhaps 1 million Ninevites

### 1. Instrument of Revival

God could have easily delivered Jonah on beach and LEFT HIM THERE

OR God could have ALLOWED Consequences of Jonah’s Choices to PLAY Out

If Jonah got what HE Wanted, HEBREW Flavored FISH Food in Mediterranean

BLATANT AND STUBBORN REFUSAL TO OBEY FIRST CALL

JONAH PREFERED SUICIDE TO SERVICE

REASONABLE FOR GOD TO SAY “bye bye, Jonah, have a nice life”

### a. Second Chance

GRACE of God DEFIES REASON -- v. 1 Then the word of the LORD came to  
Jonah the second time

MERCIFUL Character of GOD....

“Abram...and Sarai...left the city of Babylonia to go to the land of Canaan.  
There went as far as Haran and settled there” Genesis 11.31

10 yrs LATER Word of God came to ABRAM a 2<sup>nd</sup> Time: “The Lord said to  
Abram, Leave your country...and go to the land I am going to show you”  
Genesis 12.1

Should have gone directly to Canaan 10 yrs earlier / TOO comfortable in Haran

ALMOST 500 years later – God calls a “Prince of Egypt”

MOSES – takes matters into his own hands – kills an Egyptian

40 YEARS TO CHILL IN DESERT – at least during clear starry nights

WORD CAME TO MOSES A SECOND TIME - “the angel of the Lord  
appeared to him as a flame coming from the middle of a bush” Exodus 3.2

PETER WOULD NEVER MAKE SUCH A MISTAKE – said to Jesus

“I will never leave you, even though all the rest do!” Mark 14.29

THEN HE DENIED JESUS TO A LITTLE SLIP OF A SERVANT GIRL

RISEN JESUS MET PETER “Do you love me, FEED MY SHEEP”

WORD OF GOD CAME TO PETER A SECOND TIME

CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE IN HONOLULU

Speaker – well known pastor, committed Adultery couple years before

LISTENED WITH CRITICAL EAR AND HARD JUDGMENTAL HEART

“What right does this Hypocrite have to preach to good person like me?”

he said to us - IMAGINE JESUS INVITED US ALL TO A PARTY

Sticky name tags so we could know eachother – NOT JUST OUR NAMES

“For me, my tag would not say – Gordon – it would read ADULTERER”

WE ALL – WEARING OUR TAGS – EXPOSED IN SIN AND SHAME

Jesus – Host – Comes into Room, takes ALL tags – WEARS HIMSELF

YOU’VE BEEN CALLED TO CANAAN – did you stop in Haran? 10 yrs?

Like MOSES, TAKE MATTERS INTO OWN HANDS, HELP GOD OUT?  
HAVE YOU – LIKE PETER – DENIED JESUS, when should have spoken?

WHAT IS WRITTEN ON YOUR STICKY NAME TAG??

GREAT PICTURE OF GRACE // PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

v. 1 “word of the Lord came to Jonah a SECOND TIME”

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 999 times – Jonah’s God – God of 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance

It is solely because we have a God of persistent grace that we are serving Him today...as we noticed in Jonah’s case, God is determined that his servants will serve Him, no matter what it costs Him, and no matter what it may cost them!

Sinclair Ferguson

b. Same Command

GOD CLEARLY TELLS JONAH – WHAT EXACTLY TO PREACH

v. 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.”

v. 2 “the message that I tell you” – GET IT STRAIGHT / No Confusion

BAD NEWS OF JUDGMENT FOR SIN // GOOD NEWS – PARDON IN X

GOD’S WORD – STUDY AND SHARE – No Substitutes

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2.15

v. 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD.

SHARP CONTRAST 1.3 “But Jonah ran away”

v. 4 “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

8 word sermon / in Hebrew only 5 words – Maybe Jonah could WORK HERE

*“Forty more days, and Nineveh will be destroyed”*

MAYBE MORE SAID – NOT RECORDED – FOCUS NOT ON ORATOR

v. 2 “Go and Preach” – same command – no wiggle room // kids to parents

CHILDREN THROW TANTRUM to GET PARENTS to CHANGE MIND

GOD IS A WISE FATHER WHO IS UNMOVED BY KIDS FLOOR SHOW  
NO POINT IN RUNNING AWAY FROM GOD – He will catch up to you  
STILL HAVE TO FACE WHAT YOU ARE RUNNING FROM

*“God is as concerned about the servant as He is about the service.”* Sometimes you feel like quitting and running away, and that’s the worst thing you can do. Resigning from your church, giving up your Sunday school class, leaving the committee, or abandoning the choir will never solve the problems or meet the needs in your heart. You’ll probably meet the same situation and the same people (with different names) in the next ministry you accept. Why? Because God won’t let His servants run away. God is determined that His children be “conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8.29) and He will keep working until He accomplishes His purpose.”  
Warren Wiersbe

GOD’S WORDS – NOT MAN’S – Paul wrote to the Thessalonian Xtians

“we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God”  
1 Thessalonians 2.13

Evangelism is sharing the Good News of Jesus in the power  
of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results in God’s hands.

RESULTS – God’s Business // PROCLAMATION – Our Duty

c. Shaped by the Cross

Jesus: “For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”  
Matthew 12.40

OUT of Christ’s WEAKNESS came the SAVING POWER of His MINISTRY  
Some WONDER did JONAH LITERALLY Die in FISH / Jesus DEAD in Tomb

BIBLE does not SAY Clearly – Jonah PRAYED in Fish – All we KNOW

PARALLEL JONAH & JESUS – NOT Exact at EVERY LEVEL

DO KNOW > Jonah DIED a SPIRITUAL Death

Jesus: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”  
John 12.24

DIED to his OWN AGENDA, Personal Agenda, Direction, Purpose for his Life  
FOLLOW God is to DIE to Yourself – Agenda, Direction, Purpose must be HIS  
The word can only come with power to our hearers when it has come with power  
to our own hearts. John Owen

WE ARE THE INSTRUMENTS OF REVIVAL when GOD is IN US

Southern Bapt M – Charlotte Moon – Lottie – China end 1800's into 1900's  
“It is odd that a million Baptists of the South (of the USA) can furnish only three  
men for all of China. Odd that with five hundred Baptist preachers in the state of  
Virginia, we must rely on a Presbyterian to fill a Baptist pulpit here (in China). I  
wonder how these things look in heaven. They certainly look very queer here in  
China.” Charlotte ‘Lottie’ Moon

Another woman – faithful missionary to China – same time  
“I wasn't God's first choice for what I've done in China...I don't know who it  
was...It must have been a man...a well-educated man. I don't know what  
happened. Perhaps he died. Perhaps he wasn't willing...And God looked down  
and saw Gladys Aylward...and God said, “Well, *she's willing!*” Gladys Aylward

Jonah was by no means perfect. He had many elements of sin clearly visible in  
his life, clinging to him as tightly as the seaweed...But something had happened  
to him. Something in him had been slain by the grace of God. It was out of  
Jonah's inner death that life was born in Nineveh. Sinclair Ferguson

## 2. Impact of Revival

Site of Ancient city of Nineveh – was LONG LOST for CENTURIES

Huge Mound in upper Tigris R. valley – “NEBY YUNAS” Prophet Jonah

When archeologists dug under that mound – found Ancient Nineveh

One point in their HISTORY - Nineveh worshipped a FISH-god named DAGON

Jonah swallowed by fish – PERHAPS REASON FOR THEIR RECEPTION

...famine, solar eclipse, and rebellion had characterized the first half of the eighth  
century in Assyria (*this*) helps explain why the people of Nineveh were prepared  
to listen to Jonah. Joyce Baldwin

ONLY SPECULATE about CULTURAL/HISTORICAL Preparation by GOD

## FOCUS on CLEAR EVIDENCE of WORK of God from Our TEXT

### a. Word of God Made Known

...there has been recent and rather short-term season of public confession which affected many of our schools and churches. Sadly...there was the distinct desire, perhaps in more cases than we would like to admit, to suspend preaching or teaching of the Word in favor of on-going experience...Compare this to the early church in the New Testament during their inaugural revival. These people would hang on to Paul's teaching through whole nights if possible! Jim Elliff

JONAH'S SERMON – NOT LONG, ELOQUENT, INTELLECTUAL

THOSE THINGS DID NOT MATTER – God's Word / God's Spirit

Charles Spurgeon – one of greatest preachers in Church History

Young boy – did not know Jesus – attended Primitive Methodist Chapel

Preacher – no education – could not read or write

Text – “Look unto Me, and be saved” – God's invitation to Salvation

“My dear friends, this is a very simple text. It says, Look, Now lookin' don't take a great deal of pain. It ain't liftin your foot or your finger, its just Look. Well a man needn't go to college to look. You may be the biggest fool and you can look. A man needn't be worth a thousand a year to look. Anyone can look, even a child can look. The text says, Look unto *Me* and be saved. Aye, many of you are lookin' to yourselves, but its no use lookin' there. You'll never find any comfort in yourselves...Look to Christ”

After about 10 minutes he did not have much else to say

He looked up to the balcony, and his eyes met Charles Spurgeon's

“Young man, you look very miserable. And you always will be very miserable – miserable in life and miserable in death – if you do not obey my text. But if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved. Young man look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look!

NOT ELOQUENT, LONG, OR INTELLECTUAL SERMON – GOD USED IT

Based on Word of God – Filled w/ Spirit of God – Spurgeon LOOKED – SAVED

Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

Jeremiah 23.29

Jonah NOT Sent to Nineveh as REVIVALIST but as EVANGELIST

MESSENGER of God's GOOD NEWS of SALVATION thru REPENTANCE

b. Message Explained and Applied – “three day mission”

“great city of Nineveh” Jonah 1.1

v. 3 “Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth.”

SCHOLARS Debate > RUINS they're FINDING of Nineveh NOT that BIG

ARCHEOLOGISTS – SIZE of Nineveh – Walled City – Circumference 13 KM.

Could have walked across the city in couple hours – WHY did it Take 3 Days??

BECAUSE the PEOPLE QUESTIONED “who is this God, what is His name?”

BECAUSE PEOPLE STOPPED HIM – WANTED TO HEAR MORE

From KAROKE to CROWDED Streets / MARKETS to the MALLS

ALPHA Courses in Apts, Christianity Explored in COFFEE Houses

Men – Women / Boys – Girls / King – Commoner even their CATTLE!

Did not my words and my decrees, which I commanded my servants the prophets, overtake your forefathers? "Then they repented and said, `The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve'" Zechariah 1.6

Scores of mission trips, mission budgets, and missional pursuits are full of good humanitarian deeds with little thought about heaven and hell and the proclamation of the gospel....done with the right motives from the right faith, humanitarian service is profoundly pleasing to God. But is it the mission of the church?...Doing good is great, but only good news saves. Kevin De Young

c. True Repentance – SHOWN BY CHANGED LIVES

HOLY HUSH QUIETED THE BUSTLE AND NOISE OF NINEVEH

SIN IS NOT JUST WHAT WE DO, SAY, AND THINK – WHO WE ARE

SIN DOES NOT MAKE US SINNERS – SIN BECAUSE we're SINNERS

NO TRUE BELIEF WITHOUT SOME CORRESPONDING ACTION

**Ninevites believed and put on sackcloth – signs of repentance**

**PEOPLE CRIED – Sackcloth and Dust – SYMBOLS OF DEEP REMORSE**

vs. 5-8 They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God.

**Very UNUSUAL KING who LEADS the Way in NATIONAL Repentance!  
Like DAVID – RULER who REPENTED before the Lord and his People**

**Nineveh’s SIN was VIOLENCE / Learned from PROPHET NAHUM’s Words  
Woe to the bloody city, all full of lies and plunder no end to the prey! Nahum 3.1  
Hillary Criticizing RUSSIA for Sending ATTACK HELICOPTERS to SYRIA  
1000’s ALL AROUND World KILLED – Bombs/Bullets – “Made in USA”  
REPENTANCE AND FAITH – turn from general sinfulness and SPECIFIC SIN**

v. 8 Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.

**SIGN of Genuine WORK of God was LETTING JONAH LIVE**

**FOREIGNER Walked across City for 3 Days > ANNOUNCING their DOOM!**

**When Jeremiah PROPHESED God’s Judgment upon JUDAH > KILL him!**

**And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, “You shall die!”**  
Jeremiah 26.8

**HAVING been HUMBLLED by God / Nineveh CALLED on Him for MERCY!**

**I am severely afflicted; give me life, O LORD, according to your word!**

Psalm 119.107

### 3. Initiator of Revival

a. Divine Encounter v. 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God.

MESSENGER was JONAH / thru JONAH they had MEETING with GOD  
HEARD the VOICE of GOD thru the VERNACULAR of JONAH  
CONTACT with JONAH but CONFRONTATION with GOD  
POWER came from GOD – PRAISE goes to GOD  
GOD CONSCIOUSNESS SWEEPED ACROSS NINEVEH

v. 9 “Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”

KING of Nineveh NOT have MATURE, STRONG, or FULL Faith

BUT he was EXPRESSING REAL Faith – GOD GIVEN Faith

“Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through preaching Christ”  
Romans 10.17

Man is dead in sin – Dead to God – NEVER THINK OF HIM – ETERNITY

Asked Man WHAT Will HAPPEN when you DIE?? “I never thought about it!”

“...the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” 2 Corinthians 4.4

Jesus: “Jonah was a *sign* to the Ninevites...The men of Nineveh...repented at the preaching of Jonah”  
Luke 11.30,32

JESUS SAID – “Jonah was a SIGN to Ninevites”

SALVATION NOT IN MESSAGE OR MESSENGER – GOD & HIS WORD

b. Divine Empowerment God : Sent servant, Kept servant, Used His Servant

FROM HELPLESSNESS OF BELLY OF FISH JONAH CONFESSED

“I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!”  
Jonah 2.9

NOT Only did God EMPOWER the PREACHER but ALSO the PEOPLE:

v. 10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

OLDER VERSIONS of English Bible – “God repented of what he planned”

REPENTANCE – word with MORAL CONNOTATIONS

BAD PEOPLE REPENT – GOD REPENTS = GOD IS BAD?

“God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and not then act? Does he promise and not fulfill?”

Numbers 23.19

NO REAL CONTRADICTION – Judgment on EVIL Nineveh

THIS IS A REPENTANT NINEVEH – in Sackcloth in Ashes

DIFFERENT NINEVEH – Been Big CHANGE IN SPIRITUAL GEOGRAPHY

c. Divine Embrace

EVERY REFERENCE TO GOD’S REPENTANCE IN SCRIPTURE

IS A PROPHECY OF JESUS CHRIST – PORTRAIT OF THE CROSS

The just and perfectly holy God condemns, and can do no other, but when man repents and changes, God suffers for having condemned him...He takes upon himself the evil which was the wages of the man’s sin Jacques Ellul

ONLY REASON GOD WITHHOLD’S WRATH IS JESUS CHRIST

ANGER of God Against SIN was EXTINGUISHED / EXHAUSTED on SON

GOD’S ANGER BURNS AGAINST SIN /

GOD’S MERCY APPEARS IN HIS BELOVED SON

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.  
1 John 2.1,2

GREAT REVIVAL in Nineveh – Let’s Pray for Great REVIVAL IN BEIJING!!!

REMARKABLE Response to PREACHING of Jonah used by JESUS

Jesus CHALLENGES His SKEPTICAL, CRITICAL, UNBELIEVING Hearers

Jesus HEARERS have FAR GREATER Privilege: HEAR Him the Final Prophet

The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. Matthew 12.41

JONAH was SIGN of Salvation / JESUS has SECURED Our Salvation

Jesus was 3 Days in GRAVE / SLAIN as PUNISHMENT for our SINS

After 3 Days Jesus ROSE > PROOF God Accepted PRICE Jesus Paid for Sins

BE WISE like those CITIZENS of Nineveh / REPENT of Sin, CALL on God

Jonah 3:1 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. 6 The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, 8 but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.” 10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.