

JONAH: THE WRONG-WAY PROPHET (Part 6)

“Running WITH God – God’s *Preaching* Prophet in Revival” (Jonah 3)

INTRO: Ch. 1 “Great” city, wind, storm, fish. Chs. 2-3 great God of grace. When Jonah was vomited ashore, he was a resurrected man, alive from the dead! Why was he spared? Rom. 6:1-4 to new life! Next move? Hose off! Wait for God (sin to deal with or opportunity to step into). Review: Running **from** God in rebellion, **to** God in repentance, now Ch. 3 running **with** God, preaching greatest recorded revival in Bible (history?). Pic of ruins . . .

I. THE RENEWING OF A PRODIGAL PROPHET (2:10-3:3)

- A. (2:10-3:1) The *Renewed Mercy of God* - Verse 1 gets our attention. When is “then”? Once broken, repentant, and submissive, God is ready to give another chance. After all his failure God was still ready to use him. Isn’t God’s patience amazing? These words are some of the most encouraging to any child of God who has messed-up again story. Though Satan says otherwise, no need to waste your Christian life over some disobedience. Who hasn’t wanted to start over? All done things we wish we could undo, and not done things we should’ve. All had tests wish could retake and games to replay. If only I had another chance. God gives second chances. Examples: David, Moses, Peter, Paul... Lam. 3:22-23. Now, walks 500 miles to Nineveh!
- B. (3:2) The *Repeated Mandate* of God - Cp. 1:1 – The SAME:
1. Same *Method* “Go” - God never tells the lost to come & hear but Christians to go & tell. Sense of urgency!
 2. Same *Mission* “To Nineveh” (1 mm?) – Gen. 10:11-12 (Mosul)
 3. Same *Message* “proclaim...” - Preach the wrath of God and confront their sin. Jonah was told to do what he had refused to do before. God still wanted obedience to original orders. God rarely gives us more light until we obey what we already have. One way to test genuineness of repentance is to ask one to do (or stop) what he had earlier refused to do (or stop). Jonah probably promised God he’d do anything He wanted if He’d deliver him. Telling Him to go to Nineveh was sure way to check his sincerity.
- C. (3:3) The *Responsible Man of God* - This time to Jonah’s credit (grudgingly, heart not in it) he obeys more out of duty to God than care for Nineveh. It’s possible to do the will of God without the heart of God.

II. THE REPENTING OF A WICKED PEOPLE (3:4-8)

Jonah obeyed and God prepared the hearts of Ninevites. Beginning with the common people (v. 5) and spreading to the noble (vv. 6ff) revival came and have the greatest turning to God in history. All the result of repentance.

- A. ESSENCE - *Repentance* is a change of mind about sin and God, which breaks me emotionally, and leads to life changes! It is essential. It is the first word of the gospel. It is more than *surface* religion, reformation, remorse, conviction, etc.

- B. What ELICITED their repentance? (v.4b)

People repent for many reasons. Was it Jonah’s looks? No doubt freaky with bleached skin from stomach acid of that fish. Maybe his smell? Testimony? Why “40 more days”? Why did God delay? Chance to repent. But His patience still had a time limit! 2 Pet. 3:9 V. Havner, “I’d rather be scared into heaven than lulled into hell.” Worshipped Dagon, fish god and goddess of Nanshe (Pic)

- C. ELEMENTS of their repentance (vv. 4-8):

1. (v.4) *heard* the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 4:12) – Only 8 words led to greatest revival in history (Mosul). The greatest revival.
2. (v.5a) responded by *believing* - Repentance & faith are linked.
3. (vv.5b-8) evidenced *fruits* of repentance (Matt. 3:8):
 - Sorrow / Brokenness (5b-8a) - sackcloth and dust - Godly sorrow leads to repentance (2 Cor. 7:10). How sorry is enough? Shed tears? Enough to quit! Even the animals prayed and fasted (Pic).
 - Supplication in prayer (8b) - Cast self on mercy of God.
 - Surrender (8c) - Turn from evil ways. Stop sinning, start obeying.
 - Brokenness, dependence, & obedience. Recall Jesus used Nineveh as an illustration (Matt. 12:41). Jesus had preached for 3 yrs. Reinforcing His message with miracles, yet they did not repent & believe. The Ninevites heard one sermon from one preacher that emphasized the wrath of God not love, and they repented. The Jews heard the Son of God for 3 yrs., and the message of God’s forgiveness, yet refused to believe. Surely, their condemnation will be greater.

III. THE RELENTING OF A WRATHFUL GOD (3:9-10)

For many these verses are a problem: “Does God repent? Does He change His mind?” Is He fickle and changing? No. The Bible says in Mal. 3:6 and James 1:17 God doesn’t change, referring to His character. Turn to Jer. 18:7-10 and Joel 2:12-14...This is exactly what happened to the Ninevites. God threatened to destroy them because were a wicked and cruel nation. But they repented and God relented. True, Num. 23:19 says...but God reserves His sovereign right to show mercy to the repentant. Though His essential character never changes, His attitude toward us changes as we change our attitude toward Him. Pattern: We repent & find mercy every time!

ILLUS: F.B. Meyer explains...

CONC: Ch. 3 contains two great miracles. One, Jonah, the miracle of a *second chance* for every Christian. Every chance from God requires a choice from us. Two, Ninevites, the miracle of *saving grace* for every lost person. Do you need one of these?