

# **Jonah: The Preaching Prophet**

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## I. Salvation's urgency.

A. There is no second chance for salvation.

B. For this reason, the Gospel carries great urgency.

C. But there is a second chance as far as service is concerned.

D. Second chances in the Bible:

1. David – Wrote Psalms 23, 32, and 51 after his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah.

2. Peter – Peter preached to thousands on Pentecost and wrote I and II Peter after he denied Christ three times.

3. John Mark – Left the ministry during the first missionary journey with Paul. He may have been a mother's boy. At the end of Paul's life, he asks for John Mark because he is profitable to Paul's ministry.

E. The Word of God is transparent – God will forgive any sin. But that is no guarantee that one will escape the consequences of sin.

F. God told Moses to strike the rock once but Moses struck it twice in anger. God forgave Him but did not allow Moses to enter the Promised Land.

G. Abraham chose to be with Hagar in order to have a descendent. God forgave Him but the life of Ishmael had consequences for Abraham and for us today in the Middle East conflict.

H. We are free to make choices but not free to choose our consequences.

I. What a man sows, he will reap. (Galatians 6:7)

J. God always starts with you precisely where you are.

K. When you teach God's word, make it as simple as possible.

## II. Summary and context of Jonah 3.

A. Now – the re-commission. (Jonah 3:1-2)

B. So – the response. (Jonah 3:3-4)

C. Then – the results. (Jonah 3:5-10)

D. First commission is based in disobedience that leads to obedience and the re-commission is based on obedience that leads to disobedience.

#### IV. Jonah's re-commission. (Jonah 3:1-2)

A. God's second commission to Jonah is almost identical to the first.

B. God tells Jonah to proclaim the message He will tell Jonah.

C. Today, the church is failing to tell what God has spoken.

D. Instead, we need to return to Paul's call to "preach the Word." (II Timothy 4:2)

E. We are living in a generation where there is a famine of the Word of God.

F. Jonah learned that he did not have to develop the message, only proclaim it.

G. God gives the word to the prophet, who must only proclaim it and not rebel against it. (Ezekiel 2:8-9, 3:1-3)

H. God wants to minister to you before He can minister through you.

I. Does the Word taste sweet to you? Or is it stale? Have you discovered how alive God's Word is?

J. Beware giving answers without having experience of the Word.

#### V. Jonah's response (Jonah 3:5-10)

A. Jonah's disobedience in chapter one is transformed into obedience.

B. Nineveh's was the capital of the Assyrian empire. It was both a city and a complex of four other cities. The total area of greater Nineveh was over 60 square miles with over 1,000,000 people.

C. There were 175,000 people inside the gates of Nineveh.

D. Jonah proclaims a message about Nineveh's destruction in forty days. He was brief and terrifying in his message.

E. The response is that the Ninevites believed God – not Jonah – and started fasting and wearing sackcloth. Fasting and sackcloth were signs of penitence.

F. This response is the greatest miracle of the book. Salvation always is the greatest miracle.

G. The only explanation for the Ninevites' response was that it was supernatural in nature.

H. In the story of the rich young ruler, the issue is not that the young man has lots of property. The issue is that the property has a lot of him. (Matthew 19:21-22)

- I. Jesus then tells His disciples that it is hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 19:23-24)
- J. The disciples then ask Jesus who can be saved. He answers that it is impossible with mortals, “but for God all things are possible.” (Matthew 19:24-26)
- K. It takes no less of the grace of God to save a four year old than it does to save a murderer. The difference is that the four year old has their whole life to live for Christ.
- L. God saw them repent for their personal and national sin and then God relented.
- M. However, God is not fickle and does not change His mind. Instead, He uses language humans understand to describe His response to the Ninevites.
- N. God is not changing. Instead, a group of sinners have turned from their wicked ways.
- O. The only thing a person needs to do to go to Hell is “nothing”.
- P. The revelation in Jonah 3 is not about the prophet Jonah but about the prophet’s God, who gives grace both to Jonah and to Nineveh.
- Q. God sent Jesus Christ – the just for the unjust – so that we would be able to experience eternal life.
- R. Good news: for those who think they have blown it with God, God wants to start with you right where you are and give you a life of fulfillment.