

Introduction:

Have you ever had a job that you just didn't want to do? Growing up there were certain jobs dad would give me that I hated. I knew better than to say no or just not do it for I knew the outcome of that would be worse than doing the job. I think of Jonah being that way in **chapter 3**. In **chapter 1** Jonah runs from God, **chapter 2** Jonah prays and repents.

I) Chapter 3

A) A second chance

Jonah 3:1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, **2** "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you."

1. Apparently Jonah had changed and not God.
2. God's message had not changed and Jonah's responsibility to God had not changed.
3. The principle taught in **Romans 10** is not just a New Testament concept.

Romans 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. **13** For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." **14** How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" **16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For

Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- a. Faith comes by hearing the word of God.
- b. Teaching God's word requires a teacher.
- c. Who ever "calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

B) Jonah preaches

Jonah 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.

1. We see the magnitude of the city "three days" to go from one end to the other.
2. Jonah may have felt he had gone from the frying pan into the fire. Nineveh was an idolatrous, gentile city, and he was a foreigner and a Jew.

C) The message

Jonah 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!"

1. Clear and concise.
2. A definite time period (40 days) and God's judgment (Nineveh will be overthrown).
3. God judges the nations.

Jeremiah 18:7-10 "The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, 8 "if that nation against whom

I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. 9 "And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, 10 "if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.

D) Nineveh repents

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

1. Obviously there is the outward displays of repentance – sackcloth, ashes, not eating or drinking.
2. We know there was an inward component to their repentance due to the next verses.
3. There must be “fruits of repentance”, a change in thought and action.

Matthew 3:8 *"Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,*

4. Underlying point is Nineveh took the message of God’s judgement seriously.

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

5. Many of the prophets spoke of God's judgments on the nations. Habakkuk to Edom, **Isaiah 37** spoke of God's judgement on Sennacherib of Assyria, Ezekiel – Ammon **(25)**, Moab **(25)**, Edom **(25)**, Philistia **(25)**, Tyre **(26)**, Egypt **(29)**, Babylon **(29)**, etc

G) God relents

Jonah 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.*

II) Jonah Teaches us About God's Grace

A) Jonah's God was gracious

1. God was showing His grace by sending Jonah to Nineveh.
 - a. Nineveh was a wicked, sinful city, worthy of God's punishment.
 - b. Going on to **chapter 4** we see, Jonah understood this fact.
2. God was gracious to Jonah, in listening to Jonah's prayer and giving him a second chance.
3. At one time or another we all need second chances.
 - a. God does not condone sin or overlooks it but He makes a way of forgiveness.
 - b. The preaching of the Gospel is about forgiveness to lost sinners.
 - c. To words of John were to Christians.

1 John 1:7 *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

B) The message preached to Nineveh was one of grace.

1. God's warning of His impending judgment is grace.
2. How many times have you heard, "I wish someone had warned me", or "why didn't someone tell me"?
3. Think about the number of passages warning us of God's judgment.

2 Peter 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,*

2 Thessalonians 1:7 *and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

C) The impact of God's message of grace

1. The people including the king repented. Think of what this

would have looked like to Jonah.

2. We have all seen remarkable transformations as people turn from sin to serve God.

D) The Gracious result of true repentance

1. God relented from punishing Nineveh.

Jonah 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.*

2. Look at the attitude of the king.

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

3. There is a sense of humility.
4. Our obedience to God does not obligate Him to be gracious.
5. His grace is conditional but it is still grace.

Acts 2:38 *Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Ephesians 2:8 *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,*

Conclusion:

We usually think of Jonah, his attitude and actions but notice God and Nineveh. How would you of responded if you lived in Nineveh? How do you respond to God's word today?