

Message #6**Jonah 3:1-10**

Here is one of the most wonderful chapters in the entire Old Testament. This chapter proves beyond any shadow of a doubt that God is not only sovereign, but He is absolutely gracious. The chapter begins with Him using a prophet who had been in total rebellion and it ends with Him saving a city that was totally wicked.

WHEN A REBELLIOUS CHILD OF GOD REPENTS, GOD WILL USE HIM TO BRING MANY OTHER PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR WICKEDNESS.

SECTION #1 – A repentant prophet is recommissioned. **3:1-4**

Point #1 - God recalls Jonah. **3:1**

Notice carefully the text says the “word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time...” Here is one of the great verses of the Bible for God’s people for it clearly and plainly proves that God is the God of a second chance. Even when His people have blatantly rejected His Word and walked away from His will, if they will repent, God will give them another chance.

Point #2 - God recommends Jonah. **3:2**

Verse 2 shows us God still wanted to use Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach. God had not given up on Jonah and He hadn’t given up on Nineveh.

Point #3 - Jonah responds to God. **3:3-4**

This time Jonah did not run from God’s will, he obeyed it. Jonah immediately went to Nineveh and began to proclaim the exact message God wanted—namely Nineveh will be destroyed by God in forty days.

(Fact #1) - The judgment of God is certain.

The words “will be” indicate that God’s judgment will most certainly come in the future. Truth is it eventually did come even though Nineveh repented. In 612 B.C., the Medes and Babylonians demolished Nineveh.

(Fact #2) - The judgment of God is timed.

God knows the precise date of His judgment. In the case of Nineveh, it would happen in forty days. That was God’s appointed day of judgment against that city.

(Fact #3) - The judgment of God is total.

The word “overthrown” is the same word used to describe the judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah, when God rained fire and brimstone from heaven (Gen. 19:24-25).

The destruction was so complete that it destroyed the cities, the valley, all the people and anything that had grown on the ground. It was a total destruction. The people viewed God's judgment as meaning they would perish (3:9).

SECTION #2 – A rebellious city is repentant. **3:5-9**

Here is the greatest revival in all the Word of God: “the people in Nineveh believed in God.” I love what J. Vernon McGee says—“this is all God has ever asked of any person, any sinner, to simply believe on Him” (p. 761).

Evidence #1 - Nineveh's faith resulted in total humility before God. **3:5b-8a**

Nineveh was the greatest city in the world but after it believed on God, it was the humblest. In fact, this city humbled itself before God in a way that even Jerusalem didn't.

This whole city was in deep, humble repentance. When a person is truly getting right with God and getting out of sin, there will be total humility. When someone has truly repented, there will be no pride but broken humility before God.

Evidence #2 - Nineveh's faith resulted in a turning from wickedness. **3:8b**

In order to be right with God, a person must turn away from his sin. That is true for a rebellious believer like Jonah and that is true for a wicked unbeliever. Notice the chronology here; faith is believing and then turning away from sin.

If a person says he is right with God, but shows no remorse for his sin or shows no evidence that he desires to turn from his sin, he is not right with God.

Evidence #3 - Nineveh's faith resulted in trusting without knowing. **3:9**

True faith will trust in God even when it doesn't have all the answers.

SECTION #3 - A righteous God is relentive. **3:10**

God saw the repentance was real and He postponed the judgment.

There are many wonderful lessons to be gleaned from this great chapter in the Old Testament:

- 1) God is the God of a second chance. Truth is He is a God of the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 500th chances.
- 2) God is a Sovereign God who has the ability to change an entire city. What about our city?
Could it be we are not proclaiming the Word to the people of our world?
- 3) God is a God of grace, but also of judgment. It is our job to proclaim the whole council of God.