

June 16, 2019

“Jonah: Man on the Run!”

“God’s Grace and His Unrelenting Pursuit”

“I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.” Jonah 4:2b

“Hearing and Obeying”

“Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ‘Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.’ Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord...” Jonah 1:2-3a

A. Jonah gets a second chance...

“Then the LORD spoke to Jonah a second time...” Vs 3:1

1. Jonah had just finished his prayer.

“But I will offer sacrifices to you with songs of praise, and I will fulfill all my vows. For my salvation comes from the LORD alone.” Vs 2:9

2. The Lord ordered the fish to spit out Jonah.

“Then the LORD ordered the fish to spit Jonah out onto the beach.” Vs 2:10

3. God spoke once, then there were no other words until Jonah was ready to hear them; then God spoke the same words again

“Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh...” Vs 1:2, 3:2

B. Nothing changed and everything changed...

“This time Jonah obeyed the LORD’s command and went to Nineveh...” Vs 3:3

1. Jonah now had to travel back 2500 miles instead of 500 miles. Now the trip was further than it was when he was first given the command.
2. Jonah now had to go to the same city as before but now he had a failure behind him so there was an element of shame that he carried.
3. Jonah had to go to the same city and the Ninevites were still cruel and still evil, so his fear of the people didn’t change.
4. God had not given up on Nineveh, so God’s will for Jonah never changed.

“I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.”
1 Timothy 2:1-4

C. Jonah took the message of God to the city...

“On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: ‘Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!’” Vs 3:4

1. Jonah’s message from God was not the most encouraging message to share, but it was the message God gave to the city.

“The people of Nineveh believed God’s message..” Vs 3:5a

2. The people received the message as it was from God and declared a fast.

“...from the greatest to the least, they declared a fast and put on burlap to show their sorrow.” Vs 3:5b

3. The king received the message from God.

“When the king of Nineveh heard what Jonah was saying, he stepped down from his throne (God had his attention and someone else was on the throne) and took off his royal robes. (A sign of humility) He dressed himself in burlap (A sign of mourning) and sat on a heap of ashes. (A sign of repentance)” Vs 3:6

4. The king sent out a message to the city to proclaim a fast for all people and animals in the hope that God would spare them.

“Then the king and his nobles sent this decree throughout the city: ‘No one, not even the animals from your herds and flocks, may eat or drink anything at all. People and animals alike must wear garments of mourning, and everyone must pray earnestly to God. They must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence. Who can tell? Perhaps even yet God will change His mind and hold back His fierce anger from destroying us.’”

5. When God saw their repentance, He chose to not carry out the destruction He had threatened.

“When God saw what they had done and how they had put a stop to their evil ways, He changed His mind and did not carry out the destruction He had threatened.” Vs 3:10

D. God’s grace to Jonah, to Nineveh, to us...

“For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.” Titus 2:11

1. God’s grace is unchanging.

“The Lord isn’t really being slow about His promise, as some people think. No, He is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.” 2 Peter 3:9

2. God’s message of repentance is clear.

“Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.” Acts 3:19

“People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.”

Proverbs 28:13

“Prove by the way you live that you have repented of your sins and turned to God.” Matthew 3:8

3. God’s message of repentance is still unchanged!

“The people of Nineveh will also stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for they repented of their sins at the preaching of Jonah. Now someone greater than Jonah is here—but you refuse to repent.” Luke 11:32

4. The day before Jonah’s message came to town, there were no signs of change...just business as usual. God is working in spite of the fact that we see no outward appearance of change!

“Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear.” Isaiah 59:1

“‘You don’t have enough faith,’ Jesus told them. ‘I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.’” Matthew 17:20

“Jesus looked at them intently and said, ‘Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible.’” Matthew 19:26

“O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by Your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for You!” Jeremiah 32:17

“I am the LORD, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for Me?” Jeremiah 32:27

“If God is for us, who can ever be against us?” Romans 8:31b

Next week:

June 23: “Whining Alone” Jonah 4:1