

At The Movies 2025
The Book of Jonah
Week 3: Running with...
Jonah 3:1-10
Pastor Bob (PB) Hudberg

Sermon Introduction

Last week, we saw Jonah running to God through prayer and surrender. This week, we examine a man whom God had to speak with a second time to get him to do what God had told him to do the first time: go to Nineveh.

Here is the main idea for Jonah 3: God's message needs to be delivered, heard, and obeyed. It provides repentance and transformation.

"Evan Almighty" is the movie that we chose to go along with this Chapter of Jonah. God told Evan to build an ark, but it didn't make sense. He received ridicule for this project. There are a lot of correlations between this movie and what Jonah experienced in Jonah chapter 3

1 – The God of Second Chances (Jonah 3:1–2)

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

How many times have we had a second chance in our lives?

How many times have we been offered a do-over and then proceeded anyway?

Proverbs 24:16 says, *"The righteous falls seven times and rises again."*

Warren Wiersbe said, *"The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you and the power of God cannot use you."*

Movie Clip – 15:49-17:09.

Evan meeting God for the first time.

God is making his presence known to Evan.

That is what God was asking of Jonah after his transformation: preach the message to Nineveh and change the world, which is what Evan Baxter wanted to do.

Movie Clip – 30:44-32:50

God and Evan wanting to change the world.

2 – The Power of God's Word (Jonah 3:3–4)

Jonah 3:3,4 *So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"*

Just the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 says, *"The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword."*

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Charles Spurgeon said, *"The Word of God is like a lion. You don't have to defend a lion. All you must do is let the lion loose, and the lion will defend itself."*

Movie Clip – 1:11:03- 1:11:27

Evan/Noah is shouting his message to save themselves.

People laughed, mocked, and even disregarded him. But it was his last-ditch effort to try to save the people from the upcoming flood.

People may laugh at you, mock you, and even disregard you.
But you know what happened to you when you heard the message.
Don't forget what it was like when you first heard it and it made sense to you.

3 – The Repentance of a Wicked People (Jonah 3:5–9)

Jonah 3:5-9 *"And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. 6 The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, eight, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish."*

Notice—they didn't just believe Jonah, they believed God.
True repentance begins with faith. From the king down to the beggar, they fasted, put on sackcloth, and cried out to God. They didn't just say sorry—they turned from their *"evil ways and the violence in their hands."*

D.L. Moody put it this way: *"Man is born with his face turned away from God. When he truly repents, he is turned right around toward God."*

That's what repentance looks like—turning away from sin and turning to God. It's more than emotion; it's action. What sins do you need to turn from today? What violence, what evil in your hands, must be surrendered to God? When they knew that this was their only way of hope and survival, they turned to God

Movie Clip – 1:18:12-1:19:40

People running to the Ark for shelter. The flood was coming. The people saw that it was real, and their only hope was the Ark.

*When we see the greatest need, it is when we take our most significant step
No matter what it is, we need to react and respond*

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That is what happened in the movie and in Jonah 3

4 – The Mercy of God (Jonah 3:10)

The chapter ends with one of the most beautiful verses in Scripture: Jonah 3:10 *"When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God repented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it."*

God didn't change His character—He has always been merciful to the repentant.

Jeremiah 18:7-8 states that God will relent when a nation turns away from evil.

Joel 2:13 reminds us He is *"gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."*

A.W. Tozer wrote, *"Mercy is not something God has, but something God is."*

Nineveh deserved judgment, but God gave mercy.

So do we. At the cross, Jesus absorbed the judgment we deserved so that mercy could be ours.

Closing Thoughts

We need to realize these four points:

God gives second chances.

God's Word convicts.

God welcomes repentant sinners.

God delights to show mercy.