

The Book of JONAH

Chapter 3

“Special Delivery: Jonah & Salvation!”

> **C.I. Scofield writes about Jonah**, “Jonah’s character and God’s dealing with him foreshadow the subsequent history of the nation of Israel: outside the land, a trouble to the Gentiles, yet witnessing to them; cast out, but miraculously preserved; in future deepest distress calling upon the LORD as Savior, finding deliverance and then becoming missionaries to the Gentiles (Zech. 8:7-23). But chiefly Jonah typifies Christ as the Sent-One, raised from the dead, and carrying salvation to the Gentiles.” Scofield entitles chapter 3 as “The Greatest Revival in History.”

> **LESSONS FROM JONAH:**

(v1-2) **GRACE** - Observe *“the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time,”* the first time is found in chapter 1:1-2. Always remember our God is a God of grace and mercy; our God is a God of second chances and much, much more! (Bible teacher Charles Ryrie writes, “Grace is a constant theme in the Bible, and it culminates in the New Testament with the coming of Jesus (John 1:17 - *For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*) The word translated “grace” in the New Testament comes from the Greek word *charis*, which means “**favor, blessing, or kindness.**” We can all extend grace to others; but when the word *grace* is used in connection with God, it takes on a more powerful meaning. Grace is God choosing to bless us rather than curse us as our sin deserves. It is His benevolence to the undeserving. Ephesians 2:8 says, *“For by grace are you saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves.”* The only way any of us can enter into a relationship with God is because of His grace toward us. Grace began in the Garden of Eden when God killed an animal to cover the sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21). He could have killed the first humans right there for their disobedience. But rather than destroy them, He chose to make a way for them to be right with Him. That pattern of grace continued throughout the Old Testament when God instituted blood sacrifices as a means to atone for sinful men. It was not the blood of those sacrifices that cleansed sinners; it was the grace of God that forgave those who trusted in Him (Hebrews 10:4; Genesis 15:6). The apostle Paul began many of his letters with the phrase, *“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:3). God is the instigator of grace, and it is from Him that all other grace flows. Grace can be easily remembered by this simple acrostic: **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**. Grace is God giving the greatest treasure to the least deserving—which is every one of us.)

(v2a) **PREACH – THE MESSAGE – THE GOSPEL** – Jesus first sermon in Nazareth was *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor”* (Luke 4:18). The gospel is not a new plan of salvation; it is the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation which was begun in Israel, was completed in Jesus Christ, and is made known by the church. (Matthew 10:1-23; Jesus said in Matt 9:37-38 - *“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”* Daily pray for more workers in the harvest field.)

(v3) **OBEDIENCE** – *“So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh”* – **Who is your Nineveh? Who are you to share the Gospel? Matt 5:13-16** - *“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

(v4) **TRUTH** – *“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”* - **Today we need true evangelism, Larry Moyer in his book on *Personal Evangelism* writes**, “What is missing from much modern evangelism is the holiness of God. In Isaiah’s vision of heaven, God’s holiness is being extolled by the seraphim around the throne. Of all the attributes of God they could have praised, it was His holiness—not His love—of which they sang. *“And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory’”* (Isaiah 6:3). When we understand just how holy God is, we can begin to understand His hatred of sin and His righteous wrath against sinners. Zechariah 8:16-17 and Proverbs 6:16-19 outline the sins God hates—pride, lying, murder, false witness, those who stir up trouble, and those with evil in their hearts. We cringe at the idea of God actually hating, because we are more comfortable with Him as a God of love, which He certainly is. But His hatred is real and it burns against evil (Isaiah 5:25; Hosea 8:5; Zechariah 10:3). The unsaved person stands in mortal peril of the wrath of holy God, as Hebrews 10:31 reminds us: “It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of

the living God.” An unbeliever is separated from God by his sin, which God hates, and there is nothing he can do about it. His nature is corrupt and fallen and he is “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) with no hope of redeeming himself. He cannot save himself, in spite of good intentions or good works (Romans 3:20). Every good work that man thinks he can do is as “filthy rags” in God’s sight (Isaiah 64:6). No amount good living will make us acceptable in God’s eyes because the standard is holiness, without which no one will see God (Hebrews 12:14).

(v5-9) REPENTANCE – “cry mightily to God; yes, let every one TURN FROM HIS EVIL WAY AND FROM THE VIOLENCE THAT IS IN HIS HANDS.”

(What is true repentance? A turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God (Matt 9:13; Luke 5:32). In a more general sense, repentance means a change of mind (Gen 6:6-7) or a feeling of remorse or regret for past conduct (Matt 27:3). True repentance is a "godly sorrow" for sin, an act of turning around and going in the opposite direction. This type of repentance leads to a fundamental change in a person's relationship to God. In the New Testament the keynote of John the Baptist's preaching was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt 3:2). To the multitudes he declared, "Bear fruits worthy of repentance" (Matt 3:8; Luke 3:8). When Jesus began His ministry, He took up John's preaching of the message of repentance, expanding the message to include the good news of salvation: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel" (Matt 4:17; Mark 1:15). In Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God is seen the truth that repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin: by repentance, one turns away from sin; by faith, one turns toward God in accepting the Lord Jesus Christ. Such a twofold turning, or conversion, is necessary for entrance into the kingdom (Matt 18:3). "Unless you repent," said Jesus, "you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5). This is the negative, or judgmental, side of Jesus' message. The positive, or merciful, side is seen in these words: "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10). After Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, His disciples continued His message of repentance and faith (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 20:21; 26:20). Repentance is a turning from wickedness and dead works (Ps. 51; Acts 8:22; Heb 6:1) toward God and His glory (Acts 20:21; Rev 16:9), eternal life (Acts 11:18), and a knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 2:25). Repentance is associated with prayer (1 Kings 8:47), belief (Mark 1:15), baptism (Acts 2:38), and conversion (Acts 3:19) and is accompanied by humility (Matt 11:21). Repentance is God's will and pleasure (Luke 15:7-10; 2 Peter 3:9), as well as His command (Mark 6:12; Acts 17:30). It is a gift of His sovereign love (Acts 5:31; 11:18; Rom 2:4; 2 Tim 2:25), without which we cannot be saved (Luke 13:3). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

(v10) FAITH PRODUCES WORKS – “God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way” - James 2:14-26; John 15:1-17.