

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 04 Sept 2022 Amos 01-02 Listen to God
- 2) 11-Sept Amos 03-04 Turn to God
- 3) 18 Sept Amos 05-07 Seek God
- 4) 25 Sept Amos 08-09 Hope in God
- 5) 02 Oct Jonah 01-02 No Escape
- 6) 09 Oct **Jonah 03-04** **No Compassion****
- 7) 16 Oct Hosea 01-03 The Unfaithful Bride
- 8) 23 Oct Hosea 04-07 The Hollow Promises
- 9) 30 Oct Hosea 08-12 The Sin Harvested
- 10) 06 Nov Hosea 13-14 The Restoration Promised
- 11) 13 Nov Micah 01-03 Leaders Needed
- 12) 20 Nov Micah 04-06 Humble Beginnings
- 13) 27 Nov Micah 07 Hope Found

INTRODUCTION

- Jonah becomes the first foreign missionary
- His reluctant preaching was successful, and a city once bent on Israel's destruction now eagerly sought Israel's God
- Jonah learns that God is *"gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abundant in loving-kindness, and who relents concerning calamity."*

Passage	Comments
Jonah 3:1-5	<p>Second Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many opportunities does God give to people to come to their senses and do His will? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Pharaoh had 9 chances to let Israel go peacefully ♦ God gave Israel more than 200 years to repent ♦ ...and He gave Judah more than 450 years to repent • For others, God only affords 1 or 2 chances → Jonah • How many chances did God give us to repent? • Jonah put himself and others through needless pain • vv1-2. God repeated His command for the 2nd and last time – "Get up and go to Nineveh and preach to them" • vv3-4. We find out Nineveh was an "extremely large city, a 3-day walk". One 1st century writer (Diodorus Siculus) recorded Nineveh being a quadrangle, 60 miles in circuit • v4. And Jonah cried out, "In 40 days Nineveh is toast!" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ It makes one wonder if Jonah preached his heart out or if he just did the minimum to appease God • v5. AND THE PEOPLE BELIEVED GOD & REPENTED <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Yet, God used Jonah's weak efforts to save 1,000's
Nineveh History at this Time	<p>Assyria was in its early stages of collapse from its heyday as a regional powerhouse and conqueror</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Apparently, Jonah arrived in Nineveh during the reign of Ashur-dan III (773-756 B.C.). By this time, they had suffered military defeats, diplomatic setbacks, famines, and other reversals of success ♦ History also tells us the region had experienced a major earthquake and a solar eclipse, which were ominous signs of doom for many ancient peoples ♦ God had "rattled their cage" prior to Jonah's visit • God always prepares the way and the hearts of many prior to the preaching and acceptance of His word
3:6-10	<p>Urgent Repentance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv6-8. Repentance traveled from prince to pauper, with the king initiating the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The king, himself, removed his royal attire • ...clothed himself in sackcloth • ...and sat in ashes • Food & water fast for all people & farm animals • Sackcloth for man and beast • All men were to truly repent of their wickedness • v9. Their drastic display of humility conveyed their intense and honest desire to live – but would God listen

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v10. YES – God saw through the sackcloth into their repentant hearts, and also witnessed them turning from their wicked ways. Possibly the Ninevites did this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They stopped oppressing the poor • They provided justice to the weak and the poor • They stopped their adultery and idolatry practices • And they exhibited more of God's righteousness, justice, and lovingkindness (mercy) to all ... Jer 9:24
What if the USA were to repent? We can only dream...	<p>Can you imagine if our country were to honestly repent from their sins and return to God?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President & the Houses would be seen on C-Span, not in their \$2000 suits, but in blue jeans and polo-shirts praying to God corporately throughout the day • Churches would be filled to capacity with people praying and seeking after God – and it's not Sunday • Police forces around the nation would be twiddling their thumbs for at least a day; and • We would see at least a generation of new converts, saved marriages, and less strife in each & every city
4:1-11	<p>Lesson in Compassion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What foreign missionary wouldn't want to see an entire city come to the Lord with full, honest repentance • But Jonah didn't. He wanted Nineveh to be destroyed • v2. Jonah knew God was <i>"gracious & compassionate, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness, and one who relents concerning calamity"</i> • v10. God used a plant to convey to Jonah that people and their eternal destiny should have a higher priority and be more precious than one's personal comfort • v11. Jonah's reluctant attitude was still used by God to save 120,000 Arabs – the largest 3-day revival ever <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ In comparison, an estimated 3.2 million people attended Billy Graham's largest ever 4-day Crusade in Seoul (June 1973), but only 75,000 submitted cards showing they made a decision for Christ

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- In less than 50 years after Nineveh's repentance, the Assyrians, and another generation of Ninevites would destroy the Northern Kingdom of Israel. We are always one generation away from apostasy
- However, this generation of Ninevites would reap the glories of Heaven thanks to God's mercy and Jonah's reluctant preaching
- So, we may not have perfect motives or perfect doctrine or even a perfect approach, but when we follow God's will we reap benefits

NEXT WEEK:

TBD. Hosea's audience was so despicable God had Hosea marry Gomer, a cult prostitute, as a powerful analogy to provoke Israel to realize how her loving husband (God) was still willing to woo her back into His arms even after her horrendous affairs

