LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 02 Dec 2012 ............ Hosea 1:1-3.5......... Exposing a Broken Relationship
2) 09 Dec .................. Hosea 4:1-7.16 ......... Rebutting Destructive Behavior
3) 16 Dec .................. Hosea 8:1-10.15 ....... Deciding on Discipline
4) 23 Dec .................. Matthew 1:18-2:18 .... Seeking the Savior
5) 30 Dec .................. Hosea 11:1-12.14 .... Remembering Compassion
6) 06 Jan 2013 ............ Hosea 13:1-14.9 ...... Restoring the Repentant
7) 13 Jan .................... Amos 1:1-4.13 ...... Unseen the Indictment
8) 20 Jan .......... Gen 1, Ex 1, Ps 139; Mk 10 .......... Value of Human Life
9) 27 Jan .................... Amos 5:1-6.14 .......... Court is in Session
10) 03 Feb ............... Amos 7:1-17 ........... Can I Get a Witness
11) 10 Feb .................. Amos 8:1-9.15 ........ Let the Verdict be Read
12) 17 Feb ................. Jonah 1:1-2.10 .... Pursuing Those Called to Tell
13) 24 Feb ................. Jonah 3:1:4:11 .... Pursuing Those Who Need to Hear

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, and abundant in loving-kindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.”

Passage | Comments
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Second Opportunity

- How many opportunities does God give to people to come to their senses and do His will?
- 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 to Jonah

How many chances did God give to us to repent?

- Jonah put himself through needless pain fleeing God
- 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”
  - But archaeologists tell us Nineveh’s walls were only 8-miles in circumference, so that’s only a 2 hour walk
  - v4 gives us the right perspective as Jonah set out on the 1st day of his walk through the city preaching.
  - It was going to take Jonah 3 days of preaching

Assyria was in its early stages of collapse from its heyday as a regional powerhouse and conqueror

- 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 prior to the preaching and acceptance of His word by many

Urgent Repentance

- vv5-8. Repentance traveled from prince to pauper, with the king initiating the following:
  1. The King, himself, removed his royal attire
  2. …clothed himself in sackcloth
  3. …and sat in ashes
  4. Food & water fast for all people & farm animals
  5. Sackcloth for man and beast
  6. 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

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- In less than 50 years after Nineveh’s repentance, the Assyrians, and another generation of Ninevites would rise up and destroy the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This gives credence to the concept 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: 1Timothy. We cannot do justice to the teachings of 1Timothy without considering this unique soldier of the cross. If Timo-thy was in our church today I believe we would recognize him as someone who is down to earth, a trustworthy man of God, someone we would rely on to handle difficult church situations appropriately