

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 02 Dec 2012 ..... Hosea 1:1-3:5 ..... Exposing a Broken Relationship
- 2) 09 Dec ..... Hosea 4:1-7:16 ..... Rebuking 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 ..... Unseal 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
3:1-4	<p><b>Second Opportunity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many opportunities does God give to people to come to their senses and do His will?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Pharaoh had 9 chances to let Israel go peacefully</li> <li>♦ God gave Israel more than 200 years to repent</li> <li>♦ ...and He gave Judah more than 450 years to repent</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For others, God only affords 1 or 2 chances → Jonah                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>How many chances did God give to us to repent?</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Jonah put himself through needless pain fleeing God</li> <li>• vv1-2. God repeated His command for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and last time – "Get up and go to Nineveh and preach to them"</li> <li>• vv3-4. We find out Nineveh was an "extremely large city, a 3-day walk"                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ But archeologists tell us Nineveh's walls were only 8-miles in circumference, so that's only a 2 hour walk</li> <li>♦ v4 gives us the right perspective as Jonah set out on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of his walk through the city preaching. – It was going to take Jonah 3 days of preaching</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Nineveh History at this Time	<p><b>Assyria was in its early stages of collapse from its heyday as a regional powerhouse and conqueror</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ 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</li> <li>♦ 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</li> <li>♦ God had "rattled their cage" prior to Jonah's visit</li> <li>♦ God always prepares the way and the hearts prior to the preaching and acceptance of His word by many</li> </ul>
3:5-10	<p><b>Urgent Repentance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vv5-8. Repentance traveled from prince to pauper, with the king initiating the following:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The King, himself, removed his royal attire</li> <li>2. ...clothed himself in sackcloth</li> <li>3. ...and sat in ashes</li> <li>4. Food &amp; water fast for all people &amp; farm animals</li> <li>5. Sackcloth for man and beast</li> <li>6. All men were to truly repent of their wickedness</li> </ol> </li> <li>• v9. Their drastic display of humility conveyed their intense and honest desire to live – but would God listen</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They stopped oppressing the poor</li> <li>2. They provided justice to the weak and the poor</li> <li>3. They stopped their adultery and idolatry practices</li> <li>4. And they exhibited more of God's righteousness, justice and lovingkindness (mercy) to all</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
What if the USA were to repent?  We can only dream...	<p><b>Can you imagine if our country were to honestly repent from their sins and return to God</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The President &amp; 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</li> <li>• Churches would be filled to capacity with people praying and seeking after God – and it's not Sunday</li> <li>• Police forces around the nation would be twiddling their thumbs for at least a day</li> <li>• And we would see at least a generation of new converts, saved marriages, and less strife in each city</li> </ul>
4:1-11	<p><b>Lesson in Compassion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What foreign missionary wouldn't want to see an entire city come to the Lord with full, honest repentance</li> <li>• But Jonah didn't. He wanted Nineveh to be destroyed</li> <li>• v2. Jonah knew God was "gracious &amp; compassionate, slow to anger, and abundant in loving-kindness, and one who relents concerning calamity"</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• v11. Jonah's reluctant attitude was still used by God to save 120,000 Arabs – the largest one day revival ever</li> </ul>

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 Timothy 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



**Myth or Miracle? Fact or Fiction? We always must defend the faith, and demonstrate the Bible's trustworthiness**