



Repentance over Punishment (Jonah 1-4)

INTRODUCTION: the story of second chances...

Valuable Lessons in Jonah:

1. The futility of trying to flee from God.
2. The magnitude of God's love and mercy when we repent.
3. God's desire to offer a second chance to all those who humble themselves and repent.
4. The critical nature of overcoming resentment and bitterness.

Factsheet

- ☑ *Although this book is clearly about the prophet Jonah, it was written at a later date.*
- ☑ **Author: Unknown**
- ☑ Jonah, the son of Amittai, was from a town called Gath-hepher in Zebulun, a territory in Israel
- ☑ "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying," Jonah 1:1 NKJV

☑ **“In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin. He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hopher.”** II Kings 14:23-25 NKJV

☑ **When and where was it written?**

- ☑ It is not certain when the book of Jonah was written.
- ☑ However, Jonah ministered and prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel, which lasted from about 790 to 749 B.C. (see 2 Kings 14:23–25).

☑ **What are some distinctive features of this book?**

- ☑ Jonah is unlike other prophetic books in the Old Testament.
- ☑ It is not a record of prophecies, but a narrative about Jonah’s experiences.

- ☑ Of course, Y'shua referred to Jonah's three days and nights in the belly of the fish as a sign of His death, burial and resurrection:
- ☑ "Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and **no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.** The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here." Matthew 12:38-41 NKJV
- ☑ Y'shua clarified three days and three nights so there could be no error.
- ☑ He was ensuring that no one could mistake that there must be 72 hours in between the death and the resurrection.
- ☑ Who will not be able to "read the sign?"
 - ☑ Answer: an evil generation
- ☑ There is ONLY ONE sign!

- ☑ “Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him **asked that He would show them a sign** from heaven. He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red’; and in the morning, ‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ **Hypocrites!** You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. **A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.**” And He left them and departed.” Matthew 16:1-4 NKJV
- ☑ Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.
- ☑ “And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, “**This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.** For as **Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.**” Luke 11:29-30 NKJV
- ☑ *Jonah’s actions may reflect the hostile feelings and attitudes some Israelites held toward the Gentiles.*

☑ **The Future of the Gentiles**

- ☑ God's mercy to the Ninevites echoes the messages of Old Testament prophets who taught of God's concern for people outside of Israel, a foreshadow of the future incorporation of Gentiles into the Church in New Testament times.

☑ **The Jews were doing a really bad job in New Testament times!**

- ☑ "“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For **you travel land and sea to win one proselyte**, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.” Matthew 23:15 NKJV

☑ **Messiah and the Gentiles: be a light...**

- ☑ “**Let your light so shine** before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
Matthew 5:16 NKJV

☑ A light to the Gentiles

- ☑ ““I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, **As a light to the Gentiles**, To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.” Isaiah 42:6-7 NKJV

- ☑ “Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; **I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles**, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”” Isaiah 49:6 NKJV
- ☑ “Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. **The Gentiles shall come to your light**, And kings to the brightness of your rising.” Isaiah 60:1-3 NKJV
- ☑ Declare His Glory...
 - ☑ ““For I know their works and their thoughts. It shall be that **I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see My glory**. I will set a sign among them; and those among them who escape I will send to the nations: to Tarshish and Pul and Lud, who draw the bow, and Tubal and Javan, **to the coastlands afar off who have not heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.**”” Isaiah 66:18-19 NKJV
- ☑ Fishers of men...

- ☑ “Behold, I will send for many fishermen,” says the Lord, **“and they shall fish them;”** and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My eyes. And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols.” O Lord, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, “Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things.””
Jeremiah 16:16-19 NKJV

☑ *...and they shall fish them*

☑ **Peter—fishers of men...**

- ☑ “And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, **“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers**

of men.” They immediately left their nets and followed Him.” Matthew 4:18-20 NKJV (also Mark 1:16-18)

☑ **Peter (a first century Jonah)**

☑ Cornelius, you Gentile, send for Peter...

☑ “There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision **an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!”** And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, Lord?” So he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. **Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.**” Acts 10:1-5 NKJV

☑ Peter needs a vision from God to end deliver him from his Jonah-ness!

☑ “The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, **Peter went up on the housetop to pray,** about the sixth hour. Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance and saw heaven opened and an object like a

great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "**Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.**" And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "**What God has cleansed you must not call common.**" This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again." Acts 10:9-16 NKJV

- ☑ Peter contemplated deeply about what such a vision meant! Was it about being freed from the Food Laws of Moses?
- ☑ "**Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant,** behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there. **While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him,** "Behold, three men are seeking you. Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him

from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you." **Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them,** and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him." Acts 10:17-23 NKJV

- ☑ **This is what it means:** God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. And when God calls me to go to the Gentiles, I should go immediately!
- ☑ "And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. **As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him** and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. {28} **Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown**

me that I should not call any man common or unclean. {29} Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?" Acts 10:24-29 NKJV

☑ It quite profound, yet so simple! God shows no partiality. He is Lord of all. Preach to all the people. The prophets were witnesses of this...whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins. The gift of the Holy Spirit is for the Gentiles as well.

☑ “Then Peter opened his mouth and said: **“In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.** But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. The word which God sent to the children of Israel, **preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all—** that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

Him **God raised up on the third day**, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. **And He commanded us to preach to the people**, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. **To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.** While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.” Acts 10:34-45 NKJV

☑ **Peter’s Hypocrisy**

☑ Paul in Jerusalem—correcting the record!

☑ “But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, **as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter** (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who

seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, **that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.** They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.” Galatians 2:7-10 NKJV

☑ Peter—still carrying some of that Jonah spirit!

☑ “Now when Peter had come to Antioch, **I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;** for before certain men came from James, **he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.** And the rest of the Jews **also played the hypocrite with him,** so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.” Galatians 2:11-13 NKJV

☑ **The Bottom line! (Peter get it!)**

☑ I desire that none should perish but that all come to repentance

☑ “The Lord is not slack **concerning His promise,** as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but **that all should come to repentance.**” II Peter 3:9 NKJV

OUTLINE

Jonah 1: The Assignment

1. God wished to give the Ninevites a second chance.
2. He calls Jonah to preach a message of repentance to people of Nineveh.
3. Jonah does not like the assignment, so he decides to go in the opposite direction.
4. He boards a ship sailing in the opposite direction to avoid going to Nineveh.
5. While attempting to escape the ship is caught in a storm that threatens to sink it.
6. Jonah confesses to the crew that he is to blame for the dire situation.
7. He is cast overboard to save the ship.
8. He is swallowed by a great fish and is alive in its belly for three days and three nights.

Jonah 2: Jonah's Prayer of Repentance

9. Jonah prays from inside the big fish!
10. The Lord hears him and believes he is sincere.
11. God commands the fish to spit Jonah onto dry land.

Jonah 3: Repeat Assignment

12. God again calls Jonah to preach to Nineveh.
13. Jonah goes to Nineveh and prophesies to the people that if they do not repent they will be destroyed.
14. The people surprisingly respond with humble repentance and with fasting.
15. The Lord revokes their punishment.

Jonah 4: God Prefers Repentance over Punishment

16. Jonah is angered by the Lord's decision to show mercy to the people of Nineveh.
17. The Lord must teach Jonah a lesson about his own heart.
18. We learn how the Lord would rather that people repent and receive His forgiveness than punish them for their past sins.
19. We too should rather rejoice in someone's repentance over reveling in their punishment.

NEXT TEACHING

Three Days and Three Nights (Jonah 1:1-17)