

God is Compassionate

January 21, 2018 – Jonah 3:1-5; 10

“Then the Word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you. Jonah obeyed the Word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city – a visit required three days. On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned. The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast and all of them, from the greatest to the least put on sackcloth. ... When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, He had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction He had threatened.”

There are many who doubt that Jonah existed. They doubt because of the fact that Jonah lived in the belly of a large fish for 3 days. Yet we know that Jonah existed because Jesus Himself tells us when He replied to the Pharisees and teachers of the law who were challenging Jesus:

Matthew 12:39-41 – *“A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.”*

Even though there is no specific mention of Christ we see a number of specifics, one which Jesus already told us in Matthew 12:39-41. Some of those additional points include the following:

1. Jonah is a foreshadowing of preaching the gospel to EVERYONE since the Lord sent Jonah to the Gentile city of Nineveh! There are no restrictions to God’s Love for ALL people of ALL time, Everywhere For ALL sin.
2. Jonah was a picture of his nation of Israel. **Proud**, thinking that because they were the chosen people that salvation was from the Jews and ONLY for the Jews. But in reality Salvation in Christ is for ALL People. Thus proclaim the word of Christ to ALL,
3. Jonah was a type of Christ. – Luke 11:29-32; Matthew 12:40-41; Matthew 16:4 – As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so also will the Son of Man be in the belly of the earth for 3 days.
4. Jonah still is a type of Christ. In that as God’s people we need to continue to call nations to repentance and point them to Christ and His Work For Us. His Perfect Life For Us. His Innocent Suffering and death, For Us. His Glorious Resurrection – For Us and His coming again FOR US and for all believers on the Last day.

What is Your Nineveh?

- Perhaps There is work for you in your own family – those family members who have drifted away from Christ,
- Those neighbors who scoff when you regularly attend Bible Study and Sunday Worship
- Those inactive members in your congregation,
- The lost souls in your city.

Study the Scriptures so that you are all the more prepared to give an answer for the hope that you have.

Proclaim Christ at every open door, and look for those open doors, or sometimes nudge them a bit with thought provoking questions and comments that point to Christ.

For Christ is Risen, He is risen indeed, you are forgiven, and He is coming again. AMEN