

GREETING: Arise, shine for your light has come and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

Has there ever been a time when you did not listen to the Word of the Lord?

If you have difficulty determining if you have or have not listened to the Lord God, just go through the 10 Commandments.

Jonah did not listen to God because when God said – “**Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before Me.**” (Jonah 1:2)

Instead of going *East* to Nineveh, Jonah jumped onto a boat going *West* from Joppa to Tarshish.

Jonah thought he was going to be able to enjoy a Mediterranean cruise, but The Lord sent such a great wind and such a violent storm that it seemed that the ship was going to break apart.

The sailors tried all they could to save the ship, but it looked unavoidable that the ship was going to sink.

Since the sailors were superstitious, they cast lots to find out whose fault it was that the storm had come and that the ship was looking as though it would sink. The *lot* fell upon Jonah. They learned that Jonah was running away from God. The sailors asked Jonah what to do, and he said: “Throw me overboard into the sea.”

Did Jonah really think that the Lord would deliver Him?

The sailors were so reluctant that they at first refused to throw Jonah overboard and instead they tried to row to shore, all to no avail.

So the sailors cried out to the Lord for forgiveness as they threw Jonah overboard.

We know what happened.

The Lord God sent a large fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish for 3 days and 3 nights.

Then the Large fish spit / vomited Jonah out on the beach.

We then pick up with our text for today - chapter three.

The Lord now comes to Jonah again.

Hey Jonah, go and preach the Word of the Lord to Nineveh now!

Picture Jonah - was he covered with fish vomit?

When he finally learned that he was inside the fish for 3 days and 3 nights did he start to shake from shock? What was going through his mind when he realized he was still alive? Did Jonah kiss the beach?

We are not told.

But Jonah went to Nineveh and began to preach the Word of the Lord just as God told him to preach.

Vs. 4 – On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned.

Even though the city of Nineveh was so large that a visit was said to take three days, the people of Nineveh responded already on day one of Jonah’s preaching.

We are told what happened:

Vs. 5 – The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast and all of them, from the greatest to the least put on sackcloth.

This message of Jonah had such a great impact that even the king of Nineveh order a Mandate / Decree:

Listen to the King of Nineveh:

Vs. 6 - When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust.

Vs. 7 - Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let any man or beast, herd or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink.

Vs. 8 - But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.

Vs. 9 - Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.”

The King of Nineveh declared a Mandate!

REPENT! - TURN from your evil ways and violence!

The king also made it clear that the people were to DO something externally.

Demonstrate with their actions that they believed in the Lord and did not wish to follow their sinful ways of the past.

- Nineveh repented at the preaching of the Word of God.

120,000 people repented. God did not destroy Nineveh.

(It was about 775 B.C. and Nineveh would remain as it was until 612 B.C. - God would send the Babylonian empire to take over control of Nineveh in place of the Assyrians)

Jonah's Ministry occurred during the reign of King Jeroboam II of Israel. 793 B.C. – 753 B.C.

With COVID-19 we have been hearing about “Mandates”.

Imagine if the leaders of our nation declared a Mandate: “Repent of your evil ways and violence!”

Turn away, stop sinning!

Perhaps we cannot influence any national “Mandate” of repentance and turning from its evil ways, but we can approach the Lord God as individuals with DAILY contrition and repentance.

When we go through the TEN Commandments and find how drastically we have failed our Lord God, we can trust and believe that just as God the Holy Spirit enabled the people of Nineveh to repent, so also God the Holy Spirit enables us through the Gospel in Word and Sacrament to repent of our sin and to believe God and the forgiveness of sins which God has won for us.

During the time of Christ's earthly ministry, Jesus spoke of Jonah.

Matthew 12:40 – “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.”

Jesus spoke clearly of His own death. His death was of course on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus also spoke clearly that He would only be in the grave 3 days & 3 nights.

Jesus also speaks clearly that He will come again on the Last Day to judge the Living and the Dead, and those who believe in Him shall have eternal life in heaven. (Matthew Chapter 24:1 through 25:46)

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 and ALL people have Jesus as their Savior. (John 3:16)

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, Including the Gentiles of Nineveh!

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.

Why did Jonah not want to go and preach to Nineveh? We are told in Jonah 4:2.

Vs. 2 – He prayed to the Lord, O Lord, is this not what I said when I was still at home? **That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God Who relents from sending calamity.**

THEME: Even The People of Nineveh Believed God.

So can others. (Of course, not by our own reason or strength, but only by the power of the Holy Spirit. AMEN