

“Jonah: Prophet of Grace” Jonah 3

The book of Jonah is really not about Jonah, nor is it about the Ninevites. It's primarily about God, about His character, and especially about His limitless grace. That grace is on full display in the third chapter as God, in grace, restores His repentant prophet and uses him to bring grace to a people of unparalleled violence. And if God's grace can lift up a man as stubborn as Jonah and reach a people as wicked as Nineveh, then it can reach and transform every one of us!

God's limitless grace

1. Limitless grace to Jonah

- Gives Jonah a second chance (vv1-2)

Impetuous: Peter

Depressed: Elijah

Undisciplined: Samson

Fearful: Gideon

Old age: Caleb

From rough backgrounds: Abraham

Those who've blown it: John Mark, Jonah

- Gives Jonah a second chance (vv1-2)
- Transforms Jonah from rebel to hero (vv3-4)

The Assyrians

Ashurnasirpal II (883-859)

“I stormed the mountain peaks and took them. In the midst of the mighty mountain I slaughtered them; with their blood I dyed the mountain red like wool...the heads of their warriors I cut off, and I formed them into a pillar over against their city; their young men and their maidens I burned in the fire”

Ashurnasirpal II (883-859)

“I flayed [him], his skin I spread upon the wall of the city”

Esarshaddon

“I am powerful, I am all powerful, I am a hero, I am gigantic, I am colossal, I am honored, I am magnified, I am without equal among all kings, the chosen one of Asshur, Nabu, and Marduk”

2. Limitless grace to Nineveh

- City-wide repentance – vv3-9
 - Belief
 - Contrition & humility
 - Change of behavior
 - Urgent & extensive
 - Based on hope
- In sparing Nineveh (v10)

Isaiah 30:18

Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.

Ezekiel 33:11

“Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord God, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways!...”

Two types of prophecy

1. Declaration of the unchangeable future
 - 430 years of slavery
 - Messiah born in Bethlehem
2. Declaration of what will happen if things remain unchanged
 - Jonah
 - Josiah

Jeremiah 18:5–10

Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, “Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel. At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant it; if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it.”

- In sending Jonah
- In preparing the city for repentance

- **Have you received His grace of salvation?**
- **Have you received His grace of mission?**