



Life Group Questions¹

Jonah 3

May 21, 2017

Given God's design for the role of a prophet in Israel we would not have expected Jonah to respond to God's call the way he did. Jonah completely forsook his divinely instituted calling. In a sense, his rejection of God's *word* was a rejection of God's *will*. Maybe Jonah thought he was going to get out of a difficult task.

But as we will see in Jonah 3, when God has determined for something to happen, He *will* see it through and it *will* happen. Jonah is about to see firsthand Isaiah's words, "I made known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please'" (Isaiah 46:10). When God wants to bring about salvation to a people, it will happen and He will use the means through which he has ordained to bring it about.

JONAH'S COMMISSION 2.0

- How does Jonah 3:1-3 compare and contrast to Jonah 1:1-3?
- How do you think Jonah's experiences with the Lord in chapters 1 and 2 played a role in his obedience to the word of the Lord in chapter 3 and how do they for us?
- If your name were "Jonah" what chapter are you in right now?
- Do you think the words Jonah said in vs. 4 were the only words he spoke or are they just a summary of the message?
- What does God's use of a flawed man like Jonah tell us about God's use of us in proclaiming the gospel?
- What reasons would Jonah use to refrain from sharing his faith?
- What reasons do you use to refrain from sharing yours?

(continued in next column)

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GOD'S WORK OF SALVATION

- What is different about God's warning of judgment on Nineveh and His judgment in the flood (Gen. 6) and the plagues in Egypt (Ex. 6 & 7)?
- What are the similarities between the sailors' response (1:14, 16) and the Ninevites' response (vs. 5, 8-9) to Jonah?
- What basic elements about the proclamation of the gospel and its desired results do we see in vss. 4-5 and the New Testament?²
- In Matt. 12:38-41 & Luke 11:29-32 Jesus says that Jonah was a "sign" to the Ninevites. How so?
- In what ways do our lives function as a sign to the people around us?
- Misquoting, St. Francis of Assisi "Preach the gospel at all times, if necessary use words" - some argue that the example of our lives justifies never verbalizing or proclaiming our faith.³
 - ◇ What is enough for Jonah?
 - ◇ Is that accurate? See <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/factchecker-misquoting-francis-of-assisi>
- Read vss. 4 & 10 and answer these questions:
 - ◇ How does Jonah as a "sign" function in his message to the Ninevites?
 - ◇ What role does the warning of judgment play in vs. 4 based on what happens in vs. 10?⁴
 - ◇ What sense do you have of God's intention in vs. 4 based on the response in vs. 10?
 - ◇ **Go deep:** What does it mean that God "relented of the disaster" (ESV) that Jonah warned of in vs. 4? (What changed? Who changed? Did God know/think they were going to repent? What was God's intent all along?)

FOOTNOTES

¹ By Craig Hurst, ed. J. Lodbell

² What does his message tell us about it? What does the response of the Ninevites tell us about it? What means does God use to bring about repentance and salvation?

³ Timothy 4:2; Roman 10:14-15

⁴ Notice the 40 day time frame.