



RESPONDING TO GRACE WITH HUMBLE REPENTANCE

JONAH 3:6-4:4
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NOTES

[illegible]

- A. God's kindness leads us to repentance **(Jonah 3:4-6)**
 - 1. The grace and patience and kindness of the Lord displayed **(Jonah 3:4)**
 - 2. God's patience and kindness towards us makes room for repentance **(2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 2:21; Romans 2:4-5)**
- B. The people believed God and repented evidenced by their posture **(Jonah 3:5-6)**
 - 1. True repentance is heartfelt sorrow for sin where one turns away from disobedience and toward obedience **(Jonah 3:8; Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20)**
 - 2. We will perish if we do not repent **(Jonah 3:9; Luke 13:3; Romans 3:23; 6:23a)**
 - 3. We are at God's mercy **(Jonah 3:9; Isaiah 53:6-7; 1 John 1:9; Hebrews 7:25)**
- C. God is merciful and gracious to the repentant **(Jonah 3:10)**
 - 1. God is faithful to justly punish sinners, and mercifully forgive those that repent **(Luke 15:7,10)**
 - 2. There is good news for the defeated and the humble **(James 4:6; 1 Corinthians 1:26-31)**

- A. God's mercy and grace are scandalous to Jonah **[Jonah 4:1]**
- B. Why is Jonah so angry? **[Jonah 4:2-3]**
 - 1. He knew God would be God even to the Ninevites **[Jonah 4:2; Exodus 32:14; 33:18-19; 34:5-6]**
 - 2. Jonah wanted revenge and God's justice for his enemies **[Jonah 4:2]**
 - 3. He does not want to love in a world where his enemies are allowed to live as objects of God's grace and mercy and love **[Jonah 4:3]**
- C. How should we respond to God's relentless love for sinners? **[Jonah 4:4]**
 - 1. We should respond with joy and worship **[Luke 15:10; 1 Timothy 1:15-16; Romans 11:33]**
 - 2. Jonah responded by begrudging God's grace **[Matthew 20:8-16; Exodus 33:19]**

JONAH 3:6-4:4

The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, 8 but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish."

10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

4 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. 2 And he prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. 3 Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." 4 And the Lord said, "Do you do well to be angry?"

SERMON REFLECTIONS

1. What is the purpose of God's kindness toward sinners? If God treats sinners with such patience and kindness, how ought we to treat one another?
2. Why do people, in general, have such a difficult time repenting? Do you ever struggle to repent of your sin? If so, why do you think that might be?
3. How do we know if we are truly repentant of our sin?
4. Has anyone that you would consider to be your enemy ever come to faith in Christ? How did your reaction to this news compare to the reaction of Jonah?
5. What is the proper response to God's relentless love for us? How does God's grace and kindness affect the way we deal with sin in our lives?



Jonah

WEEK 5

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READING THE STORY

Making observations is the first step in becoming familiar with a passage and to help understand what is being said. In a notebook (or separate piece of paper), make the following observations about this passage...

- List any **People/Places**—
- List any important **verbs** (actions), **repeated words/phrases**, or other **theological/special terms**—

OBSERVATIONS

- 1 What was the response of the people and king of Nineveh to Jonah's proclamation?
- 2 How did God respond when Nineveh repented?
- 3 What is that "*displeased Jonah exceedingly*" [4:1]?

SUMMARY SENTENCE

In your own words, summarize this passage in 1–2 sentences—

JONAH'S WORLD

King of Nineveh: the king of Nineveh at that time was likely a governor-type authority within the confines of Nineveh.

Covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes: the king, in a posture of repentance, covered himself and sat in ashes, as was typical for God-fearing individuals as a sign of grief and lament.

Relent: as a response of repentance from their evil ways, God turns away from His threat of disaster towards the people of Nineveh. God showed mercy as the people sought forgiveness.

WORLDS COLLIDE

ANGRY ABOUT MERCY

The people of Nineveh were well known to be evil, hateful people. Yet God gave them an opportunity to repent (or turn away) from their evil ways. Jonah wasn't fond of the idea of God forgiving these evil-doers even though Jonah himself was forgiven when he repented just a few verses before in the story. How quick he forgot. Or, maybe he didn't forget, maybe he just didn't think they were deserving of God's mercy and grace. The humble repentance of the people and king must have come as a surprise to Jonah. One could imagine that he thought his words to them would have fallen flat—maybe that's why he didn't spend much time explaining things to the Ninevites. What inflamed Jonah more was the fact that God *“relented of the disaster he said he would do to them”* [3:10]. He wanted to see disobedient people served justice; he wanted them to pay for their iniquities. Jonah was angry. He didn't take to heart that he, too, was a recipient of that same grace.

Just like the people of Nineveh, we've all grieved God. We rightly deserve to pay for our disobedience. However, just like the people of Nineveh, we have the opportunity to repent, to turn away from our wrongdoing, and receive the grace of God through Christ's work on the cross on our behalf. What a great mercy! Once we've understood what a gift of grace we have received in our salvation, our attitude toward someone's repentance will have a tone of humble celebration and thanksgiving, not self-righteous anger.

GOING TO NINEVEH

We can see a lot of Nineveh in our world and culture right now, yet God has a heart for every lost person out there. Let's pray that our hearts would be open to spreading the great news of God's grace to all who are undeserving (hint: every one of us) and pray that God would give us a heart of mercy towards others as well.

RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 1 In what way do you see yourself in either the king of Nineveh, or Jonah, in this passage?

RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 2 We sometimes have people in our lives who show genuine repentance, even if we've been hurt by them. When we find ourselves in these situations, what could be our response to them be, as we are recipients of the same grace granted to them?