

Jonah 3:1-10

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[0 : 00] Amen. I heard that song a lot when I was younger, back before I was saved.! And that's one of those that stuck with me because I love the melody of it so much.

But when I did get saved, it took on, you know, it was more than just melody. It meant something to it. And I'm thankful for that. There's a lot of them older songs that are like that.

But anyway, Book of Jonah. We should all be very familiar with the Book of Jonah. What's the first thing we think of when we think of Jonah?

We think of a man being thrown into the seas, cast in by those that were on a ship with him, and a big fish swallows him. And unfortunately, that's where a lot of us leave it.

There's a big fish swallows Jonah, and as the Scripture says, it vomits him up on dry land. And that seems to be in a lot of church circles, and that's where we leave Jonah.

[1 : 03] But folks, there's two more chapters to Jonah after that. We're going to be in the third chapter of Jonah this morning. And personally, I'd rather teach or preach Jonah as a series, a chapter at a time, but we'll be in the third chapter this morning. That's okay.

You know, I felt like this is what the good Lord wanted me to do, and I don't want to get swallowed by a fish, so I'm going to do what the good Lord wants me to do. But Jonah chapter 1, again, we see this man Jonah.

Jonah is a prophet of the Lord. This is not a man that God just looked down one day just before this happened and said, you go preach to Nineveh.

Jonah was a prophet of the Lord. You actually see him mentioned in the books of Kings. He is the son of a man named Demetai. But he is a prophet.

In other words, he was seasoned. He knew better than to do what he did. And he did it anyway. The Lord commissioned him to go to this place called Nineveh.

[2 : 05] Nineveh being the capital city of a country named Assyria. Assyria being a very bad enemy of the Israelites. Assyria being a very violent nation.

A very brutal nation. And the more they grew in power, the more they grew geographically, the more brutal it seems that Assyria became.

Assyria, some of you may have seen pictures or paintings or otherwise depictions of people in ancient times.

And many times on the way into their capital cities or into towns or whatever, there would be people on stakes outside of the city that were leading up all along the road.

And there would be people on top of those stakes dead. And that's where those people left them.

Assyria was much that way. The city of Nineveh was much that way. They prided themselves in their brutality of whom they deemed as their enemies.

[3 : 08] People that they had overtaken. And so, many people say that Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because of this. That may have been part of it. But folks, we find in Jonah 4, verses 1 and 2, why Jonah didn't want to go.

Jonah knew God. Jonah knew the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He knew his God. And he knew that his God was merciful. He knew that his God was patient.

His God was kind. And he did not want those Ninevites to have a chance at salvation. He wanted them to perish. And that's why Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh.

But anyway, back to chapter 1, we see this man Jonah. We know that he's a prophet. He jumps on this ship after God has commissioned him. He jumps on a ship headed towards Tarsus in the absolute opposite direction of Nineveh.

And he thinks that he's going to avoid God. He's going to escape the presence of God. God sends a big storm. These other men that are on the ship, all of them pagans as far as we know.

[4 : 10] They cast lots to see why this storm, why this calamity has come upon them. And the lot falls on Jonah. And they say, who are you? Where are you from? What country are you from?

And Jonah says, I'm a Hebrew. I'm a Hebrew. And I fear the God that made the heaven. I fear the God that made the earth. I fear the God that made the sea. And they say, what should we do to get rid of this problem that we have?

Jonah says, cast me over the side. Right. And everything is going to be all right. So that's what they do. On to chapter 2 in Jonah. This is the chapter we're all most familiar with.

Jonah is in the belly of this fish. The Scripture says, God had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. God had all this in foreknowledge. None of it caught God by surprise.

None of it was a plan B or a plan C for God. He knew all this was going to happen. But Jonah did not know it was going to happen. These other seafaring men on this ship, they didn't know what was going to happen.

[5 : 09] But in Jonah chapter 2, we see Jonah in the belly of this great fish. And Jonah realizes what he's done. And Jonah owns what he has done. He has turned his back on God.

He has went the opposite direction that Almighty God had wanted him to go. And he prays unto God from the belly of this fish. And I've used that illustration more than one time when I tell people I didn't get saved in a church.

I didn't get saved at an altar. I didn't get saved in this way or that way. The ways that people are most accustomed to seeing. I tell them I got saved in a tool room floor.

In a greasy, oily tool room floor. My hands were covered in nasty muck and oil and grease. I was a mechanic at the time. And I tell people where I got saved. And some of them will say, well, that's impossible.

There had to be a preacher there. There had to be an altar there. There had to be a church. There had to be this. There had to be that. And I've used Jonah's example many times. And I say, if God could hear Jonah out of the belly of a fish at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, He could hear my prayer from that nasty tool room floor where I got saved.

[6 : 19] And you didn't have to be at church to get saved. Maybe many of you were, but it's not necessary. Folks, many times throughout the Scriptures, folks, there weren't churches.

But folks were still getting saved. I read in the book of Acts where 3,000 people got saved one time when Peter preached. But I read nothing about the presence of a church at that point. So don't tell me that it's necessary to be in a church.

Where you're at and where God is dealing with you, that's where you can get saved. I've heard some amazing stories of where and how people got saved.

And mine pales in comparison as compared to some of the other stories I've heard. But anyway, Jonah praised unto God out of the belly of this great fish. And God, in mercy, because Jonah turned his back, folks.

He could have said, no, I'm done with it. I'm just going to get somebody else. But no, God, in His mercy, He allowed this fish, and in fact, commanded the fish, to spit Jonah up on the land.

[7 : 26] And Jonah goes towards Nineveh. And that's where we're going to pick up. And Jonah chapter 3. That's just a real quick recap of the first two chapters of the book of Jonah. So Jonah chapter 3, beginning at verse 1, It says, And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I have bid thee.

So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey. And he cried and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them, even to the least of them.

For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything.

[8 : 39] Let them not feed nor drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry madly unto God. Yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

Who can tell if God will turn and repent? And turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not. And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way. And God repented of the evil that he said that he would do unto them, and he did it not. Back to verse 1 in Jonah chapter 3. And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Folks, this is way too important for us to just rush past here, because the entire Bible that we've got, the entire 66 books of the closed canon of Scripture, is all God inspired. God had every word put in this Bible for a reason. Every time we see the word A, it's for a reason. Every time we see the word Thee, it's for a reason. And here in Jonah chapter 3 and verse 1, it says, And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time. Folks, and as I said just a couple of minutes ago, God, when Jonah turned his back upon God, turned his back on the commandment that God had given him in chapter 1, to go into Nineveh, that great city, and preach to them, preach against them.

[10:08] As a matter of fact, yeah, bring a message of judgment to them. Jonah turned the other way, and God could have been finished with him, right then, and right there, God could have allowed him to have died.

He could have allowed him to be tossed into the sea, and for Jonah to have sunk down to the depths of the sea, with no great fish to swallow him up, no way to preserve him, no way to keep him, no way to do any of these things.

But God, my God is a God of second chances. My God is a God of third and fourth chances. He's a God of twentieth and thirtieth chances. He is a God of as many chances as he wills to give. And here in this scripture, the Holy Spirit of God inspired Jonah to rock that he was given a second chance from God. The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time. And what did it say? It said, arise, go unto Nineveh. That great city and preach unto it. The preaching that I bid thee. The word of God did not change.

[11:10] The very first thing that he told Jonah to do, it did not change one eye out of the folks. And my God does not change. The book of Malachi says, I am the Lord and I change not.

There is nothing about God that has changed. He has been there from the beginning. He will be there in the end. And his attitude and his attributes and anything else about God has never changed.

He is now what he has always been. And he is now what he will always be. Hallelujah. And I praise God for that. I praise God that he is unchanging.

He's immutable according to the scriptures. He's unchangeable according to the scriptures. And you might say, well, we just read just a few minutes ago, Spencer, that the king of Nineveh said that God might repent of what he done.

And God did repent of it. We read that ourselves, folks. God knew in all of his omniscience, in all of his omnipresence, in everything that God is, and ever has been, and ever will be.

[12:13] God knew what was going to happen. He knew that the Ninevites would repent. He knew that Jonah would go and preach a message of repentance, preach a message of judgment.

He knew about their repentance. He knew about the king. He knew about it all. God did not change his mind. And God will not change his mind.

Folks, and especially when it comes to this book, Psalm 119 says, the word of God is forever settled in heaven. It cannot be altered. It will not be altered. The will of God cannot be altered. But praise God. Praise God. Ain't you glad for what Peter said? Peter said, the Lord is not slightly in turning His promises. As far as some men count slaginess, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

That's the will of God. That everyone comes to repentance. That everyone believes. That everyone hears the Gospel. It enters their ears. They believe it. It seeps into their hearts.

[13:11] And they receive salvation. That's the will of my God. Not saying that everyone will be saved. The Scripture teaches against us. The Scripture doesn't teach that at all.

That everyone will be saved. And you be careful what preachers and teachers you listen to. And what churches you attend. Because some of them will teach you that very thing. Doesn't matter what you do. Doesn't matter where you've been.

Doesn't matter how you act. God's saving everybody. God's saving everybody. It's not His will that any should perish. But that all should come to repentance. But in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 3, what do we read?

God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. In other words, the wicked will die in their sin. They will die in penitence. They will die unregenerate.

God has no pleasure in their death. But it will happen. And it does happen. Unfortunately, it happens every day. Arise, go unto Nineveh. And do what?

[14:09] That great city and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. Arise and go and preach are the commandments that God gives His prophet here. God gives Jonah.

He says, arise. You get up from where you're at. You go unto Nineveh where I told you to go before. And you preach the message that I gave you to preach then. Folks, if we are preaching anything outside of the Word of God, it's not going to do this lost world any good.

If we're preaching our own ideologies. Now, once in a while when I'm preaching or when I'm teaching, I might say, in my opinion. But I will make it plain that that is my opinion.

And if I come up on something that is not biblical, but you can find it in an extra biblical text, I make sure that I make it very plain that it's not Bible, but there is proof of it out in the world.

But folks, when we are preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation, mind you. And the Gospel alone is the power of God unto salvation.

[15:10] When we are preaching the good news that man is a sinner, but God is a marvelous Savior. When we are preaching those things, we must stick to the Word. It was already said this morning in Sunday school that people are saved by the preaching of the Word of God.

If they don't hear the Word of God preach, there's no chance for salvation. And it's not because we do anything. It's because that's the way that God's Word says that it is.

And I believe what God's Word says. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. That is not just for salvation. That's for us that are saved and born again too.

You want to grow your faith? Get your nose in the Word of God. You want to grow your faith? Up your prayer life with God. But get your nose in the Word. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

If you never get into the Bible on your own time, if you're only going by what the preacher says on Sunday mornings, or what the teacher says on Sunday school, if you're only going by these things, you are not growing in God.

[16:11] I highly recommend that you get your nose in the Word. I'm not bragging on Spencer. I'm not bragging on Spencer a bit, but I've had people tell me, I wish I knew about the Bible, what you do.

And I say, I wish I knew about the Bible, what you think I know about the Bible. And what little bit I do know, what little bit I do know, it didn't just come to me.

I didn't lay down to sleep at night. And God just implanted into my mind. That's not how it works. That's why Paul told Timothy, study to show thyself approved.

If you're not studying the Word, shame on you. If you're not studying this love letter that God has left for us, shame on you. Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh according to the Word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. So Jonah arose.

[17:09] Folks, there's no back turning here. We read about that in the first chapter. But here, after Jonah's received a second chance from Almighty God, Jonah gets up, he goes where he's supposed to, he does what he's supposed to, and he does it the exact way that God tells him to.

Boy, we could learn a lot from that as Christians. We could learn a lot from that as the New Testament church. Jonah arose. God told him to arise.

It says he went unto Nineveh. God told him to arise. Go to Nineveh, that great city. And you preach them what I bid you to preach. Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh according to the Word of the Lord.

Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. I want you to notice something here. And this goes along with what was said Wednesday night. I'm all for commentaries.

I am. I'm all for commentaries. You be careful what you're reading. You compare it with what thus saith the Word of God. And if it goes against what thus saith the Word of God, trash it.

[18:16] Don't keep it. Don't keep it. Now, you're going to run into little secondary and tertiary things that really don't matter. Right. And this is actually one of those things.

But what does it say here? In Jonah, or I'm sorry. Now, Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. It doesn't say three days' journey out of the distance. It says that Nineveh was of three days' journey, meaning it took three days to cross Nineveh, not to get to Nineveh. Right. As some commentaries will have you believe, and some commentators will have you believe. It's not from wherever the great fish spit Jonah out. It took him three days to get there. And a lot of people say that because in the next verse it says, so Jonah, or I'm sorry, and Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey. They'll say, it was a three-day journey to Nineveh, but it only took Jonah a day to get there. Yeah. That's not the point of this. Right. That's not the point. In fact, none of this is really the point of the Scripture, but I'm saying this as a warning. Be careful what you read, and you compare it with what does say at the Word of God.

[19 : 21] You look at context when you are reading it, and you pay attention to context in the Word of God. Context is everything. Because I can tell you right now, I can turn to the book of Ecclesiastes and justify almost any sin that I want to commit.

Right. And justify it until I get to the 12th chapter. That's where the rubber meets the road. All the way at the end of the book. But I can turn there.

I can say, well, the Bible says we can eat. The Bible says we can drink. The Bible says I can do this. The Bible says, I mean, Solomon did it. Why couldn't I do it? I could justify almost any sin that I wanted to.

But, if I take it out of context, but once I read it out of context, with what Solomon's trying to get across, they're at the end of the book. That's where the rubber meets the road.

And that's where it matters. Jonah began to enter into the city of Day's journey. And he cried and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. I don't read anything else that Jonah said here.

[20 : 22] Now, could he have? Of course he could have. I wasn't there. Folks, I don't know. But what is recorded in the word of Scripture is yet forty days, and Nineveh will be overthrown.

Nineveh shall be overthrown. Nineveh will be destroyed. Nineveh will be dismantled, is what it is saying here. The Hebrew word that is used here is hafat, which is the same word that is used to describe the destruction that came on Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19.

It means it will be utterly and completely destroyed. And he's given this warning to the Ninevites. He says, Yet forty days.

Why the word forty? The number forty many times in Scripture is the number of trial. It's the number of tribulation. It rained forty days and forty nights when Noah was on the ark, did it not?

Jesus was tempted for forty days and forty nights. Elijah went forty days and forty nights without food or bread or drink. Moses, he does the same thing. The word forty is generally for trial and temptation.

[21 : 29] Temptation being a form of trial. Not to be tempted to do evil. But it says he went in, he said, Yet forty days, and then of us shall be overthrown.

That's all that the Scripture provides us that the man preached. But verse 5, hallelujah, we see a revival start. We see a revival begin in verse 5.

So the people of Nineveh believed God. This is the key to the whole thing. And folks, it has ever been the key to the entire thing.

To believe God. It is not in how much money you put in these plates on Sunday morning. It is not in how good or how bad you might dress.

It is not necessarily how good or bad you treat your neighbor or treat your spouse or treat your children or treat anyone else. It is in believing the Word of God.

[22 : 25] And if you believe the Word of God, you'll do all those other things. If you don't believe it, you won't do those things. I've said that many times. I mean, you're reading 1 Peter 3.

The very first line we read is, wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands. And us husbands love that line. We love that line. Submit yourself to me, woman.

I joke about that a lot. But what else are we to do? We are to love our wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. That's the one us husbands want to ignore.

That's the one we want to set off to the side. But folks, if I truly believe God and I believe what the Word of God says, as these Ninevites did, I will love my wife as Christ loved the church.

And if I do love my wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, I will treat her with respect as Christ treats the church with respect. I will treat her like that.

[23 : 21] And therefore, if I'm treating her that way, she'll have no problem being in submission to me. And that submission has nothing to do with slavery, by the way. It has nothing to do with her doing everything that I deem for her to do or everything that I will for her to do.

That's not what the Scripture is getting at there. But if I treat her the way the Bible tells me to treat her, she'll treat me the way the Bible tells her to treat me. And folks, it's a beautiful thing. Biblical marriage is a beautiful thing. I'm getting off track, ain't I? So the people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least of them. The people of Nineveh believed God. And that is the key to the entire thing. We can believe all kinds of things. And this world would have you to believe all kinds of things.

The world would have you, as I said earlier, to believe that you can go to heaven no matter what. Folks, outside of the blood of Jesus Christ, outside of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and outside of faith and Jesus Christ and His atoning death, you will not go to heaven. [24 : 31] I don't care what the rest of the world tells you. Repent and believe. Repent and believe. We read towards the end of this chapter, we read it just a little while ago, these people repented.

Why did they repent? Because they believed. If you believe without repentance, folks, that's only half of it. And that'll do you no good. That'll do you no good.

What does James say? Faith without works is dead. Being alone. And people will say, well, I believe. Hey, James addresses that too.

He says, I believe that there is one God. I do as well. The devils also believe. And tremble. We can believe all day long. I know people right now, lost as lost can be.

They'll say, well, I believe in God. I believe in Jesus. I believe in this. I believe in that. But folks, their life does not show it. There's no repentance. There's no fruit of repentance. They can just keep on doing what they've always done.

[25 : 27] They keep acting like pagans. And folks, pagans have always done what pagans do because that's all they know how to do. Just like heathens. Heathens will only do what heathens know how to do because that's all they know.

That's all they know. The people of Nineveh believed God and proclaimed a fact. This is the people of Nineveh. We haven't even got to the king yet. Jonah got a day's journey.

In other words, if it's three days' journey across Nineveh, he is a third of the way into Nineveh. And he's preaching. Yet in 40 days.

That word yet's important too, by the way. Yet in 40 days. In other words, hey, there's a chance for mercy. Yet in 40 days. This city will be overthrown.

Your city that you all have built, that you all have amassed, that you all have spread, this great city that is so industrious, this great city that is so prosperous, this great city that is so large, God is going to overthrow it.

[26 : 32] God will overthrow it. And the people, it says here in verse 5, so the people of Nineveh believed God. They believed the message that was coming from Jonah that God had sent. They believed God. When I go out here and I preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, whether I'm in a pulpit or whether I'm on a street corner somewhere, if I'm preaching the true blue gospel of Jesus Christ and people come to believe it and they receive salvation, it's not because of anything that I have done.

God done that because His gospel was preached. It is His gospel that is the power of God unto salvation. And they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

Folks, I am glad. I am glad that grace, grace is no respecter of persons. God is no respecter of persons. As far as salvation goes, folks, it is available to the Jew and to the Greek.

I've already quoted it this morning a couple of times and I will again. Paul says in Romans 1, for I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to the Jew first and then to the Greek.

It is for everyone. And here in Nineveh, these people repented from the greatest of them to the least of them. It didn't matter how far up the social ladder that they were.

[27 : 47] It didn't matter how much of a peasant that they were. Every one of them heard the message that the man Jonah was preaching and every one of them repented. They repented.

And folks, this is genuine repentance. It is genuine. There is a difference between coming to the altar and shedding a few tears and feeling sorry because you got caught in your sin.

And genuine repentance where you're crying out to God because you've come to the end of yourself and you realize that there's no hope for salvation. There's no hope for life.

There's no hope for anything outside of Jesus Christ. And God has what you need in that atonement. That produces genuine repentance. That produces genuine repentance.

They proclaim the fast put on that cloth from the greatest of them even to the least of them for the word came unto the king of Nineveh and he arose from his throne and laid his robe from him and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

[28 : 51] The king of Nineveh. This is one of the most powerful empires. Assyria was one of the most powerful empires if not the most powerful at this time in the entire world. And their king, you'd think that he would have acted like Pharaoh did over in the book of Exodus.

Who is this God that I should believe in? That was Pharaoh's words when Moses comes saying, let my people go. God says he's going to do this. God says he's going to do that.

Who is this God that I should believe in was the words of Pharaoh. You would think that this king of Nineveh would have had the exact, the king of Assyria really would have had the exact same response.

But folks, he didn't. He believed God just like the people did. Again, from the peasants all the way up to the king. They repented.

They repented. Most people in this position, most people will seek to stifle the Word of God.

They'll seek to snuff out the Word of God. They will seek to stop the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

[29 : 52] But this man in penitence, he looks up and he says, hey, we're all going to repent. And not only us people, you have the animals do the same. And that wasn't because the animals could receive salvation.

It wasn't because the animals could be saved. Animals can't repent. Just like heathens and pagans.

What I was talking about earlier, cows do what cows do because that's all they know how to do.

Horses do what horses do because that's all they know.

Dogs and cats are the same way. They can't repent. They're the way that God designed them to be. And my Bible teaches that they're going back to the dust.

Period. And I know that might break some of y'all's hearts, but that's the truth of the Scripture. As much as I loved a certain cat that Missy and I had, I don't expect to see him in heaven.

However, Missy says that he was so great God might have him for a lap kitty. That's beside the point. Getting off subject. He was a great cat. Verse 6.

[30 : 56] For the word came, or verse 7, and he calls it to be proclaimed. Who calls it? This king. He calls it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his noble saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything, let them not feed nor drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God.

Folks, that is another key in this entire thing. We can fast as much as we want to. If you go throughout the week and you say, I'm fasting for God, I'm doing this for God, or not doing that for God, but you don't spend that time with God, you are not fasting.

You're just starving yourself. Yeah. You spend that time with God. You say, I'm skipping a meal. I'm skipping a meal because I'm fasting. I'm fasting because so and so is sick.

I'm skipping a meal but I'm going to go riding the bike or doing this or doing that. Folks, you fast to spend time with God. You fast to pray. You fast.

You skip something that you would normally do. Something that you would normally want to do. And it's not necessarily food, but that's how most of us normally attribute fasting to.

[32 : 10] We skip a meal. And that's great. That that half hour you might be eating. Spend it with God in prayer or spend it in the Word of God. Do something with God or with the Word of God.

That is true fasting. These people and the King Himself decreed it. Praise God. Praise God for leaders like this. This world could use some leaders like this.

It says in verse 8 again, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God.

Don't just sit in ashes and don't just sit in sackcloth.

Don't just sit there in this parentage. You cry mightily unto God. He doesn't say, don't whisper, just whisper a little prayer once in a while.

He says, cry mightily unto God. James says, the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. And this man here, a pagan king, one that did not have the Old Testament, one that couldn't have cared less about the Psalms or about anything to do with Israel coming up, with Abraham being chosen, with God bringing the Israelites out of Egypt and parting the Red Sea.

[33 : 23] This king didn't know and didn't care about any of us. And he knew better than the people of God. He knew better what to do than the people of God did.

The world's watching you, folks. If you're here and you're part of the church, I'm talking about the part of the bride of Christ, the world's watching you and they're just waiting on you to mess up. They are waiting.

You know why? Because they know better what to do than you do. They know how we're supposed to act. They know how we're supposed to carry ourselves. They know that we're supposed to dress modestly.

They know that we're not to have bad language coming out of our mouths. They know that we're not supposed to be getting drunk and getting high and all that good stuff.

They know all these things. And they're the very first ones that will point it out to you that's all caught doing it. You get caught? No. Lost person will be the first one.

[34 : 25] This king here decrees for all these people and all these animals to be covered in sackcloth. And he tells them to cry mightily unto God. Yea, let them turn everyone from his evil way.

The king recognized why this judgment was passing upon them. Let everyone turn from his evil way. The king realized, hey, there's evil in the land.

There's evil in this city. There's evil in this country. And this is why the judgment of God has been pronounced upon us. Folks, I tell you now, if you're here lost, right now, there is judgment coming. Judgment was pronounced on Nineveh. Yet 40 days, and God shall overthrow this city. Folks, there is judgment coming. It's coming down the pike. It's coming down the line.

There is a judgment. There is the wrath of God which will last forever and ever and always. It's going to be in a place called hell. And if you die lost without Jesus Christ, that's exactly where you will end up.

[35 : 27] And that judgment has been pronounced. That judgment has been told us. It has been conveyed to us. And it's being conveyed to you one more time right now. That the judgment of God is coming.

And without Jesus Christ, you have no escape and no hope out from underneath the judgment of God. Repent. Repent and believe.

These people believed. They repented because they believed. Folks, it is like that throughout the Scripture. Repent and believe. Repent and believe. Repent and believe. Rahab.

She repented. Why? Because she believed. She believed. When those Israelites showed up to her house, Rahab, the harlot no less, she repented of her way.

She's mentioned in Hebrews chapter 11 as one of the heroes of faith. Praise God. Hallelujah. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God.

[36 : 27] Yea, let him turn everyone from his evil way and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell? Praise God. Folks, this man, again, this is a pagan king.

Thank you. He didn't know what the prophet Joel would have said. Couldn't have cared less what Joel could have said. But Joel in Joel chapter 2 said, There's coming a day when whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.

He didn't have Romans 10. He didn't know that Paul quoted that very text from Joel and said that if we confess Jesus Christ as Lord with our mouth and we believe in our heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

He did not know that. This pagan king did not know that. But it says, Who can tell? Who can tell if God will turn and repent? Folks, this is repentance.

This is, honestly, this is gospel repentance. God is under no obligation to save a single soul. He is holy. He is just. He is righteous.

[37 : 33] And we are all nothing but a bunch of filthy sinners that deserve His judgment and hell. Every one of us deserve that. This man here says, Who can tell?

But praise God for the promises that we find in the Scripture. That if we believe in our heart that God hath raised him from the dead and we confess Jesus Christ as Lord, if we have called upon the name of Jesus Christ, thou shalt be saved.

But this man here says, Who can tell? Folks, he had no guarantee of the mercy of God. He had no guarantee of the grace of God.

But he cast himself upon that mercy with hope that God would show it. That's genuine repentance. That's genuine repentance. Somebody comes up, and I've heard people say, you probably have too, I've done too much of my life.

I've done this. I've done that. I've been here. I've been there. God would never forgive me. And folks, that's a prideful statement. I've done so much that God can't forgive me.

[38 : 39] That's pride. That is pride to say that. I've sinned so much. Praise God. There is no sin that is greater than the grace of God. There is no sin that is stronger than the grace of God.

There is no amount of sin that is more than what the grace of God can cover and wash away by the blood of Jesus Christ. Who can tell us God will turn and repent and turn away from His fierce anger that we perish not.

Who can tell it? This king says. He says, but we've been told. We've been given warning. This man said, yes, 40 days and God will overthrow the city. We have got to repent.

We have got to cry out to God. We have got to cry out for mercy. And sinner, if you're here now, I suggest that you do the same thing. I suggest that you do the same thing if the Holy Spirit is dealing with your heart.

You do the same thing. You repent. You repent of your ways. You repent of your sin. This king here told us, turn, every man, turn from your evil ways. You've got to recognize that you are a sinner before you can ever be saved.

[39 : 45] Jesus said, I came, I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He said, He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Folks, that was me.

That was me. That is the world. If you're sitting here saved, that was you. And if you're sitting here lost, that's you too. You repent and you believe or otherwise the judgment of God is coming and there is nothing you can do to stop it.

Christ has already done everything that there is to do to stop the judgment of God by hanging on a tree, by shedding His blood. The Bible says without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

There is no remission. There is no forgiveness of your sin without the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ. You say all you want to about the Old Testament sacrifices. Folks, that was not powerful enough to wash away sin.

That was what God prescribed for a different people in a different time, but it all pointed to the greater sacrifice. It all pointed to the ultimate sacrifice. It all pointed to the atoning death of Jesus Christ that He suffered on behalf of sinners.

[40 : 47] Hallelujah. Amen. The Bible says He commended His love toward us in the while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us. Hallelujah. In that same chapter, Romans chapter 5, it says He died for the ungodly.

That was me. That was you. Every one of us are ungodly. And God saw their works. That they turned from their evil way. And God repented of the evil that He said that He would do unto them. And He did it not. Now, this term repenting doesn't mean that God sinned and then He had to repent. There's some folks out there that are trying to convince you of that. Folks, God, a perfect, holy, just, and right God cannot sin.

He cannot. It's not that He will not sin. He cannot sin. If a God that saved my soul could sin, He wouldn't be God. He would not be God.

But here, it says, and God saw their works. Well, since when does works have anything to do with salvation, is that not what these people received? It says that God repented of what He said that He was going to do.

[41 : 52] In other words, He backed off of it. Forty days rolled up and the city was still there. But folks, I tell you now, about a hundred years later, give or take a decade or two, they fell right back into their evil ways.

They fell right back into what they said that they were, or into what they were doing before this message from Jonah came. These people, these particular Ninevites, the Assyrians, they were spared the judgment of God because they repented.

But it wasn't long. I mean, honestly, in terms of years, it wasn't long before they fell right back into their old ways. And that's why Nineveh had to be excavated because it was buried in sand.

