

Women In the Word  
 Bible Study - The Minor Prophets  
 October 3, 2018

Jonah 3:1-10  
 Cate Dudley

## “I HAVE A WORD”

Headline reads: *“One Man Brings Entire City to its Knees”*  
*This is not “fake news” but the “Good News” for each of us and all of creation.*

This is how the story reads to this point:

- God calls Jonah the prophet to go to Nineveh to “call out against it.”
- Jonah refuses and runs.
- God thwarts Jonah’s attempt to escape by a life threatening storm.
- Jonah’s determination to disobey God’s call results in Jonah’s near drowning.
- God puts Jonah in “time out.”
- Jonah prays and God answers.
- God’s mercy prompts Jonah to obey. His heart lags behind to give mercy to an evil people.

### Who: Our Cast of Characters

**A.) Jonah:** He is like Jesus in many ways.

- a) The only prophet from Galilee, Gath Hepther, only two miles from Nazareth.
- b) Jesus compares himself to Jonah before his accusers in Luke 11:28  
*(vs. 28) “Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it! ...*  
*(vs. 29) ...”This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.*  
*(vs. 30) For as Jonah became a sign to Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.*  
*(vs. 32) The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment and condemn it for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.*
- c) Jonah delivers a saving WORD from God. Jesus IS the Saving WORD of God, who was in the beginning, the WORD made flesh (John 1).

### Jonah’s Name:

- Hebrew names are significant
- Jonah’s name in Hebrew translates “Dove.”
  - American connotation = peace, sign of the Holy Spirit
  - Hebrew name = silly, senseless one
  - Jonah’s father, Amittai’s name = “my faithfulness”
  - So Jonah, son of Amittai means “Dove, son of my faithfulness.”

## 2. The Citizens of the GREAT city of Nineveh

- The King and every person (**vs. 5**) “from the greatest to the least of them BELIEVED GOD.”
- They were a sign and symbol foretelling God’s offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ to the world and ALL NATIONS beyond the chosen Jewish nation.

## 3. “The Beasts, the Herds, and the Flocks”

- Their fasting represented all of creation in submission to a Holy God. Man’s sin is so great that even the whole earth needs renewal. (see Romans 8:30-26).

## 4. God, Three Persons in One.

- The Holy Trinity held sway over the whole situation.
  - God the Father rescued Jonah and commissioned and equipped him to serve as prophet, despite his rebellion.

## 5. The Holy Spirit

- Compelled Jonah to pray and obey
- Caused the King and Ninevites to believe and repent with Godly sorrow leading to eternal life.

The King said “Who Knows?” implying a desire for the God of mercy who knows and cares and provides

## 6. Jesus

- Is the one who took the punishment that Jonah, the Ninevites, and all sinners, deserve.
  - Matthew 28:18-20: Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of ALL nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

### **When and Where:**

The great fish has just vomited Jonah on the beach. Jonah, the ex-rebel, has stopped running from God’s direct command.

- Obedience begins. Did his heart lag?
- Points toward Nineveh, a 600 mile journey.

**What: A Word from God. THE WORD; Jesus Christ**

- Jonah enters the great city of Nineveh and proclaims God's message.
- God gave a warning to Nineveh (but not to Sodom and Gommorah). The warning implied a chance to receive mercy.

*What does God's word through Jonah reveal?*

- **Law:** God's Holiness Requires Obedience
  - Deaut 10:12-14 " And now Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love Him with all your heart and soul, and to observe the LORD'S commands and decrees that I am giving to you for your own good? To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.
  - **Therefore, Believe and Repent.**
  - 2 Cor. 7:10 "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death."
  - Also see 2 Peter 3:9
- **Gospel:** God's love offers Grace and Mercy, He gives us His word, the WORD; Jesus Christ
  - Origin:
    - John 1:1 " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God."
  - Substance:
    - ...and the Word was God
  - As Creator:
    - John 1:3 "All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made that was made."
  - As Savior:
    - John 1:4 "In Him was life, and the light was the hope of men.
  - As Redeemer:
    - John 1:12 "But as many as received Him, to them He have the right to become children of God to those who believe in His name.

**All of this TRUTH is packed into God's simple message to Nineveh.**

**How and Why:**

News reports are not always at liberty to tell the “How” (mechanism, process) or the “Why” (motive, or physical principle) behind an event.

To God and to us, this is extremely important because God is Sovereign: eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, all good, all wise, all powerful, and more.

**God is Love:**

- 1 John 4:8 “Whoever does not love, does not know God, for GOD is LOVE.”
- In love He chooses to save His children.
- In love He creates, sustains, provides, forgives, justifies, and glorifies.
- In love He sacrifices himself.
  - Isaiah 53:6 “God has layed on Jesus the iniquity of us all.”
- In love He gives us His Holy Spirit, who teaches, equips, gifts, convicts, inspires, and comforts us, and SEALS US TO OUR ULTIMATE SANCTIFICATION in spite of our sins.
  - (see Deuteronomy 30:19)
- In love, instead of leaving us in the devastation of our disobedience like Jonah for a time, He restores us to safety, usefulness, and blessing - both personal and to the glory of His kingdom.

**The Wrap Up:**

So God’s “Silly Dove, son of my faithfulness,” was able to be faithful in delivering God’s word to an evil people.

And by God’s faithfulness, these evil people believed, repented, and gave glory to God. Jonah’s testament serves to prove that God is unwilling that any should perish.

- In His holiness: God could not give sin a pass
- In His mercy: he exacted all sins and punishment on Himself

Note: When God “relented” or “repented” from destroying Nineveh, the Hebrew word used was “nacham.” Nacham means “inward suffering” or “moving to pity.” At the cross, God repents of His holy obligation to condemn us in our sin.

As believers, we all “have a word,” the WORD, Jesus Christ.

Let’s not withhold it, or “go down” into hiding, but share it’s blessing to the glory of God!

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## RESOURCES

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