

Something Greater than Jonah is Here

Jonah 1:17-3:10, Matthew 12:38-41

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Tuesday Morning Men's Bible Study

Park Cities Presbyterian Church

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Jonah 1:17

¹⁷ And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Jonah 2:1-10 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, ² saying,

“I called out to the LORD, out of my distress,
and he answered me;
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
and you heard my voice.

³ For you cast me into the deep,
into the heart of the seas,
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and your billows
passed over me.

⁴ Then I said, ‘I am driven away
from your sight;
yet I shall again look
upon your holy temple.’

⁵ The waters closed in over me to take my life;
the deep surrounded me;
weeds were wrapped about my head

⁶ at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land
whose bars closed upon me forever;
yet you brought up my life from the pit,
O LORD my God.

⁷ When my life was fainting away,
I remembered the LORD,
and my prayer came to you,
into your holy temple.

⁸ Those who pay regard to vain idols
forsake their hope of steadfast love.

⁹ But I with the voice of thanksgiving
will sacrifice to you;

what I have vowed I will pay.
Salvation belongs to the LORD!”

¹⁰ And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

Jonah 3:1-10 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ²“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” ³So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. ⁴Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” ⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.

⁶The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷And 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, ⁸but 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. ⁹Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.”

¹⁰When 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.

Matthew 12:38-41

³⁸Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.” ³⁹But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

Table Discussion Questions:

1. What is repentance? How is repentance different than confession?
2. Can you be repentant without a change of heart? Can you be repentant without a change of behavior? What are the dangers of having one without the other?
3. What is the difference between man-centered moralism and God-centered repentance?
4. What does repentance have to do with worship?
5. Why did God relent from destroying Nineveh? What does this teach us about God's character?
6. What does Jonah and the big fish have to do with Jesus and the tomb? Why does Jesus say, “something greater than Jonah is here”?