

**CHAPTER THREE**

<p><b>1</b> Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying,</p>	<p>We don't know where the great fish took Jonah and we also don't know how long it was before the Lord came to Jonah again.</p>
<p><b>2</b> "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you."</p>	<p>But God said...</p>
<p><b>3</b> So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey <i>in extent</i>.</p>	<p>Jonah this time was very obedient, He arose and went straight to Nineveh, which was a very long Journey, and when he reached Nineveh, the city itself was so BIG it would take him three days to walk all the way through to preach to everyone.</p>
<p><b>4</b> And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"</p>	<p>Jonah wasted no time in preaching - even on the outer edges of the city, before he had fully entered he began preaching God's message.</p>
<p><b>5</b> So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.</p>	<p>God's message was powerful, people hear and believe the message from God. Humbling themselves wearing sackcloth, people strong, weak, rich, poor, small, great believe. Yet in Israel, God's own people fail to turn so willingly to their God.</p>
<p><b>6</b> Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered <i>himself</i> with sackcloth and sat in ashes.</p>	<p>The word reached the King...even the King humbled himself and sat in sackcloth in ashes. Leaving his throne that was the sign of His power and wealth and he led the people humbly.</p>
<p><b>7</b> And he caused <i>it</i> to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water.</p>	<p>The King humbled himself so much that he made a decree to all the city saying.... Fast before the Lord. This is not a time for feasting but for repentance. But the King included even the animals in this decree saying "nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water."  The Book of Esther came to mind, when the King would send a decree commanding the citizens on what they should do.</p>
<p><b>8</b> But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.</p>	<p>Assyria was a very wicked evil violent nation, deep in sins and sin requires punishment. BUT a nation with a King that is humble can make all the difference. When you have a leader that is not full of pride and humbles himself leading by example - it makes a difference. We must lead by example. He even command to cover the animals in sackcloth to repent.</p>
<p><b>9</b> Who can tell <i>if</i> God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?</p>	<p>Our God is a merciful and graceful father who would rather we repent so he can forgive us and not punish us. But this choice is up to us! Would you prefer punishment or to humble yourself and repent and let yourselves be at the mercy of God? The Mercy of God is to not receive what we deserve. The King acknowledges they deserve destruction and that God has the authority and power to do it, but He is a merciful God.</p>
<p><b>10</b> Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the</p>	<p>The King led his nation wisely. God our good good Father restrained himself from punishing them - because they received the message with all their heart and repented sincerely. The Kings humbleness at receiving the message from God through Jonah saved the city that day.</p>

<p>disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.</p>	
<p><b>CHAPTER FOUR</b></p>	
<p><b>1</b> But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.</p>	<p>As we mentioned before - Jonah wanted to see Nineveh destroyed, the Assyrian Nation. Jonah became very angry and disagreed with God being merciful to the Gentiles. Jonah had a heart for Israel and believed in God but .... he had <b>pride</b> and his heart was not right, Jonah clearly struggled with <b>forgiveness</b>. Our hearts should be in agreement with the <b>will of God</b> and trust that what God wants is what is right and for the good always!</p> <p><i>Psalm 37:8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm - as Jonah will learn!</i></p>
<p><b>2</b> So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You <i>are</i> a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness, One who relents from doing harm.</p>	<p><i>Psalm 86:15 But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.</i></p> <p><i>Jonah is saying "Oh why God, why did you do it? I wanted to let them die!" I think Jonah has forgotten that it is by God's Grace and Mercy that he is still alive.</i></p>
<p><b>3</b> Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, <i>it is better for me to die than to live!</i>"  <i>Maybe Jonah had caught a glimpse of the portion in Hades that is Paradise and hoped that God would send him there.</i></p>	<p><i>Oh Jonah, what are you saying???? I am speechless - Jonah want's to die again? This suggests that quite a bit of time has passed since Jonah was inside the fish or he would not say it.</i></p>
<p><b>4</b> The LORD said, "<i>Is it right for you to be angry?</i>" <b>20</b> <i>Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."</i> <b>21</b> <i>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:17-21)</i></p>	<p><i>17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have[a] regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.</i></p>
<p><b>5</b> So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city.</p>	<p>Jonah decided to wait for 40 days to see if God will pour out His wrath. Compare this to Jesus being tested in the wilderness for 40 days. God would test the repentance of Nineveh for 40 days to be sure they truly meant it.</p>
<p><b>6</b> And the LORD God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant.  <b>(The plant is undeserved Grace - as God want's for Nineveh)</b></p>	<p>Jonah made himself a shelter which clearly did not last - Our God is the creator of all things and cares about every little detail. God knows what we need and gave Jonah shade and did so miraculously, Jonah was cared for underneath the shadow of God's creation, but notice it says Jonah was grateful for the plant... But was he grateful to our God for creating it?</p>
<p><b>7</b> But as morning dawned the next day God</p>	<p>That must have been one very fat worm. The plant is gone, God removed his shadow from over Jonah and Jonah sufferers. He should have looked to God and acknowledged Him in even the smallest of details. God provides and God takes away. He</p>

<p>prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered.</p>	<p>alone is sovereign.</p>
<p><b>8</b> And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." (thinking of Paradise) <i>The worm was probably eaten by a bird.</i></p>	<p>Again - God demonstrates His awesome sovereignty over the weather on this earth. The sun beats on Jonah's head carried with a strong wind and perhaps now Jonah has learned that to be Angry and want wrath will only bring harm? <b>How is it Jonah did not learn after being swallowed by a great fish!</b> Jonah is angry because God allowed the plant to perish - yet Jonah desires the death of 1000's in Nineveh.</p>
<p><b>9</b> Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be <b>angry</b> about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"</p>	<p><i>Ecclesiastes 7:9 Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.</i> <i>Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.</i></p>
<p><b>10</b> The LORD said, "You have pity on the plant which <b>you did not labor, nor make it grow</b>, which grew overnight and perished overnight.</p>	<p>God is saying "What did you do Jonah? I am the creator, I made all things. You have pity on the plant but not on lost souls, on people, human beings made in my own image? Why do you harden your heart Jonah?"</p>
<p><b>11</b> And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than <b>one hundred and twenty thousand persons</b> who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"</p> <p><i>More than 120,000 made in the image of God.</i></p>	<p><i>Do you remember a couple of weeks ago Ilir asked us to put our right hands behind our backs - I put my left hand behind my back! I did not know my left hand from my right hand! How much I need to turn to God for direction in my life... The Lord who is God laboured in creating this world, how every single soul belongs to Him, we are all His children - God is sad to see how lost we are, mankind is lost and confused. God will do all He can to save us - salvation is not just for the Jews but also for Gentiles. If we seek Him, with a humble heart and repent God forgives and will give direction to us, we are God's children made in His own image.</i></p>

We bring a lot of trouble upon ourselves when we don't listen to God. Jonah hopefully learned this lesson. What God want's for all of us is for the best. Jonah would have learned that God lovingly cares (such as with the great fish and shelter and all in Nineveh) and also what it is like if God withholds from us His care, Jonah got burnt. What Jonah did after this we do not know. But we do know that Nineveh was spared for 200 years until God finally destroyed them. With new Kings leading, they returned to their evil ways - this time, no offer to repent was given but God made a promise to destroy them completely. Until recently no one knew where the ruins of the city is - then it was found beneath the desert.

Side note: Nineveh repents and a few decades later they conquer Israel taking ten of the tribes into captivity - So a question is was Jonah right to not want to give them God's message? Actually the message is a good thing for Israel! It is both the Grace and Mercy of God for both Gentiles and Israel. If Assyria did not repent God would have destroyed them, but because it was God's plan that Assyria repented means they later rose again to be a super power, and because they were the empire that created the policy of taking their enemy into captivity by deportation rather than outright slaughtering them meant the Israelites lived and the Babylonians also copied this method from the Assyrians. If Jonah had not preached to Assyria, then Babylon would likely never have used deportation and might have slain Daniel, or Ezra or Nehemiah and we would not have those books today which Ilir has taught to you! The bloodline leading to Jesus.