



A BLUNT MESSAGE FROM GOD

Week #8; October 12, 2025



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Review:

- It's been over a month since we had our last lesson in this Jonah series - - since Sept. 7, to be exact.
- Since that point, we've had our potluck fellowship, we've celebrated The Lord's Supper, and we've had two special lessons on 'The Rise of Lawlessness,' - - so, a lot has happened.
- You might have forgotten where we left off, (and if YOU didn't - I did!). Here's a quick review to help us all get back on track.
- Our text last time was ***Jonah 2:9 through Ch. 3, and the first part of vs. 3.***
- That last lesson was a four-point outline, and each point had something to say concerning Jonah.
- Here it is again:
 - **FIRST, there is the confidence in Jonah** - we saw Jonah's confidence within the closing part of his prayer while he was still in the great fish.
 - He expressed 'thanksgiving.' His bad attitude which had defined him to that point had changed.
 - He was confident in WHO the Lord is and WHAT his ultimate destiny in God is.
 - **SECOND, we have the commitment of Jonah** - Jonah makes a 'vow' and he intends to follow through.
 - He vows to do to those things God had originally commanded him to do back in **Ch. 1.**
 - He vows to obey God. And so, Jonah determines to 'hit the road.'
 - He's got to get out of the fish first - - but he makes a commitment to go to Nineveh.
 - **THIRD, there is the command to Jonah** - the fish barfs Jonah on the beach, and Jonah then hears from God virtually the same instructions we read back in **Ch. 1:2.**
 - God commands Jonah, once again, to go to Nineveh and preach, but this time Jonah is a different person.
 - He's been through the 'school of hard knocks,' and he's learned a few things. He's wiser now. (...and he probably smells and looks different).

- But this second time, God gives Jonah one more additional element of information. He tells Jonah, *'Proclaim to Nineveh the message I give you.'*
- In effect, God tells Jonah, *'Don't worry about what to say. I'll let you know that.'*
- It's a subtle reassurance to Jonah that he'll probably live. I think that's likely been a concern of Jonah's before this point.
- **AND LASTLY, we see the compliance of Jonah** – this point is straightforward, but it has much to say about Jonah.
- Jonah obeys this time. He's not obeyed at all up to this point. He's rebelled and he's done his own thing every other time before.
- But this time, we read two words together for the first time: *'Jonah obeyed.'* That's a big change.
- Jonah complied with the Lord's command, and he started his long journey to Nineveh.

NOTE: That's our quick recap. I think it helps us all get on the same page, and it brings us now to **Ch. 3:3, and I'll read through vs. 4.**

NOTE: I've entitled this lesson **'A Blunt Message From God,'** and to get into it, we first need to appreciate a couple of high-altitude comments about Nineveh:

1. There are two descriptions of Nineveh given here: (a.) *'Nineveh was a very important city,'* and (b.) *'a visit required three days.'*
 - Archeological excavations have continually proved the Biblical account about the greatness of Nineveh.
 - Founded by Nimrod way back in **Genesis Ch. 10**, Nineveh ultimately became the capital of the Assyrian empire.
 - Nineveh was a great city in its architecture: its palaces, its fortifications, its walls and temples, and in its stunning works of art.
 - It was great in its developed civilization and construction, and as we learned before, it was great, above all, in its wickedness.
 - We learned in prior lessons some details about Nineveh's wickedness, and this wickedness was so great that the prophet Nahum called Nineveh *'the city of blood.'*
 - Archeological records have also underscored the size of Nineveh; its walls comprised a circumference of about 60 miles – so the *'three days' visit* **in vs. 3** makes sense.

A. Now, let's look at the very simple and blunt message Jonah delivered to Nineveh

NOTE: I've read some commentators' opinions that Jonah 'preached the Gospel' here, or that he delivered a 'great oratory for repentance.'

I don't see that. I think that's inserting personal opinion where Scripture is silent.

1. The Bible says Jonah was commanded by God to go to Nineveh and proclaim to it a message that God would give to Jonah when he arrived there.

- Jonah mentions this important detail, and then he records the message that God gave him to proclaim to Nineveh. It's just ONE sentence.

2. The blunt message was, *"Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned."*

- That's the message God gave Jonah to proclaim to Nineveh.
- There are no reasons given, and no additional details. Jonah gives no suggestions for any 'next steps.'
- It seems Jonah does not even mention who he is or who sent him to Nineveh in the first place.
- We just read the basic announcement that God gave to Jonah to give to Nineveh.
- It appears that Jonah entered the city, walked around it for about three days, and proclaimed over and over, 'You've got 40 days before you're done.'
- It was not a positive message, but a negative one. It was not full of information or other details; it was a simple and blunt message.
- One could say it raised a lot of questions, and it gave no answers. Blunt messages are like that.
- It was not a message that seemed to carry much credibility given the military might of Nineveh. It seemed out-of-touch given the prosperity of this city's economy.
- So, the bottom line is you wouldn't normally expect this sort of simple message to have much impact - - but it did!

NOTE: I'm looking ahead here, but we'll see in our next lessons that fear strikes the Ninevites from the king on down. Jonah's message hit home.

- ✓ The whole city repents and turns to God. That's roughly 600,000+ people.
- ✓ Some historians tell us that this is the greatest single revival in the history of the world.
- ✓ In one fell swoop, an entire advanced and powerful civilization turned from blatant paganism to the worship of the God of Israel.
- ✓ In one moment, disaster is averted, and God cancels the judgment He had planned to send upon Nineveh.
- ✓ (Like I said - - I'm getting ahead of myself. We're going to unpack these specific points next week. But - I mention them now to get us in the right frame of mind. We need to grasp the bigger picture of what is going on.)

B. Here are some important insights regarding this simple blunt message that God had Jonah deliver to Nineveh.

1. God's Word, delivered God's way, will always accomplish God's intentions.

NOTE: There are a couple things I'd like to say about this:

- **Truth must be direct.**

- I'll make this one personal. One of the most common criticisms I've received over the 18 years I have taught Solid Bread Community is I am too direct.
 - I'm constantly told I need to 'tone it down,' or I need to 'tread lightly,' or I'm 'not being considerate enough of others.' I've had people leave because they said I was 'too direct.'
 - I'll be honest here: part of teaching God's Word responsibly is teaching what it says and not what we wish it said.
 - Part of teaching God's Word responsibly is declaring HOW it says WHAT it says - - and not diluting those things to suit any personal preferences.
 - Truth needs to be direct. Any ambitions to round the corners of truth or soften its landing ultimately reduces truth's effectiveness.
- **Here's another facet of delivering God's Word God's way – and it is this: God's Word is powerful.**
 - I've sat under too many pastors who gave up the power of God's Word for the positive thinking of man's word.
 - Many pulpits today are emphasizing a humanistic spin, or a psychology prescription, or a woke agenda, rather than proclaiming the confrontational and hard-hitting power of God's Word.
 - Let's remind ourselves of something very important here: Satan does NOT want the power of God's Word to be proclaimed.
 - Satan is MUCH more inclined to promote '*doctrines of demons*' (**Cf. 1 Tim. 4:1**) where a set of principles or ideas are advanced that is a departure from the power and truth of God's Word.
 - I was struck by an article I read recently – just a day or so ago – where it documents that more and more churches are now preaching woke ideals, are teaching that God is multiple genders, are taking issue with the plain truth of Scripture, and are even preaching the basic tenets of communism.
 - I've been to several church leader events the last few months where entire groups of pastors (sometimes half or more being women), are yipping and wailing like coyotes during prayer time, or they're making noises like a car that turns over but - - - it just won't start.
 - I feel embarrassed for them, and honestly, I quietly pray against what I sense in the room during those times. There's nothing Biblical about any of it.
 - When these pastors ask me about Solid Bread Community, and how we teach and study God's Word - - it is hard for them to hide their disapproval or keep from rolling their eyes.
 - I had one person pull me aside and 'counsel' me at one of these events. He told me the Bible was 'inspired poetry,' that it was MEANT to be interpreted many different ways, and that I was being

unwise and offensive for teaching it literally as being God's divine truth.

- Believe me, the frank, literal, and expository teaching of Scripture is rare these days - - and so the **power of God's Word** is missing in many churches and bodies of believers.

2. Here's another insight about this simple blunt message that Jonah delivered: God prepares hearts to receive His truth.

NOTE: Again, there are a couple of things I need to say about this.

- **Jonah's message was not his message – it was God's message.**
 - It was God's responsibility to prepare the way, and it was Jonah's responsibility to obey.
 - Look back at the first two words of **Ch. 3:3**, "*Jonah obeyed.*"
 - He didn't get the message from God of what he was to proclaim to Nineveh until he got there. He had to obey first. He had to get out of bed and put his boots on.
 - He just had to obey and go - and then he had to trust God for the message and whatever impact that message would have.
 - It's easy to get caught up in attendance numbers, or in delivery style - - or even how the sound system holds up, what the bills are, and so on. It's easy to worry if things could have been said better or different.
 - I can get 10 great comments about a lesson, but if I get one bad one, it ruins my whole day (sometimes my week) - - it's crushing!
 - It's hard to pick myself up again. I know I'm not alone in feeling that way. This is a spiritual battle; I know that for a fact.
 - We all need to remind ourselves that all we need to do is boldly proclaim God's message.
 - It's God's message that He has prepared hearts to receive. It's God's message that brings about change.
 - It's God's message that will always accomplish its intended purpose, that will prosper where it is sent.
 - It's God message that will not be ineffective or return empty (**Cf. Isaiah 55:11**).
- **God holds people and nations accountable.**
 - We've learned the past several weeks, and we are being reminded again today, that God is a just God. He gives everyone a chance.
 - **Romans 1:20** tells us that those who reject God and suppress the truth are '*without excuse.*' Why?
 - Because God has sent them a message too. He has made clear His '*eternal power and divine nature*' in His Creation, and He holds them accountable to that.

- They don't need to know more than that. They just need to respond the right way to the message that God has provided. He'll sovereignly take care of 'next steps' from there.
- Here, in Jonah, it's much the same thing. A blunt message was proclaimed to the inhabitants and the city of Nineveh: "You've got 40 days before you're toast."
- The Ninevites didn't NEED to know more than that. Perhaps they may have wanted to know **how** and **why** and **who** and so on – but God didn't provide any of that information.
- He told them, "You've got 40 days," and He held them accountable to that.
- And they responded as they needed to! They repented – as we will learn more about next week.
- IMPORTANT: There is no wiggle room here. Everyone who rejects Jesus Christ's offer of salvation and refuses to repent - will be held accountable to that decision.
- They will know they were wrong, and they will know the Gospel message was right. They will know they are *'without excuse.'*
- But, it will be too late for them – but they will know Jesus Christ is the (ONLY) way the truth and the life.
- That's why **Philippians 2:10-11** says:

*"...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of **those in heaven**, and of **those on earth**, and of **those under the earth**, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

- (see boldfaced) - This is a comprehensive statement. It covers ALL individuals and ALL entities from ALL time.
- There is no question; God holds people and nations accountable.
- He is a just God, and everyone He holds accountable will know they are responsible for their choices and outcomes.

3. And here's a third insight concerning this simple blunt message that Jonah delivered: **Our God is a God of mercy and compassion.**

NOTE: Once more - - I have a couple of things I want to say about this insight.

- **The book of Jonah highlights the truth that God desires all people to be saved.** Let's get a few things straight about the Ninevites:
 - They were the sworn enemies of Israel. God would use the Assyrian nation – of which Nineveh was a part – to judge the Jews and take them into captivity within a few decades from this point.
 - The Ninevites were ruthless, bloodthirsty, depraved to the core, fierce, and completely pagan.

- But God showed mercy and compassion to them anyway. They received 'mercy' – in other words, they did not get what they deserved. That's mercy.
- They repented (as we will learn more about next week), and God held back His judgment.
- This story raises some questions: "Did God NEED Jonah in the equation?" NO. "Did God know the Ninevites would repent?" YES. "Did God sovereignly BRING the Ninevites to repentance?" YES. "Was Jonah's life, circumstances, and choices a part of God's 'master plan?'" YES. "Is God bigger than all our comprehensions?" ABSOLUTELY – YES!
- Some of those things are hard for us to wrap our minds around – especially if we consider them all together.
- But here is something we can hold fast to: our God is a God of mercy and compassion – and He will sovereignly execute ALL variables to display these attributes.
- **And here's the last thing I want to draw attention to, and it pivots off the point that our God is a God of mercy and compassion. It is this: complete transformation is possible.**
 - I want to tell you a personal story to illustrate this point. This will be hard for me.
 - At the conference we hosted last November with LA Marzulli, I met a beautiful, articulate, polished, and highly successful young lady. Her name was Melissa.
 - After the conference, Melissa came up to me. She was keenly distraught. She asked if she and I could visit further, and I said yes.
 - We met at a local coffeeshop, and Melissa shared that some of the information LA Marzulli had disclosed had scared her.
 - I'll make a long story short. Melissa was heavily into yoga, and not just yoga, but kundalini yoga. It's demonic to the core, and Melissa was very practiced in it.
 - She described multiple times she felt 'taken over' by forces outside of her power. She detailed her 'out of body' experiences to me.
 - It was clear to me from what she told me that she was either 'oppressed' by demonic forces, or – probably - 'possessed.'
 - I had the chance to share the gospel very clearly with Melissa. I asked a few of you to pray for her and you committed to doing that. You know who you are.
 - My wife and I met with Melissa further. Melissa had lots of questions about salvation, about the Bible, about 'truth,' and so on.
 - She was eager to learn, but her life had been exceedingly hard on her. She was guarded. She'd had few positive relationships in her life.

- I gave her a John MacArthur Study Bible, and to Melissa's credit, she read it - - right away. She began to heavily mark it up with questions and comments, and we met to discuss those things.
- The last time Laura and I met with Melissa, it didn't go well. The truth about God, sin, and salvation painted Melissa into a corner.
- She faced a juncture where she knew she needed a complete transformation. The facts were clear to her. That's when things abruptly changed.
- I will tell you that's the point that Melissa 'manifested.' Other forces took over. Everything changed - - abruptly. It was scary, and it was other-worldly.
- That meeting ended awkwardly, and Melissa subsequently sent me a volley of texts that were blasphemous to the core and filled with an otherworldly hatred - - it was nothing I'd seen in her before.
- In the few weeks that followed that last meeting, I felt tangible darkness and oppression in my own life. My nights were filled with bizarre nightmares that were unusual for me.
- I knew what was happening. I'd gotten too close to someone that the devil owned.
- I'd spoken the truth clearly, and demonic forces were angry. It was all quite clear to me.
- I kept in touch with Melissa (by text) from that point. I reminded her that I was praying for her, that Laura and I cared for her, that God loved her, and that she needed to turn her life over to Jesus Christ.
- I was stunned to find out a couple weeks ago that Melissa passed away. The coroner's report said it was a combination of alcohol and prescription drugs.
- I was absolutely grieved. I went into research frenzy and found a bunch of Melissa's friends. They all said it was not intentional, but accidental. She passed away quietly – unaware – totally alone!
- I have since been directed to Melissa's daughter, and to her mother. Both are completely shattered. I am hoping to be used by God in their lives. Please be praying...
- So, I tell you all that to remind you of this, **complete transformation is possible**. Nothing is beyond God.
- However, only God can know the final outcome - - that is not up to us to conclude. Our imaginations serve no purpose...
- Do I believe God could have saved Melissa? Absolutely. Do I know that He did? I don't know the answer to that. Melissa made choices. I will know someday, but not right now....

NOTE: Here's where it all comes full circle for you and me.

- Truth needs to be direct. Any efforts to water truth down are NOT a part of God's agenda and purpose.

- God prepares hearts to receive His truth. But in the end – that’s a sovereign transaction between God and those who are hearing that truth.
- God will hold ALL people accountable for the truth they know and have heard - - and that includes cities like Nineveh, and fragile vulnerable people like Melissa.
- Our God is a God of mercy and compassion, but that does not exclude people from doing the right thing.
- The Ninevites repented when they heard the truth, but some people do not.
- None of that changes God’s attributes of mercy and compassion, none of that changes God’s abilities to supernaturally transform - - - but it’s important to respond properly.
- There is a personal responsibility there, and it’s important to be swift.
- The Bible says in **2 Cor. 6:2** that *‘today is the day of salvation.’* We need to seize the present moment to receive God’s grace and mercy. We might not get another....
- The Ninevites got the truth. So did Melissa. The Ninevites did not delay in repenting. But Melissa did. I confess that I worry less about the Ninevites than I do Melissa.
- The Bible’s warnings are stark, and they are real. God is God, and we are not. There’s no sense in arguing with eternal truth.
- We don’t have long left on this earth. We don’t even know if we’ll be here tomorrow. It’s high time to get our priorities and choices in order.

NEXT TIME: “An Incredible Repentance” (Jonah does his job, and God does His)



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Solid Bread Community was started with a passion to teach the truth of God’s Word – every part of it, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don’t pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don’t teach what is NOT there. Don’t force a passage to mean something it really doesn’t.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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