

Never Doubt God's Ability

Scripture

"Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." (Jon 1:1-2 NKJV)

"So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered [himself] with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused [it] 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. 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. Who can tell [if] God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it." (Jon 3:5-10 NKJV)

"Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. "For 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. "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah [is] here." (Mt 12:38-41 NKJV)

Devotion

The people of Nineveh were particularly cruel. In fact, later, after their time of repentance, they return to their wickedness, and Nahum calls her the bloody city. However, let us not lose sight of the fact that Nineveh did repent at the preaching of Jonah.

The men who threw Jonah from the ship likely caused a good deal of talk when they returned to port. The Scriptures tell us they sacrificed and made vows (Jon 1:16). Their lives changed because they saw the power of God dealing with Jonah.

Then Jonah turns up in Nineveh probably looking like a ghost having been in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, and it has a dramatic effect upon the king. The people feared God and turned from their wickedness.

Today, as Christ said, we have one greater than Jonah. Christ died and rose from the grave after three days and three nights. This is the sign for all to believe.

It was unlikely for Nineveh to repent, however, she did. Is it more unlikely that your neighbor would repent than the wicked people of Nineveh? Do we doubt God's ability, or are we acting like Jonah?

Jonah was likely displeased with God's mercy towards Nineveh because he saw that as a setback for Israel. It was either that or he feared being made to seem a false prophet. The former is more likely as the latter would make him a monster to set at naught the souls of men for his ego. This kind of selfishness would certainly bring a harsh response from God, but he only receives a mild correction.

So let us look at our own lives. Do we not witness because we feel it would set back the church? I ask just to point out the ridiculous. Do we disregard the souls of men for selfish reasons? Or, do we just doubt God's ability to save? Perhaps it is a combination of the last two. May we repent and may God forgive our lack of zeal if either is true!

Never doubt God's ability to save. He saved you didn't He?