

Let Us Learn a Lesson from Jonah
(Matthew 16:1-4)

Introduction:

1. On this occasion the Pharisees and the Sadducees approached Jesus.
 - a. Their purpose was to "tempt" [test] the Lord.
 - b. They wanted Jesus to "*show them a sign from heaven.*"
 - c. Later, Jesus warned His disciples about the "leaven" [doctrine] of these people (vs.6, 12).
2. In His response, Jesus mentioned:
 - a. the general formula for determining if the weather will be fair or foul
 - b. "*the sign of the prophet Jonah.*"
3. The Lord indicated that valuable information can be learned from Jonah.
 - a. This evening we plan to examine "the sign of Jonah."
 - b. This morning we are making a more general study of God's dealings with Jonah.
 - c. As we search the Scriptures, "let us learn a lesson from Jonah."

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST BE REMINDED OF SOME PRELIMINARY INFORMATION
 - A. God gave Jonah a mission (Jonah 1:1-2).
 1. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria.
 2. God was going to use the Assyrians to punish His people in the northern kingdom.
 - B. (Jonah 1:3) Jonah attempted to flee to Tarshish "*from the presence of the Lord.*"
 - C. Jonah was determined to be the cause of a great storm that arose, and he was thrown overboard (Jonah 1:4-16).
 - D. We learn from Jonah 1:17 that God prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah.
 - E. Jonah prayed from the fish's belly, and his prayer of praise and thanksgiving is recorded in Jonah 2:1-9.
 - F. (Jonah 2:10) Jonah returned safely to land.
- II. (Jonah 3) GOD PROVIDED ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR JONAH TO DO HIS WILL
 - A. (vs.1-2) God gave Jonah the same mission again.
 - B. (vs.3-4) This time Jonah obeyed God's instructions.
 - C. (vs.5-9) Jonah's message produced great results.
 1. (vs.5) The people believed God and repented.
 2. (vs.6) Repentance began with the king.
 3. (vs.7-9) The king commanded everyone in Nineveh to repent.
 - D. (vs.10) God changed His mind about destroying Nineveh.
 - E. Because God provided another opportunity for Jonah to do His will, He is often called "the God of the second chance."
- III. LET US EXAMINE OTHER BIBLE CHARACTERS WHO WERE GIVEN ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO DO GOD'S WILL
 - A. Peter was given another opportunity (Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75; Acts 2:14).
 - B. The prodigal son was given another opportunity (Luke 15:20-24).
 - C. Simon was given another opportunity (Acts 8:13, 18-24).
 - D. God will give additional opportunities to His children who repent (1 John 1:9).

Conclusion:

1. God's dealings with Jonah teach us a valuable lesson about His nature.
2. David learned the same lesson, and he summed it up in Psalm 145:8, 14.