



Jonah 3

The Greatest Mass-Conversion
in History



Significant Aspects & Lessons

- The greatest mass-conversion in history
- Second chances
- True repentance characteristics
- God's unchanging character

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." 3 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 in extent. 4 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!"

V1: God gives Jonah a second chance. Where else do we see second chances in the scriptures?

- Moses – 40 years in Midian EX 3:10
- Peter – Led God's people after denying Him 3 times (John 21)
- Us?

V2: What is Jonah told to do?

A: The NKJV word preach here is actually "proclaim." Jonah is to repeat what God told him to say.

V2: How is this effective?

A: God's power and sovereignty is displayed - [Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.](#)

V4: What is our job as children of God?

A: [Matt 28 – 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.](#) Amen.

V3: How was Nineveh a 3 day journey?

A: Nineveh had an inner fortified city, about 7 miles in circumference, with a much larger city, probably 4 cities, outside, that were 60+ miles in circumference

V4 Is there any significance to 40 days?

A: Open discussion.

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. 6 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. 7 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. 8 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. 9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

V5: Who believed first?

A: The people believed first, no matter the stature

V6: What is the King's response after hearing?

A: Repentance for the nation

V7: For who?

A: Man and animal, this was typical Persian custom to include the herds.

V6-8: Should we repent with sack cloth and ashes today? What does true repentance look like?

- Genuine repentance is linked to a change in lifestyle.
- Acts 26 - 19 "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, **turn to God**, and **do works befitting repentance**.

V8: What were the Persians repenting from?

- Evil ways – acting counter to God
- Violence -

10 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.

V:10 What was the result?

A: They repented.

Q: What were the phases of Nineveh's repentance?

1. Proclamation of the truth of God
2. Belief that God is who He says He is, and that His proclamation is truth
3. Taking action in repentance from specific sin. The belief is confirmed by specific action

Q: Is this model the same for today?

A: Yes, the bible, God and truth never change

V10: Did God "change His mind"?

- Num. 23:19 -"God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"
- Nineveh was eventually destroyed

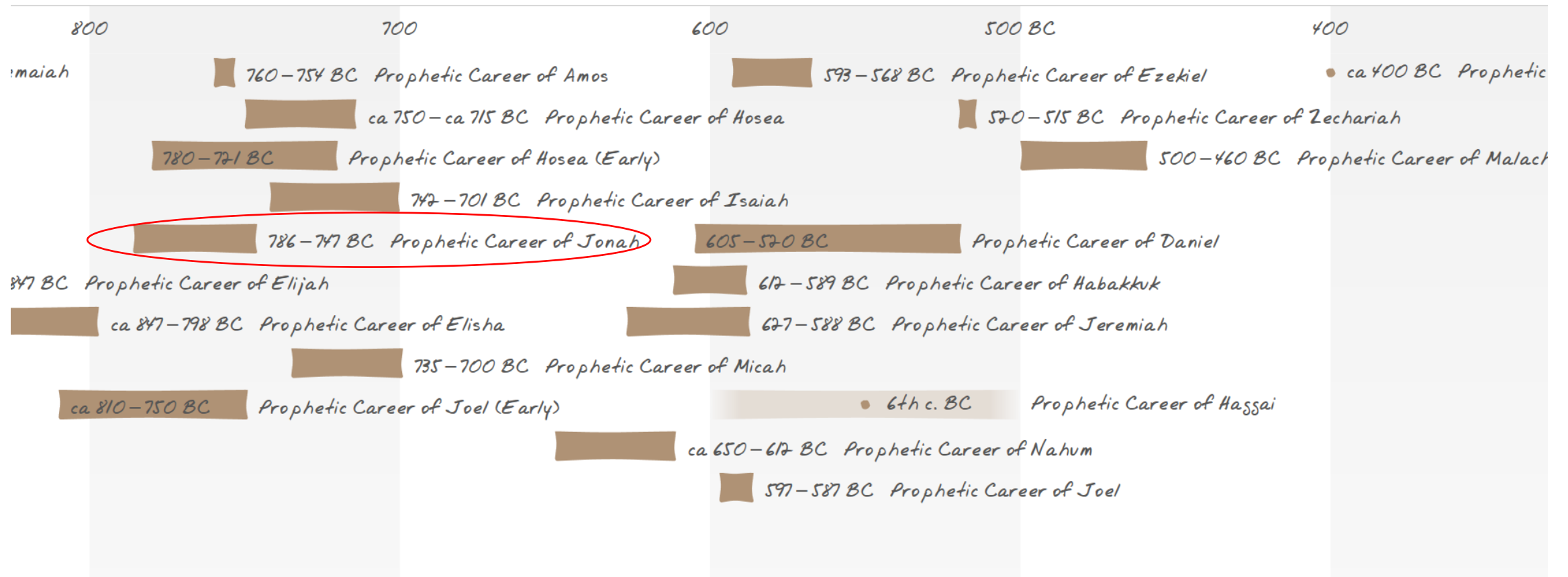


What did we learn?

- Second chances
- True repentance characteristics
- God's unchanging character



Appendix



Historical Context

- One of four (Elisha, Elijah, Isaiah) Old Testament prophets referred to by Jesus
- Considered the “Acts” of the Old Testament
- Written completely in the 3rd person
- Jonah was from near Nazareth, in the Galilee
- Likely written around 790BC, during the reign of the northern kingdom’s King Jeroboam
- The only prophet sent to the heathen nations
- Nineveh was likely the largest city in the world, 60 miles across and 100,000+ inhabitants
- Nineveh had gone through significant natural disasters, perhaps priming them
- Hosea and Amos predictions of future conquest of Israel may have produced Jonah’s reluctance

