

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

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Lesson 33: Sharing the Gospel with the World, (Jonah 1–4; Micah 2; 4–7)

Introduction



The Field is Ripe, Already to Harvest—Enrique Manuel Garcia, 2006

How many young men in the Church does the Lord want to serve full-time missions? **All** worthy, able young men. And it is important that each of these young men respond to this call. Who else is eligible to serve full-time missions? Worthy single sisters 21 years of age or older and senior couples when their circumstances allow. In 1979, **President Spencer W. Kimball** spoke of the need for more missionaries who could preach the gospel to people in all parts of the world. He declared: *"I believe the Lord can do anything he sets his mind to do. But I can see no good reason why the Lord would open doors that we are not prepared to enter"* ("The Uttermost Parts of the Earth," Ensign, July 1979, 9).

This lesson discusses how the lives and writings of Jonah and Micah help us understand our responsibility to love all people and share the blessings of the gospel with them.

Jonah is called to preach to Nineveh, but he runs away. (Jonah 1–2)

Jonah 1:2 - The Lord wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach repentance.

Nahum 3:1-5 - Jonah was reluctant to accept a mission call to Nineveh because of the great wickedness and violence of Nineveh. The people of Nineveh, the capi-

tal of Assyria, were enemies to Israel.

Jonah 1:3 - Jonah went to Tarshish to try to escape from the presence of the Lord and from the calling extended to him. But as he was to learn, we cannot hide from the responsibilities of our callings.

Doug Simpson—Website: dcsimpson.info

Jonah 1:4 - 2:10 - The Lord showed mercy and helped Jonah survive and repent.

Jonah 2:1-9* (cited above) – While he was inside the great fish, Jonah learned that the Lord answers prayers when we repent and turn to him for forgiveness.

Lesson Highlights

- Jonah is called to preach to Nineveh, but he runs away.
- The people of Nineveh respond to Jonah's message and repent.
- Micah prophesies of the mission of latter-day Israel.

A study of this lesson will help us to fulfill our responsibilities as latter-day Israel to love all the people of the world and share the blessings of the gospel with them.

Next Week

#34 "I Will Betroth Thee unto Me in Righteousness" (Hosea 1–3; 11; 13–14)

President Spencer W. Kimball:

“When I ask for more missionaries, I am not asking for more testimony-barren or unworthy missionaries. I am asking that we start earlier and train our missionaries better in every branch and every ward in the world. That is another challenge—that the young people will understand that it is a great privilege to go on a mission and that they must be physically well, mentally well, spiritually well, and that ‘the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance.’ ... The question is frequently asked: Should every young man fill a mission? And the answer has been given by the Lord. It is ‘Yes.’ Every young man should fill a mission”

(Ensign, Oct. 1974, 7-8).

Elder David B. Haight said:

“In behalf of the Brethren, this is a call for retired couples to seriously consider serving a mission. We desperately need more couples to help meet our needs. ... Less than 50 percent of the requests for couple missionaries from [our] mission presidents are being filled. ... The Brethren hope that many, many more couples will make themselves available for full-time service to the Church. The need is great! Hundreds of thousands of new members join the Church each year, and they need to hear a friendly voice of support and comfort from experienced members. The refrain, ‘I’ll go where you want me to go, dear Lord’ (Hymns, 1985, no. 270), should be more than a hymn we sing on Sunday. It should be our own prayer of faith as we serve wherever the Lord has need of us”

(Ensign, Feb. 1996, 7, 12).



Jonah is Forgiven
—Steve Nethercott 2006

Matthew 12:39-41 - During his earthly ministry, the Savior spoke about the “sign of the prophet Jonas [Jonah]”.

The people of Nineveh respond to Jonah’s message and repent. (Jonah 3-4)

After Jonah repented, the Lord called him again to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh.



This sign meant that just as Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish and then was brought forth alive, so the Savior would spend three days and nights buried in the earth and then would come forth resurrected.

We can learn from the story of Jonah that rather than avoid our missionary responsibility, we need to be more valiant in obeying the Lord and sharing the gospel.

Through his prophets, the Lord has repeatedly commanded every worthy, able young man to serve a full-

time mission. He has also encouraged senior couples to serve as full-time missionaries if they are able. Some reasons young men and senior couples choose not to serve missions include lack of commitment and faith, unworthiness, unwillingness to leave the comforts of home and family, fear of what might be expected of them.

Jonah 3:5-9 - The people of Nineveh responded to Jonah’s message. In ancient times, people clothed themselves in coarse cloth (sackcloth) and sat in ashes to show that they were humble and repentant.

Jonah 3:10 - God responded to the change in the people by suspending their punishment.

Jonah 3:4 - Jonah had prophesied the downfall of Nineveh in 40 days.

Jonah 4:1-3 - Jonah re-

sponded with anger when the Lord forgave the people of Nineveh.

Jonah 4:4-11 - The Lord taught Jonah by the growth of the gourd that gave shade and comfort and then died that God loves all his children. Just as he showed mercy to Jonah, he desired to show mercy to the repentant people of Nineveh.

Jonah’s experience can teach us that we need to love other people in the way the Lord loves them.

Micah prophesies of the mission of latter-day Israel. (Micah)

The prophet Micah called on the people of Israel to repent of their wickedness and return to the Lord. He prophesied of the destruction of Jacob (Israel) and Judah. He also prophesied that latter-day Israel (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) would accomplish the purposes of the Lord with great power.

Micah 2:12-13 - The Lord promised that he would gather the remnant of Israel, that they would become a great multitude, and that he would lead them. These promises are being fulfilled today.

Micah 4:1-7 - Some of Micah’s great prophecies about the latter days are: the temple shall be built, Israel shall gather to it, the Millennial era will commence, and the Lord will reign in Zion.

Micah 4:1-2 - Micah prophesied that after the latter-day temple was established, people would flow to it and the law should go forth from it.

Micah 4:3-7 - Micah prophesied that during the Millennium, the Lord would establish peace and reign over the people from Mount Zion. These prophecies are important to us because we

must be the instruments in the Lord’s hand to prepare the way for these prophecies to be fulfilled.

Micah 4:11-13 - This scripture is about the latter-day destiny of Israel. In the ancient world, oxen were often used to thresh grain. They would walk over the grain, separating the chaff from the kernel. The chaff was blown away and the kernel saved. The nations that oppose Zion will be gathered as sheaves and then be threshed by Israel.

D&C 29:7; 33:5-7 - This work of separating the chaff from the kernel can be compared to latter-day Israel’s

responsibility to do missionary work throughout the world.

Micah 5:2-4 - Micah prophesied of the Savior's birth in Bethlehem.

Micah 5:7 - The Lord's people and their effect on the people of the world are compared to dew or showers on the grass. By saying that these showers will not wait "for the sons of men", Micah meant that just as mortals cannot stop dew from forming or showers from falling, nothing can stop the Lord's work from progressing throughout the world.

Micah 5:8 - Here the Lord's people are compared to a lion. Just as a flock of sheep has no power to stop a young lion, no power on earth will be able to hinder

the work of the Lord.

In 1842 the **Prophet Joseph Smith** declared, "*No unhal- lowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done*" (History of the Church, 4:540).

Micah 6:6-8 - This scripture helps us when we feel overwhelmed by all that is expected of us by reminding us that the way to success is simple—...do justly, ...love

mercy, and...walk humbly with God. That doesn't mean it is easy—just simple.

Micah 7:18-20 - After prophesying of the Lord's work in the latter days, Micah came to a conclusion about God's nature—that he delights in mercy; is forgiving, compassionate, and faithful in keeping the covenants he made with our fathers.

Many phrases in these verses could be applied to the Lord's dealings with the people of Nineveh. All of these phrases could also be applied to the Lord's dealings with us.



Micah

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How has the Lord helped you repent and return to his ways?
- What have you learned from the story of Jonah that helps you be more valiant in obeying the Lord and sharing the gospel?
- What has Jonah's experience taught you about loving other people?

Conclusion

The Lord loves all his children and we, as latter-day Israel, have the great responsibility to share his love and the truths of the gospel with all people.