

## READ Jonah 3-4

Great revivals have occurred throughout history—among the Jews in the first century, the tribes of Ireland in the fifth century, the Protestants in the sixteenth century and the people of Wales in the twentieth century. Yet one of the greatest revivals of all time occurred hundreds of years before any of these—the amazing revival in Nineveh described in Jonah 3. Matching the revival's intensity is Jonah's despair in chapter 4. What an emotional roller coaster!

### *Opening*

- How have you seen God's compassion expressed when you are obedient?
- What little things irritate you or bring you joy?
- How do you usually express frustration or disappointment or anger?

### *Digging in —Discovering the Word*

- If you were Jonah, how would you feel when the word of the Lord came to you a second time (3.1-2)?
- Assyria was one of the most powerful nations on earth, known especially for its military might and brutality. How would this make it difficult for Jonah to proclaim: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned" (3.3-4)?
- What evidence is there that the Ninevites were sincere in their repentance (3.5-9)?
- How and why does the Lord respond to the Ninevites (3.10)?
- What view of God do the Ninevites express in this chapter?
- If a genuine turning to God were to occur in this country, what results would you expect to see?
- What evidence do you see here that God is the God of "a second chance"?
- In response to God's word, what does Jonah do? The Ninevites? Their king?
- How do you account for their response to Jonah's message? For God's change of heart (3.10)? What does this say about God's will? What does it say about God's use of us to achieve His will?
- Why was Jonah greatly displeased and angry (4.1-3)?
- Did these things give him any right to be angry (4.4)? Explain.
- Evidently the forty days had already passed (3.10). Why then do you think Jonah still waited to see what would happen to the city (4.5)?
- How does the Lord use the vine as an object lesson for Jonah (4.6-11)?
- Why did Jonah run from God earlier? Why is he depressed and angry now? What is the history of relations between the Israelites and the Assyrians?
- What three things does God provide Jonah? Why? What do the vine, worm, and hot sun reveal about God? About Jonah?

### *Connecting the Dots — Applying the Word*

- How would you end this dangling story?
- In what ways are we sometimes more concerned about petty things than about those under God's judgment?
- When has God given you two chances? To be or do what? To witness where?
- When would you consider "fasting" and "putting on a sackcloth," as the Ninevites did? What is a "spiritual fast"?
- What can we do to begin seeing things more from God's perspective?
- In your life, how have you seen God demonstrate the qualities Jonah mentions in 4:2?
- How does God's treatment of you motivate you to reach out to those who don't know him?
- When have you tried limiting God's mercy to others? To yourself? To whom is God wanting you to show mercy?

*Prayer:* Spend some time before the Lord expressing your repentance and experiencing God's grace.

(adapted from IVP Press Daily Bible Study and the Serendipity Bible)