

# HOURL OF POWER

**Prayer Guide – April 29, 2018**

Read Jonah 3:1-10... I want to begin our prayer time by quoting two things from the sermon:

1. Stephen's sermon in a sentence: *"When God gives us a second chance, it involves a call that requires a commitment in order to see a change in the lives of those around us!"*
2. Chapter 3 begins with TWELVE WORDS that are incredibly powerful and some of the most beautiful in the Bible: *"Then the Word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time!"*

Stephen gave us example after example of this **God of Second Chances** whom we serve. He told of Adam and Eve, Joseph, David, Elijah, the nation of Israel, Peter and Paul, as well as himself! God has recorded story after story for us to be able to SEE with our eyes that our mistakes and our disobedience are NOT the end of His call on our lives.

The Revised Standard Version translates **Jonah 3:1-2** in this way: "Then the Word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that *I tell you*.'" The words "I tell you" are very different from the words, "I told you." God could tell us 'I told you' over and over again. He could surely have said that to Jonah.

I want us to look at a good storm story of Paul's in Acts 27. (Is there such a thing as a good storm story? Actually we learn a lot from storms!) **Read Acts 27:1-2**. Paul is a prisoner being carried to Rome to make his appeal before Caesar (see Acts 25:21 and 26:32). Paul is headed into a storm that is not of his own making. He had not been disobedient as Jonah had been, but these stories are very similar. Cargo is lost (Acts 27:18). Just as the sailors in Jonah's ship came to see the reality of Jonah's God, the sailors on Paul's ship will do the same (Acts 27:21-26). I want us to focus on the words in Acts 27:9-14. Paul knows that danger is ahead because they were too late in setting sail. BUT read vs. 13 and ponder the words, "When the winds began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted." Oh my goodness, how many times do we think we have obtained what we want, and yet, we have been previously warned that our choices are leading us to disaster. When I read Acts 27:21, I find it almost humorous. Paul just had to get in those words: "You should have taken my advice." Or as we often say, "I told you!"

## ADORATION

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- Let's praise the Lord for not hounding us with our failures. Read Psalm 103:11-12. He means that!
- Praise Him for what is **not** included in the story of Jonah – a lecture on how foolish he was to run from God's call the first time!
- Praise Him for leaving us a record of History that does not gloss over the ugly parts of our heritage! We need to know that 'all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.' (Romans 3:23)
- I once heard David Platt say, "Don't stop there! (Romans 3:23) There is only a comma! The rest of that sentence says, 'and we are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.'"
- Praise God that He redeems US, and He can and will REDEEM our mistakes!

## CONFESSION

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- Stephen sent out a list of questions for our Life Group lesson. I think they are great questions for us to lay before the Lord and see if we have some areas in our life where we need to confess our reluctance to obey.
  - Is there any assignment God has called me to that I have not accepted?
  - What is MY Ninevah? Is there a place outside of my comfort zone that God is calling me to?
  - Have I ever made a commitment to the Lord that I never followed through on?
  - Is there any area of my life where God is giving me a second chance to obey?
  - What SCARS of my life could God use to lead others to Christ for His glory? Our tendency is to COVER our scars. Christ would call us to EXPOSE our scars.
  - Is there any area of my life that is hindering others from moving forward in Christ?
  - What price would you be willing to pay to see God move in a mighty way in your life, your family, your church, this community?

### THANKSGIVING

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- Just simply thank Him for giving us a second chance. Beth Moore calls these second chances 'do-overs'. Thank Him for being able to orchestrate events in our lives so that we do get a second chance to do it right the next time!
- Thank Him for the scars you bear that do give you an opportunity to share about God's grace.
- I loved Stephen's declaration that this story is not about a big fish. It is about a BIG GOD. Thank Him for being able to do '*immeasurably more than we could ever ask or imagine.*' Ephesians 3:20
- Thank God for His ability to transform a whole community through the words of one man. Remember the quote that stirred DL Moody: "*The world has yet to see to what God will do with a man fully consecrated to Him*". DL Moody said that he would be that man! And he, like the disciples in Acts 17:6, turned the world around him upside down. (NKJV)

### SUPPLICATION

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- In the Life Group study guide from Julie, she spoke about her closet full of shoes. She said that she chooses shoes according to what she has planned to do that day. (You don't wear flip flops to play in the snow, for example.) Would you ask the Lord to help you make choices right now that will equip you to be a voice for Him?
- I once worked for Greer Christian Learning Center (*which has now helped to bring Blue Ridge Christian Learning Center into existence.*) My boss, Joe Price, told the story of a season in his life when God was very quiet with him. For four months, he felt like he heard very little from the Lord. One day, he sensed the Lord ask Him, "Joe, will you say 'yes' before I ask the question?" Because Joe was so hungry for that fellowship he had once enjoyed, he replied with a sound "YES!" The next day, someone called and asked Joe if he would pray about something. Joe said, "The answer is yes!" "But Joe, I haven't asked the question." "I know, but the answer is yes!" That 'yes' took him to Romania on a mission trip, and it was there that God birthed the whole notion of a learning center for high school students. I don't have all of the numbers regarding students and salvations and God's call into ministry that have all come from that learning center, but I do know that it all began with a commitment: "God, I will say yes to you, no matter what you ask!"
- So this morning, will you pray that with me, that we would DO WHAT HE CALLS US TO DO!