

Teaching for 3-26-08

When a King Repents

The Prime Minister of Vanuatu (an island nation in the South Pacific) stood at a public gathering in October 2002 and repented on behalf of his nation. He included in his confession the seeking of forgiveness for the sins of ancestors, as well as the renouncing of any idol worship and covenants with evil spirits. He concluded by declaring a covenant with the Almighty God, acknowledging “the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior.”

When first viewing this public proclamation on video, it was hard to imagine the same display of humility and repentance could ever happen in our own nation. Now, just a few years later, we are approaching a time in history that could very well be a defining moment for the United States. A month from today on April 26, many believers will gather in Washington, D.C. and around the nation in personal and corporate repentance. President Bush has been invited to participate by both declaring a national day of repentance and actually being present at the [*ReignDown USA*](#) gathering on the National Mall.

We know from Scripture that dramatic results occur when a king (or prime minister or president) repents corporately for the sins of a nation. In Jonah 3, the king of Ninevah joined the people in true brokenness, humility and repentance for his nation—and God responded with mercy: “*When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened*” (3:10).

Imagine that same heart of repentance coming from the President of the United States. ***Do you have the faith to believe that God might again hear the cries of His people on behalf of an entire nation?***

The Humility of a King

The part of Jonah’s story that usually gets the most attention is Jonah’s disobedience in refusing to go to Ninevah with a message from the Lord (chapters 1-2). He suffered the consequences by spending extensive time in the belly of a whale—no doubt acknowledged his disobedience and reaffirmed his submission to the Lord God!

But chapter 3 is the amazing story of what happened when a king and all the people of an evil land repented in true humility. When Jonah finally made it to Ninevah, his message from the heart of God was simple: *Forty more days and Ninevah will be overturned.*

The response was profound. The people ***immediately believed*** the message was from God. Without hesitation they began fasting and outwardly showing their sorrow at their sin. Soon the king heard the message and responded with the same humility. He stepped down off his throne, took off his royal robes, and submitted himself in repentance before the Almighty God. He decreed that everyone should join him, with the hope that perhaps “*God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish*” (vs. 9).

We know that God graciously and mercifully spared Ninevah, even though the Prophet Jonah was not pleased with God’s response. How thankful we can be that the Lord is far more merciful than perhaps many of us as we look at the sin around us!

The Hindrance of Unbelief

Jonah’s message was just one sentence, but it was from the heart and mouth of God. God had forewarned

Jonah of His intentions by telling him, "*Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me*" (Jonah 1:1). So Jonah simply declared the truth. *Forty days and it's over.*

That was enough to grip the people's hearts and turn them toward repentance. They did not struggle with unbelief. They did not question whether the message might be true or if the Lord might actually destroy their city because of the overwhelming wickedness. They simply responded by believing.

We also have an opportunity today to respond with belief. The vision and message of *ReignDown USA* is about our need to repent and believe as a nation. It is the belief that God gave a message to a stay-at-home mom of a nationwide movement of repentance, culminating in a gathering in Washington, D.C. The vision includes President Bush "falling to his knees, with his arms outstretched and tears streaming down his face, whispering *I'm sorry.*" There have been many confirmations this vision is from the Lord, which you can read by [clicking here](#).

So the question is whether you are ready to believe that God is calling His people and this nation to repentance. If so, you will respond as the Ninevites did with immediate obedience! You will ask the Lord to prepare your own heart for this profound movement of national repentance, as well as pray fervently for President Bush to lead our nation in true humility before the Lord. If you are hesitating or holding back, ask Him to forgive you of your unbelief and infuse you with greater faith.

We as a Church need personal repentance before we can hope and pray for national repentance. ***We have 31 days before ReignDown USA, but the Lord desires that we not wait.*** Today is the moment for radical, immediate obedience!