

# Stepping Out with Jesus



A series of studies focusing on the lives of several Old Testament heroes of the Faith: In these studies the examples of these worthy men who lived and died by their faith in God and the hope of the coming Messiah will be examined. By taking note of their exemplary conduct the student will be encouraged to follow Jesus and lead others in the way that leads to eternal life.

# Daniel: Stepping into the Lion's Den

## I. INTRODUCTION:

### A. One of the Most Remarkable Stories of Courage & Conviction in the OT—

1. It is a story that is well known and well loved by even young children.
  - a. When I refer to it as a “story” I do not mean a story in the sense of a fairy tale.
  - b. I refer to it as a story in the sense of the word, which means “an account—a telling of what factually happened.”
2. This story involves a group of four young men, who were among a larger group of young men who were taken from their home in Judea to the far away nation of Babylon.
  - a. They were trained in the educational system of the Babylonians so that that they might serve the King of Babylon.
  - b. All of this takes place about 500 years before Christ was born.
  - c. We want to focus this morning on the choices made by one of man—Daniel.

### B. This Story Is Relevant—

1. For children
2. For parents of children
3. For every Christian
4. Because Daniel made a great, godly, righteous choice.

## II DISCUSSION:

### A. Daniel Was a Righteous Man, and His Choices Were Righteous—

1. **Mark 13:14**—Jesus speaks of Daniel as a prophet, and declares that what Daniel had to say—was of vital importance to believers living at that time.
2. **Ezekiel 14:14**—Ezekiel was also a prophet; he worked at similar time as Daniel. He promised God's judgment if people didn't repent—said that even if Noah, Daniel and Job were present—they would only save themselves.
  - a. Understood—this is a compliment to these three men—they would be righteous even in a terrible environment.
  - b. Understood—this is not a compliment to the Jews as a whole because not even Noah, Daniel and Job would be able to get these people to repent.
3. So no doubt about it—Daniel was a great man, righteous man, and one that lived right before God.

### B. The Choice Daniel Made to Step into the Lion's Den—

1. Read with me Daniel 6:16-22
  - a. You will correctly note—Daniel did not literally say, “Well, I think I'll go into the lion's den today.”
  - b. Rather, this was a punishment inflicted upon Daniel.
  - c. Only proper to ask “Why?”
2. Remember Daniel was a great man in the kingdom.
  - a. **Daniel 6:1-2**—Daniel had a high position in the kingdom.
  - b. **Daniel 6:3-5**—Jealousy against Daniel.
  - c. **Daniel 6:7-9**—an evil idea hatched against Daniel.
3. Now here friends, is where Daniel choose to step into the lion's den.

- a. Remember, the decree that was signed specifically included the punishment of the lion's den. **Daniel 6:7**
- b. Remember, Daniel knew about the decree and knew when it had been signed. **Daniel 6:10**
- c. With this clear knowledge, Daniel chose to step into the lion's den—when Daniel chose to obey God rather than men. **Daniel 6:10-11**.
4. Do you realize how terrible that would have been. Let me show you. When Daniel's accusers were punished—look what happened to them. **Daniel 6:24**
5. Consider with me the great potential there would have been for compromise.
  - a. We'd like to think that we'd be just like Daniel, but I have doubts.
    - (1) We tend to think we're greatly persecuted if someone laughs at us. Or if we someone verbally mistreats us because we're a Christian.
    - (2) I have some doubts that we would have made the same choice Daniel made.
  - b. Might we have said:
    - (1) Well, this is just 30 days. Let's get through this rough patch and then things will be back to normal.
    - (2) I'm in a great position to do good for God. I can help influence the Jews that are in captivity, watch out for them. I can influence the king. I can't get myself killed.
    - (3) There's no actual command from God to pray 3 times a day in front of an open window. I know that I've always done it this way, but I'll just modify my routine and pray in a hidden place, no one will know that I pray to God and serve God.
    - (4) Actually—there was such a principle—**1 Kings 8:46-53** (Solomon talking—don't guess it was a command, but an understanding, a principle, that Godly people carried away captive would pray toward Jerusalem.)
  - c. Don't you reckon those thoughts would have at least flashed through our minds just a bit?
  - d. So friends and brethren, what is it that made Daniel make this kind of choice—to be thrown in with the fiercest of wild animals—to pay a great price?
  - e. We ask this question because young people—the things that made it possible for Daniel to make great choices—is the same thing that will enable you to stand firm for God.
  - f. Parents—the things that allowed Daniel to not compromise are the same things your children (my children) need in order to not compromise.
  - g. Christians of all ages—the things that permitted Daniel to obey God rather than me, are the same things that will strengthen you and me—to obey God rather than men.

**C. One Reason Why Daniel Was Able to Step into the Lion's Den (Daniel 6:23).**

1. "...and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed (trusted) in his God."
2. Daniel had faith, conviction, belief in his God.
  - a. Notice that Daniel always understood his role, and God's role. This surely strengthened Daniel's faith.
    - (1) See Daniel 2:27-30, 45; Daniel 5:17
    - (2) Daniel always aware of his role as a man, and God's role as God. That builds faith.
  - b. Notice also that the events of **Daniel 3**—that happened to his three friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego happened before this incident with the fiery furnace.
    - (1) **Daniel 3:28-30**—known throughout all the land.
    - (2) Not sure if these four men were always in close proximity—doesn't matter. This was proclaimed.
    - (3) Suggesting—surely Daniel's faith and belief in God was strengthened by seeing what God had already done.

- c. This kind of belief and conviction, reminds me of the description of Abraham when he was called to offer his son Isaac.
- (1) Can you imagine how a father gets up early in the morning to sacrifice his boy? You know he went into his son's tent, watched him sleep, caressed his hair, maybe thoughts racing through his mind of the boy's childhood—and all that he meant.
  - (2) How does a father go through with that? **Hebrews 11:17-19** tells us. He knew that God was able to raise his son up.
  - (3) I'm suggesting that this kind of faith—is the kind of faith/belief that Daniel had.
- d. Do you have that kind of faith?
- (1) Young people? Parents are you instilling that kind of faith? All Christians of all ages?
    - (a) Might well say, "Well, God doesn't raise people up today."
    - (b) Yes, true—if you mean the kind of raising from the dead that Lazarus experienced.
    - (c) But it is not true that God will not raise us up. For Martha (much of what we remember about Martha is "Martha, Martha, you are troubled about many things..." but that is not the sum total of her life) said, "I know he will rise in the resurrection of the dead."
    - (d) Do you have that kind of faith—I'll serve God, I'll not stop, I'll not compromise, I'll not give in, I'll not give up... because I believe in my God. I know that if the very worst thing possible happens—God is able to raise me up—and God will raise me up.
    - (e) Yes, I can be cut down—but just for a little while. Then I will rise again never to die again, never to suffer again, having escaped the bondage and fear of death—I shall live forevermore.
    - (f) Kind of begs the question: Is death our enemy, or is death our unwitting friend? For those left behind—death indeed is an enemy. But really for those who are ready, those who believe in God, live faithful lives of service, death is our unwitting friend, delivering us from a world of pain and sorrow to eternal life with God our Father.
  - (2) Might well say—how do I build that kind of faith/trust?
    - (a) Trust is built when one person proves reliable, keep their word, promises. That happens over and over again.
    - (b) Daniel—about 500—see and TRUST!
    - (c) David—about 1000—see and TRUST!
    - (d) Moses—about 1500—see and TRUST!
    - (e) Abraham—about 2000—see and TRUST!
    - (f) Job—before that?
    - (g) Let our faith/trust be like that of those in Thessalonica—**II Thessalonians 1:3**—"your faith grows exceedingly..."

**D. Another Reason Why Daniel Was Able to Step into the Lion's Den.**

1. Comes from the simple fact that a man doesn't just wake up one day and have that kind of deep courage and conviction.
2. Daniel was willing to pay the ultimate price because he had established Godly patterns of behavior since "the early days."
  - a. **Daniel 6:10**—"as was his custom since early days."
  - b. Reminds me of **II Timothy 3:15**—"from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures."
  - c. This sort of thing had its start in the very beginning. **Daniel 1:8**

- (1) Seems possible to me that a Jew might have felt that in the circumstances, this food business was negotiable.
  - (2) What a Jew could eat, not eat—was serious—but in this circumstance—what choice would they have?
  - (3) They were like slaves—in the sense that they were not free to direct their own lives. They had been captured—kidnapped.
  - (4) Of all the problems they would have—food would be the least of their worries.
  - (5) “Bigger” problems: temple worship? Sacrifices? Sabbath?
- d. But Daniel “purposed in his heart”—made a decision—and he was going to stick by it. This is how I’m going to live and I’m not going to compromise.
- e. Remember that Christ said something about faithfulness in small matters.
- (1) **Luke 19:13**—described as the parable of the minahs, elsewhere parable of the talents.
    - (a) Men were left in charge of an amount. Upon finding that they were faithful, they were given more.
    - (b) **Luke 19:17**—faithful in little, will be entrusted with much.
    - (c) Why?
    - (d) Why is a person who is faithful in little given responsibility over much? (that’s a principle still at work today in the workplace).
    - (e) Because faithfulness in little predicts faithfulness in much.
  - (2) That’s why this is said to elders—**I Timothy 3:5**—in reference to a man’s children being in submission—“if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?”
- f. What we see in Daniel is a man who early on—decided that he would be faithful to the Lord—maybe in an area that might seem relatively small.
- (1) But that decision to be faithful—became a way of life.
  - (2) And when the ultimate test came, there was no doubt what Daniel was going to do.
  - (3) Because from the early days—he had established Godly patterns of behavior.
3. Young people
- a. Are you establishing godly patterns of behavior that will serve you all the days of your life, enable you to stand firm for the truth and not waver?
  - b. For example, have you decided that worshipping God and assembling with the saints is my first priority and I’m not going to allow other activities to make worship and assembly with the saints a second priority?
  - c. For example, have you decided that you will always tell the truth, this is what you’ll do now and this is what you’ll do all the days of your life—that you’ll be known as an honest person?
  - d. For example, have you decided that in addition to all the various physical things you will do every day—brush your teeth, clean yourself, feed yourself, that you’ll also feed your self with the spiritual nourishment from God’s word?
4. Parents
- a. Are you, am I, training our children to establish Godly patterns of behavior at a very early age that will stay with him all the days of his life?
  - b. Is your child old enough to turn his Bible and follow along with the sermon? Teach him to do that, even when he can’t quite keep up—because he will learn and he will keep up—and it will become a pattern of life for him. There’s something better your young son or daughter can be doing than drawing pictures. They can learn to follow along in the Bible.
  - c. Is your child old enough to sign? Maybe can’t read all words, sing great—but they can learn this pattern of behavior very early on, for the rest of their life.

5. All Christians
  - a. It's not too late—See **Acts 11:23**.
  - b. You can still decide you will do things a certain way—and will not turn aside from that.
  - c. Remember all the trouble Peter had.
  - d. Lacked faith and sank in the water.
  - e. Rebuked Christ when Christ said He would have to suffer and die.
  - f. Promised he would never forsake the Lord, yet lied about Christ like a child might lie.
  - g. But yet he obviously made a change. In **Acts 5:29**
  - h. Does not just mean “ought” in a theoretical sense, for this is also what they actually did.  
They obeyed God rather than men. Yet relatively short time earlier—Peter didn't have this kind of confidence and conviction.

### **III. CONCLUSION:**

#### **A. Think about Daniel and the Remarkable Choice He Made—**

1. How could he do that? He had great faith/trust in his God.
  - a. And he had established patterns of uncompromising behavior early on in his life.
    - (1) And if that's not something each of us needs, well then I just don't know what people need.
    - (2) Fact is—that is what we need. We need faith like Daniel's. We need to establish non-negotiable patterns of behavior like Daniel did.
    - (3) We need to teach our children to do the same.

#### **B. Remember Daniel's Story Covers a Lifetime—**

1. Remind you that the story of Daniel does not take place over the course of a year or two years.
  - a. Daniel was taken captive in about 605 BC by Nebuchadnezzar. How old was he? Bible refers to him as a “young man.” Let's just assume he was roughly the age we consider a “young man”—16 years old.
  - b. Pretty well known that Nebuchadnezzar was king until 561 BC. If Daniel was about 16 when captured, Daniel is about 60 when Nebuchadnezzar dies.
  - c. Then Daniel interprets a dream for Belshazzar—Nebuchadnezzar's son—and Belshazzar dies.
  - d. Then Darius the Mede reigns—and this is the man that cast Daniel into the lion's den.
  - e. Some historians believe there is evidence that the reference to Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian—dates this event around 538 BC.
  - f. If so, and if Daniel was about 16 at the time of his capture, he is about 80 years old.
  - g. Friends, the actual years might vary a little bit. But the evidence is pretty conclusive: These events take place late in Daniel's life.
2. I point out all that to say this:
  - a. The kind of belief in God that Daniel had will serve you well all the days of your life.  
When you are an old man and an old woman—it will serve you well.
  - b. The kind of godly patterns of life that Daniel established when young—will serve you well all the days of your life.

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# Jonah: Stepping into Nineveh

Our hearts are still captivated by the accounts of the Bible. These accounts reveal valuable lessons for the young and old alike. One such account that still places us in a state of awe is that of Jonah and the big fish. The four chapters of the book of Jonah can be seen as a summary of Jonah's relationship with God.

## I. JONAH'S CALL—

### A. God's Call.

1. Chapter I begins with the prophet Jonah receiving a message from the Lord, divine instruction. We must note that Nineveh was a city identified with wickedness and cruelty to others. They were the hated enemies of Israel. Jonah received divine instruction to go and preach.
  - a. Jonah 1:2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me."
  - b. It is clear that this was a time of Assyrian greatness, since God calls it "that great city" not in relation to its extent only, but its power! God tells Jonah to cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before Him.
  - c. Note that from the beginning that God represents Himself, the Great Judge, as sitting on His throne in Heaven, unseen yet all seeing who knows the wickedness, lawlessness, unrighteousness!
  - d. Example from Genesis: God said to Cain "The voice of thy brother's blood, crieth unto me from the ground." And of Sodom, "the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, because their sin is very grievous; the cry of it is come up unto Me."
  - e. In many other accounts, God is long-suffering towards those who are disobedient, which in such an account as we are studying, God is giving the opportunity for Nineveh to hear the warning, to heed to such warning, and repent. It was Jonah that would be the instrument to present the warning against disobedience and the message for repentance.
2. God detailed Jonah's mission.
  - a. God's command was simple, and understandable.
3. God sent Jonah to fulfill it.
  - a. God leaves His message in the hands of man to deliver.
  - b. II Corinthians 4:7 "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."
  - c. If we do not deliver God's message, it will not get delivered.
4. There was an urgency associated with it.
  - a. Much like the days of Noah, when God determined to destroy the world. Proverbs 14:34 "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Far too many preachers today no longer wish to cry out against sin and wickedness. The apostle Paul, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..."

### B. Jonah, a Man on the Run from God!

1. He decides to go the very opposite direction, fleeing to Tarshish.
  - a. Jonah might have thought:
    - (1) Jonah was aware of the evil, cruelty, brutality of the Assyrians, so we could imagine he had concern for his life, they might kill him for prophesying what God said.
    - (2) I can preach God's Word in another place.

- (3) Why trouble the waters at Nineveh?
- (4) Why get myself involved?
- b. Jonah did not want God to spare Nineveh.
- 2. He attempted to run from God, more specifically his obligation to God.
  - a. We cannot run from God.
  - b. Song: Watching You! Running away from God is impossible.
  - c. Avoiding obligations!
- 3. Jonah found a ship and paid the fare.
  - a. Jonah 1:3 "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD."

### **C. God Reacts to Jonah's Disobedience; God Sends a Storm.**

- 1. Numbers 32:23, "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out."
- 2. Even though Jonah was asleep in the lower part of the ship, he could not escape God and his responsibility to Him.
  - a. Jonah 1:4, "the Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm so that the ship was about to break up. And the sailors became afraid and started calling to their gods!" The verse refers to the pagan sailors calling upon their false gods, who in their minds must be upset as to some irreverence."
- 3. However, Jonah was called upon by the pagan sailors to call upon Jehovah, in which Jonah acknowledged in vs. 12 that it was because of his own actions that caused this great tempest of the sea! Yet the sailors tried hard to return to land, but they just couldn't do it, for the sea was even mightier against them.
- 4. Jonah 1:14 these sailors were no longer calling upon their false gods, but the one true God, whom Jonah had made known unto them, and to God, they cried with an earnest and submissive cry, beseeching the Lord God to spare them and not to lay upon them innocent blood.
- 5. Jonah soon realized that although he could run, he could not hide from the Almighty God! Before Jonah could return to God, he must first stop running! The crew took Jonah up and cast him into the sea, and the sea stopped her fierce raging.
- 6. Note vs. 16 the sailors, holding the Lord God in reverence, worshiping Him in offering sacrifice, vowing to serve Him.

### **D. God Prepares a Great Fish for Jonah.**

- 1. God was both correcting Jonah as well as transporting him safely to carry out his mission.
- 2. Hebrews 12:6, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."
- 3. In chapter 1, we see a man running from God; he did not like what he had received from God!
  - a. How many today do not like what they hear from the word of God? As the apostle Paul presented to young Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:3,4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts/desires shall they heap unto themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables."
  - b. "When I don't like what I hear from the word of God, and thereby refuse to accept it, I am turning away, running from God! That is for those who have never put on the body of Christ, who do not like to hear about the one true Church, baptism/immersion, for the

remission of sins and also for the members of the Lord's church who do not like to hear about short-comings and responsibilities.

c. The question is: Am I running from God?

## **II. JONAH: A MAN ON THE RUN; TOWARDS GOD!**

### **A. *Jonah Is in the Fish for 3 Days and 3 Nights.***

1. Jonah prays to God.

a. In the midst of affliction many will call upon God when otherwise they will not.

b. We observe the effectual prayer of a penitent heart.

2. Genuine repentance.

a. As we observe Jonah's prayer, we note an attitude being presented, even as vs. 9 simply says "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving."

b. Jonah surely was thankful that he had been spared, as he described in vs.2-6 of the awful experience he under went in the deep sea. Jonah said it himself, "I have been expelled from thy sight." Isn't that the result of sin/disobedience? Note Isaiah 59:1-2.

c. Many times when we fall away, we are expelled from God's sight, and we have the tendency to say, why hast thou forsaken me, O Lord, and truly its not God forsaking us, it is us forsaking God.

d. But Jonah said in verse 7, "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple." Often times, we are the same way; when things are going good, smooth sailing, we tend to take God for granted, but when we lose hope, faint hearted, we cry out to Him! God asks several times over, "where are my children?" This kind of relationship with God results in an inconsistent, up and down, see-saw pattern spiritual life. A consistent, daily commitment to God promotes a solid, stronger relationship.

e. We find in verse 8 Jonah referring to "those that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy!" Any object of our devotion that replaces God is a lying vanity! We deceive ourselves with something ultimately empty and foolish. So, we must make sure that nothing takes God's rightful place in our lives.

f. Jonah, when dismissing God's instructions forsook His faithfulness, regarding himself to be above God. Priorities: God first, others second, self last.

g. In verse 9, Jonah pledges to keep his vows, to do, to fulfill his responsibility. Jonah turns his eyes back to God, certainly with a change of heart, change of mind and a change of direction... and truly salvation is of the Lord!

3. God heard the cries of Jonah.

a. Verse 10: The Lord spoke unto the great fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

b. In chapter II, we observed a man running toward God. Someone has observed that there are times when we must go into the lowest depths, so that we may regain a living faith! Jonah truly went to the lowest depths, to realize "where could I go but to the Lord?" which also comes very real to us today. When we think we have gone to the lowest depths, and seemingly have passed the point of no hope, we must consider Jonah, as God was merciful to him as to his penitent heart he had before God.

c. The question is: Are we in the sea of perdition? We must acknowledge that God is still in control, truly "in Him we live, move and have our very being."

## **III. GOD'S 2<sup>ND</sup> CALL AND JONAH'S MESSAGE: A MAN RUNNING WITH GOD!**

### **A. *Jonah's second call.***

1. Jonah 3:1-2 "And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee."
2. God forgave Jonah.
  - a. Hebrews 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
  - b. God did not bring up any of the previous mistakes of Jonah.
3. God gives Jonah the same call as before.
  - a. Jonah was to preach what God bid him to preach.
  - b. He was to deliver God's message.
    - (1) II Timothy 4:2 "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."
    - (2) He was not to deliver the opinions of man or man's philosophies.
  - c. God's Word is the only thing which will accomplish God's Will.
    - (1) Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it."
    - (2) When we substitute things for God's Word, it will save no one.

### **B. Jonah's Message.**

1. Jonah 3:4b "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."
  - a. In vs. 2-3; "A city of three days is an expression of three cities together, including Nineveh itself; the ancient "Assyrian Triangle" of cities was spread over some 26 linear miles.
  - b. Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, crying forth, and said forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. Jonah was preaching destruction!
2. Matthew 12:41 "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas..."

### **C. The Ninevites Response.**

1. They repented. They proclaimed a fast & put sackcloth from the greatest even to the least. Vs. 5, and vs.6/7 the King published a decree that no man nor beast would taste, feed, or drink water, in which he also included that everyone was to turn from their evil ways, from violence and robbing in vs. 8.
2. In vs.9 the king acknowledged that it was the only opportunity they had left to try to get God to them live and hold back his fierce anger.
3. In vs.10 God saw they made an end to their evil, thus He abandoned His plan to destroy them.
  - a. Jonah 3:10 "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not."

## **IV. GOD'S MERCY.**

### **A. First Observe God's Mercy with Jonah.**

1. God had every right to destroy Jonah for failing to obey His will.
2. God gave time for Jonah to come to his senses in the belly of affliction.
3. God granted Jonah the opportunity to do repent and obey Him.

### **B. God Showed His Mercy with Nineveh.**

1. He allowed them 40 days to repent.
  - a. God allows us time to repent.
  - b. II Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

- c. No one knows how much time we possess; II Corinthians 6:2 “(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)”
2. When they repented, God spared the city; Jeremiah 18:7-10 “*At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it*; <sup>s</sup>If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. <sup>9</sup>And *at what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.”

## **V. CHAPTER IV- JONAH, A MAN RUNNING AHEAD OF GOD!**

### **A. Jonah Was Very Angry Because God Had Changed His Plans.**

1. Vs. 2 Jonah complained to God and told God that was the reason he fled and didn't want to go, because of the very character of the Lord God: gracious, merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, and “repentest thee of evil.” He was upset as to having told the Ninevites that God would destroy them and God didn't!
2. Jonah was so upset he would rather die than to have to face the Ninevites. Notice what God asked Jonah in Verse 4, “Doest thou well to be angry” or “Is it right to be angry about this?”

### **B. Jonah Took a “Wait and See” Attitude.**

1. Jonah built himself a booth out of boughs of the trees, and he sat on the east side of the city waiting to what might become of the city.
2. God prepared a gourd (a vine or plant).
  - a. This again became important to Jonah; it brought him great joy.
  - b. However in verse 7, God prepared a worm to smote the gourd, and caused a very hot east wind to beat upon Jonah's head to the point in which he fainted and wished in himself to die, saying “it is better for me to die than to live” (pity party).
  - c. In verses 9-11, God asks Jonah is it right for you to be angry, because the gourd died, in which Jonah replied “yes”, even though Jonah had not labored or made it grow. Then we find God asking Jonah, “should I not spare those of Nineveh?”
  - d. The message of Jonah rings out loud and clear. God cares for the heathen. God will spare no extremes to get his message to them, even when the messenger is deliberately disobedient. The gourd thou hadst pity on was but one; but the inhabitants of Nineveh, whom I have pity on, are numerous.” It is a great city and very populous, as appears by the number of the infants, suppose from two years old and under; there are 120,000 such in Nineveh, that have not come to so much use of understanding as to know their right hand from their left, for they are yet but babes, those who were spiritually ignorant.
3. Often today people place more value on things of this life than on their souls or their lives.
  - a. Matthew 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

## **VI. CONCLUSION:**

**Do we ever catch ourselves feeling like Jonah? Jonah presented his life as to say, Lord, I'm living right, doing what thou hast desired, and look at the iniquities of those of Nineveh! Jonah did not show a lot of love for their souls! Jonah desired to see destruction rather than repentance. If we had been in Jonah's place what would we have done! We are in his place in that God has called us to go into the world with His Word: what have we done? (Mark 16:15-16; Romans 12:1-2. Matthew 5:16).**



# **Josiah: Stepping into the Temple**

**A. Josiah the son of Amon— II Chronicles 33:21-25**

**B. Josiah became king at eight years of age— II Chronicles 34:1-2**

**C. Josiah at the age of sixteen began to seek God— II Chronicles 34:3**

**D. Josiah purged the land of idol worship—II Chronicles 34:3-7, II Kings 23:4-20**

**E. Josiah an example to the people— II Kings 23:3, II Chronicles 34:29-33**

**F. Josiah exhibits a tender heart— II Chronicles 34:19, II Kings 22:11**

**G. Josiah shows respect for God's authority in keeping the Passover- II Chronicles 35:1-5, II Kings 23:21-22**

**H. Josiah's legacy-good from beginning to end— II Chronicles 34:1-2; 35:25-26, II Kings 23:24-25**

Kerry Henry  
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# David: Stepping onto the Battlefield

## I. INTRODUCTION:

The story of David and Goliath (I Samuel 17) is an interesting story. It is, however, more than just interesting; it can be valuable to us. We, too, are at war (Ephesians 6:10-18; I Timothy 6:12; II Timothy 4:7); the challenges we face can be as persistent and imposing as the giant, Goliath. We gain courage and insight for our battles when we carefully consider David stepping onto the battlefield.

## II. DISCUSSION:

### A. *David stepped onto the battlefield to glorify God.*

1. The “army of the living God” was being put to shame by a heathen nation.
2. David sought to remove the reproach and give honor to God (I Samuel 17:26, 36, 45-47).
3. David did not fight to satisfy his own ego or to impress others with his skills.

### B. *David stepped onto the battlefield when the call came.*

1. David did not start the day expecting to fight a giant (I Samuel 17:16-20).
2. It was not an unnecessary fight—there was a cause (I Samuel 17:29).
3. Some men do not respond favorably to the Lord’s call to battle.

### C. *David stepped onto the battlefield when other men would not.*

1. Some not only refuse to enter the battlefield, but malign those who do (I Samuel 17:28, 33).
2. David would not be discouraged or distracted (I Samuel 17:29, 34-37a)
3. Sometimes we are not as alone as we think (1Kings 19:18).
4. God and one is always sufficient.

### D. *David stepped onto the battlefield when the odds seemed insurmountable.*

1. The “tale of the tape” suggested a total mismatch (I Samuel 17:1-7, 33, 38-40).
2. God allows us to face “insurmountable odds” to know His power & glory (Judges 7:2).
3. How can we lose when we fight for God (Romans 8:31; 1John 4:4)?

### E. *David stepped onto the battlefield with faith in the Lord’s name (I Samuel 17:45).*

1. Faith is the victory (1John 5:4).
2. There is power in faith (Matthew 21:21).
3. David had a history with God (I Samuel 17:34-37; Psalm 20:7).

### F. *David stepped onto the battlefield again and again.*

1. David fought other battles after this one (I Samuel 17:7).
2. David even fought the Philistines again (II Samuel 5:17-19).
3. Jesus was tempted on more than one occasion (Luke 4:17).
4. We will have to fight again and again.

### G. *David stepped onto the battlefield on his way to glory.*

1. This was “the first day of David’s heroic life.”
2. The battles we win move us toward glory (James 1:2-4, 12).

## III. CONCLUSION:

“Who will follow Jesus standing for the right, holding up His banner in the thickest fight, listening for His orders, ready to obey?”

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