

Scripture Lesson for January 24, 2021 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Introduction to the Hebrew Lesson: Jonah 3:1-5

This is the classic story of Jonah's attempt to flee from God's call for Jonah to go to Nineveh. Jonah boards a ship to escape but God creates a great storm and Jonah ends up in the belly of a huge whale. In the dark. Of course, Jonah prays for a rescue by promising God he will do better. Out of the dark belly of the whale, Jonah is coughed up on the dry land and in the light of day. Listen to how Jonah responds to God's second call in chapter 3, verses 1-5 from "The Message"

A Reading from the Hebrew Lesson: Jonah 3:1-5

Maybe God Will Change His Mind

3 ¹⁻² Next, GOD spoke to Jonah a second time: "Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They're in a bad way and I can't ignore it any longer." ³ This time Jonah started off straight for Nineveh, obeying GOD's orders to the letter. Nineveh was a big city, very big—it took three days to walk across it. ⁴ Jonah entered the city, went one day's walk and preached, "In forty days Nineveh will be smashed."

⁵ The people of Nineveh listened, and trusted God. They proclaimed a citywide fast and dressed in burlap to show their repentance. Everyone did it—rich and poor, famous and obscure, leaders and followers.

Introduction: The Gospel Lesson Mark 1:14-20

In the very first chapter of Mark, Jesus calls his first disciples, Simon and Andrew, and James and his brother, John. Listen to the story of Jesus calling disciples – in the light in middle of the day from Mark 1:14-20 from The Message:

A Reading from Mark 1:14-20

¹⁴⁻¹⁵ After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee preaching the Message of God: "Time's up! God's kingdom is here. Change your life and believe the Message." ¹⁶⁻¹⁸ Passing along the beach of Lake Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew net-fishing. Fishing was their regular work. Jesus said to them, "Come with me. I'll make a new kind of fisherman out of you. I'll show

you how to catch men and women instead of perch and bass.” They didn’t ask questions. They dropped their nets and followed.

¹⁹⁻²⁰ A dozen yards or so down the beach, he saw the brothers James and John, Zebedee’s sons. They were in the boat, mending their fishnets. Right off, he made the same offer. Immediately, they left their father Zebedee, the boat, and the hired hands, and followed.