

**Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”**

A “*certain lawyer*” inquired of the LORD, what he might do to inherit eternal life. The LORD replied by asking him what the law said. He then answered by correctly summarizing the law in its two tables. The LORD then plainly told him, “*Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.*” When confronted with his own obvious failing to keep that law he then reverted to the common default of the natural man, “*But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?*” The LORD then set forth the parable of the Good Samaritan. Men will either deny the veracity of the law or when that fails will seek to excuse themselves by claiming that they do not understand it. In all cases they will seek to convince themselves and all who will listen, that they have a good reason for disregarding the precepts of the law.

Some even imagine that they do keep it and wonder how they could possibly be considered as lawbreakers. It is impossible for a man to comprehend the separation that exists between himself and a HOLY GOD, apart from the grace of GOD to strip him of his “excuses” and to confess his inability to approach unto GOD and his devilish rebellion against HIS precepts. This “great grace” is illustrated for us as the LORD humbled Job before him, causing him to put his hand over his mouth saying, “*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*” Job was, then, a man without any excuse.

We see the same scenario on the Damascus road, as Saul of Tarsus who breathed out threatenings and slaughters against the people of GOD was now brought down upon his face to confess the LORDSHIP of CHRIST JESUS. He had excused himself of wrong as he held the coats of those that stoned Steven and convinced himself that he was doing good by obtaining letters against the disciples of CHRIST. Yet he was stripped of all of that justification in his own mind when the LORD convinced him of the truth which, heretofore, he had kicked against and defended himself. All such pretense was now purged from his mind and he had no excuse.

This is the essence of repentance. True repentance does not exist where men seek to make excuses for their actions or justify themselves in their own eyes. True repentance is a perfect work which is the product of the HOLY GHOST convincing men of their own sin, the only perfect righteousness, which is found in CHRIST, and judgment which is to come.

The LORD sent Jonah to Nineveh to preach unto them the necessity of repentance. “*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*” On that journey the LORD saw fit to bring Jonah to repentance in a very unconventional but effective manner, as HE prepared a fish for Jonah’s passage there, even though Jonah had bought a ticket going the other way. In the belly of that fish, HE caused Jonah to come face to face with his own limitations and complete inability to deliver himself from what he supposed would be his tomb. In the midst of that darkness the LORD convinced him of sin, righteousness, and judgment and he cried out, “*But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; ----. Salvation is of the LORD.*”

Though the LORD spared Nineveh, according to HIS mercy, it was unto Jonah that the LORD revealed HIS sovereign will. We see the natural depravity of Jonah, as he (though an object of the LORD’s mercy) did begrudge that same mercy shown to those he despised. Yet it seems that the LORD did all of this to soften the heart of Jonah even though such is not spelled out in the book. Why else would he have written this account but to show the LORD’s mercy in retrospect? Yet the underlying reason for this account was not the sparing of Nineveh or even the softening of Jonah’s rebellious heart, but rather to illustrate the resurrection of the Only Begotten SON of GOD, as HE triumphed over death and hell. “*For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*” The resurrection of CHRIST is at the very center of the preaching of the Gospel. There can be no gospel preaching where the resurrection of CHRIST is not unequivocally declared. For if HE did not rise from the dead, then HIS death on Calvary’s cross, while noble, could have procured redemption for none. Now is CHRIST risen from the dead and become the FIRSTFRUITS of them that slept. Has the LORD granted you repentance unto LIFE? You can have no hope in the resurrection apart from it.

*“Thy free grace alone,”#11* **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at [forthepoor@windstream.net](mailto:forthepoor@windstream.net)**