

LAST WEEK

WHY BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

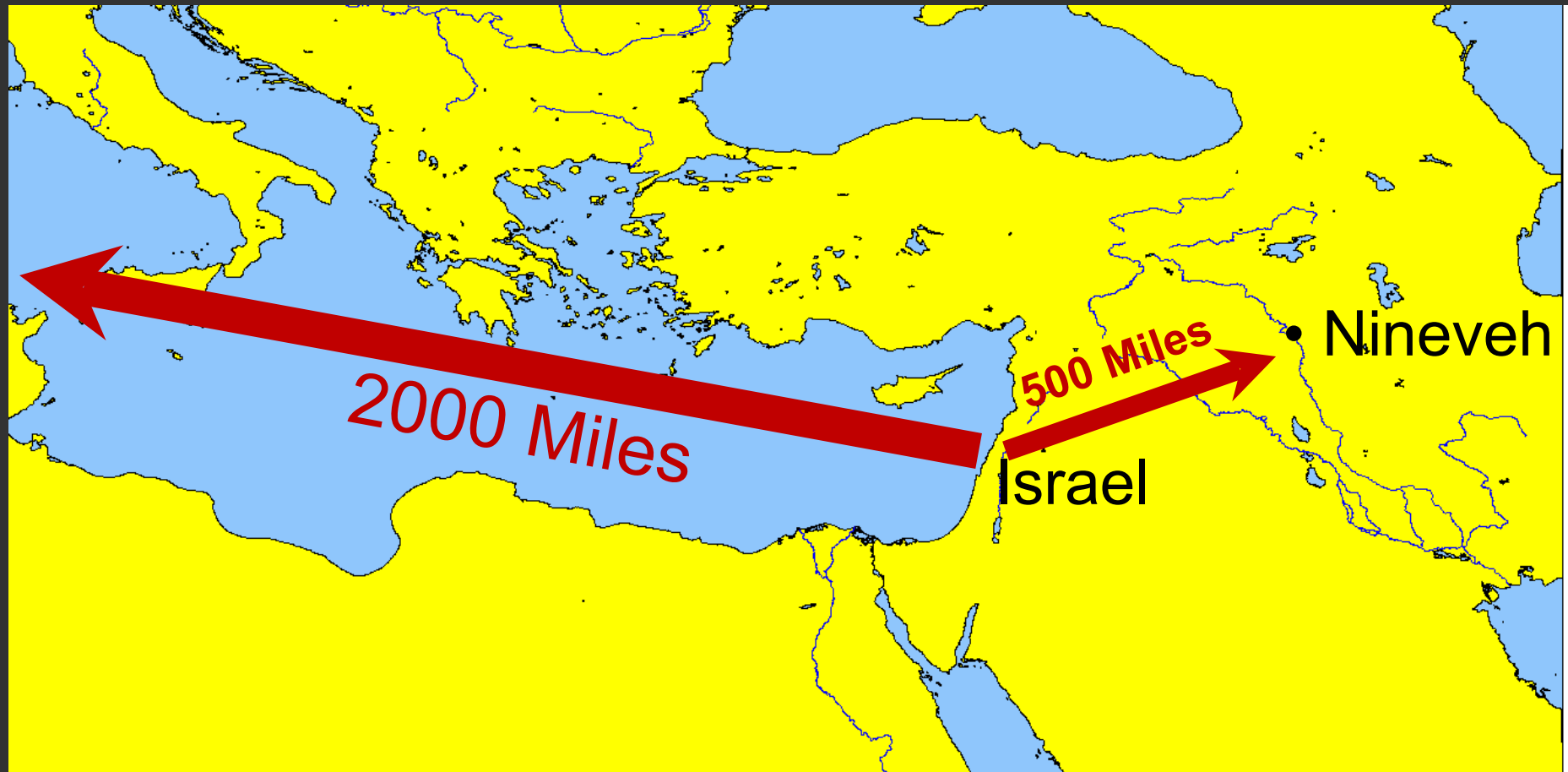
Romans 8:28, NIV '84

When Good Things Happen

TO BAD PEOPLE

Jonah, Chapter 4

JONAH KNOWS HOW TO RUN!



When Good Things Happen

TO BAD PEOPLE

Jonah, Chapter Four

JONAH, CHAPTER 4

1 But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.

2 He prayed to the LORD, “O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

3 Now, O LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

JONAH, CHAPTER 4, CONTINUED

4 But the LORD replied, “Have you any right to be angry?”

5 Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city.

There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city.

6 Then the LORD God provided a vine and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the vine.

JONAH, CHAPTER 4, CONTINUED

7 But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the vine so that it withered.

8 When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live."

9 But God said to Jonah, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?" "I do," he said. "I am angry enough to die."

JONAH, CHAPTER 4, CONTINUED

10 But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight.

11 But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?”

JONAH'S JOB IN NINEVEH

- Preach destruction
(3:4)
- Entire city listened
 - “Ninevites believed God”
(3:5)
 - Fasting and sackcloth
 - Even the king urged repentance (3:8)
- God had compassion
(3:10)

GOD TEACHES JONAH

- Jonah is furious with God
 - Wants the Ninevites to suffer
 - Mocks God's mercy4:2b
- Jonah sets up camp to watch 4:5
- God sends to Jonah...
 - Shady vine
4:6
 - Hungry worm
4:7
 - Scorching wind 4:8

WHEN GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO BAD PEOPLE

- Should God be merciful to our enemies?
- Are we different from them?
- God is always righteous, holy and just
- He always punishes sin
 - Some scores he settles later
 - Sometimes he lets the punishment fall on Jesus

MAKING THE PIECES FIT

- Repentance of Ninevah
 - They heard God's message
 - And repented
- When we were enemies, how long did God wait for us?
- Are we like Ninevah, or Jonah?
 - One repented
 - The other did not

MAKE NO MISTAKE

- Repentance is still required
- God always desires to be merciful
 - But he is still just
 - There are still consequences
 - God always punishes sin
 - If you repent, the punishment falls on Jesus

LIFE LESSONS

- God is at work in the lives of the lost
 - *Those we like*
 - Family
 - Friends
 - *Those we don't like*
 - Bullies
 - Bad teachers and bosses
 - Criminals
 - Terrorists

★ □ THE BIG IDEA ★

God longs to be merciful, even to those who don't deserve it

Like us

THIS MORNING

- Are you like Jonah?
 - Count your blessings
 - Leave the wicked in God's hands
- Do you need mercy? Be like Nineveh
 - Repent
 - Pray urgently
 - Ask for forgiveness and mercy