

## Introduction:

Amazing facts in the Book of Jonah; 1) a prophet who knew God would try to run from God, 2) the idolatrous sailors turned to prayer while the prophet did not, 3) God saved Jonah from the storm by using fish in which Jonah spent three days and nights, 4) the reaction of Nineveh to the preaching of Jonah, 5) Jonah's reaction to their repentance. You would think Jonah would be elated to have such a reaction to God's word. Gospel preachers want people to respond, to be saved, but not Jonah.

### I) Chapter 4

#### A) Jonah's anger

***Jonah 4:1*** *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.*

1. The "it" refers to the last verse of **Chapter 3**.

***Jonah 3:10*** *Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.*

2. Jonah actually wanted God to punish Nineveh. What Jonah wanted and what God wanted were two different things.

#### B) Jonah speaks to God

***Jonah 4:2*** *So he prayed to the LORD, and said, "Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. **3** "Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!"*

1. Give Jonah credit for praying to God, some people in their angry withdraw from Him.
  - a. Have you ever been so angry you find it hard to pray? That is exactly when you need go pray.
  - b. It is hard to harbor hard feelings while in prayer.
2. Jonah's request, God just go ahead and kill me.
  - a. Jonah was not the only prophet of God expressing this desire.
  - b. Moses - **Numbers 11:14** *"I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. 15 "If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now-if I have found favor in Your sight-and do not let me see my wretchedness!"*
  - c. Elijah -- **1 Kings 19:4** *But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!"*
3. How was Jonah different from Elijah?

**1 Kings 19:10** *So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."*

  - a. Elijah was not upset over the grace of God, but the sins of the people.
  - b. Elijah was upset because God's purpose was not being accomplished; Jonah was angry because it was.

- c. Elijah was thinking about the people and God's cause; Jonah was thinking about himself.

### C) God's reply to Jonah

**Jonah 4:4** Then the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

1. Have you ever been asked a question and not answer it because you know your answer is wrong or makes you look bad?
2. Why was Jonah angry?
  - a. Was it his patriotism or nationalistic spirit?
    - i. Assyria was the enemy nation and had to be defeat by Israel.
    - ii. Was it because he knew Nineveh would repent when Israel would not?
    - iii. Christians must be careful of a "us" against them attitude. Jews had this with the Gentiles
  - b. Was it because Jonah's will were not aligned? Jonah did not want the same thing God wanted.
    - i. **Matthew 6:10** *Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.*
    - ii. We are members of God's kingdom; His will is what matters and not our own.
  - c. Was it racism and hatred of the people of Assyria?
    - i. As Christians we know the value of every soul. Black, white, brown, yellow, red, etc all created in God's image.
    - ii. The call to preach to every nation means to preach to people who look different from us.

- d. Was it pure selfishness – He did not want to share his God with these people
  - i. How would his fellow Jews look upon Jonah upon his return? You went to these people and preached to them?
  - ii. Peter faced this after preaching to the household of Cornelius.

***Acts 11:3*** saying, "***You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!***"

- e. Jonah was upset over God's grace. He possessed the same spirit as a number of people in the Bible.
  - i. The oldest son in ***Luke 15***.
  - ii. The Pharisees condemned Jesus because He ate with sinners, ***Matthew 9***.

- 3. Jonah goes outside the city to see what would happen.

***Jonah 4:5*** So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he ***made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city.***

- a. What was Jonah hoping to see? Destruction?
- b. The hand of God just wipes the city off the face of the earth?

#### D) God's object lesson

***Jonah 4:6*** And the **LORD** **God** **prepared** a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant. **7** But as morning dawned the next day **God** **prepared** a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered. **8a** And it happened, when the sun arose, that **God**

***prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint.***

1. God usage of things in Jonah- the sea, the storm, a large fish, now a gourd, a worm, and an east wind. God is using His creation to teach Jonah and us these lessons.
2. The gourd provides Jonah with much needed shade and now Jonah is happy!
3. God used the worm and the wind to damage and kill the plant. Jonah is angry!

***Jonah 4:8b Then he wished death for himself, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."***

**E) God's lesson**

***Jonah 4:9 Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!" 10 But the LORD said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. 11 "And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left-and much livestock?"***

1. The plant was nothing but a plant. Why was Jonah angry? Because it gave him shade.
2. God provided the plant to give shade to Jonah and Jonah did not complain but saw God's mercy.
3. Nineveh a city of 120,000 people was of much greater value than that plant.
4. Should not God show them greater mercy.
5. Jonah valued some thing of little value and considered as

nothing the souls of Nineveh.

## II) Application

### A) We need to recognize and obey God's will

1. When we fight against God's will we are running away from Him.
2. God will is for all mankind to be saved and for us to preach to the lost.

### B) Not care only about ourselves but others

1. Love your fellow man means to do more than not steal, kill, or lie, to him.
2. It means to do good.

***James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.***

### C) Have our values and priorities right.

1. Sometimes we can really get attached to something of little value and then throw away something of great value.
2. We might spend years of diligent study for a degree but not think a thing about our soul.
3. Do not swerve to miss a dog but hit a person.
4. The soul of people are more important than any material thing.

***Matthew 16:26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"***

**Conclusion:**

**Don't be a Jonah!**