



Jonah #4 "Out of Control Emotions" [Jonah 4:1-11]

Jonah's Emotional Response & Prayer:

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry Jonah 4:1

"Angry" = Hebrew = קָרָה = burn/rage/furious

And he prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." Jonah 4:1-3

- Jonah's Prayer Reveals His Extreme SELF-CENTEREDNESS And Shortsightedness About The God He Served.
- Jonah Uses The Virtue and Character Of God As An ACCUSATION Against God

"There is this real scandalous, even offensive side to God's grace & mercy, when the wideness of it begins to include people that we hate."

God Questions Jonah

And the LORD said, "Do you do well to be angry?" ⁵ Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. Jonah 4:4-5

- Jonah Wanted God To DESTROY Nineveh, But God's Heart Was To TRANSFORM Nineveh

⁶ Now the LORD God appointed a plant^[b] and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live" Jonah 4:6-8

- Jonah Is HAPPY Not Because God Spared An Entire City - But Because God Saved Jonah From His Discomfort.

"Jonah wanted to skip God's lesson and go straight to God's blessings."

God Questions Jonah Again

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ And the LORD said, "You pity (compassion) the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?" Jonah 4:9-11

- Nineveh Represents Those We Would Consider Our ENEMIES.

"The first step towards loving our enemies is recognizing the common, broken humanity that we all share."

LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READ JONAH 4:1-11.

- In verse 1, Jonah is furious because Nineveh repented and was spared. Why does God's mercy toward a brutal enemy make Jonah so angry?
- Jonah recites a famous description of God in verse 2 as reason for his anger. Why do you think Jonah using God's best attributes as an *accusation* against Him?
- Jonah was happy to receive God's grace when he was saved from the fish and shaded by the plant. Why is it so easy to welcome grace for ourselves, but resent it when it is given to our enemies?
- Who represents "Nineveh" in your life today? What group or type of person would you find hardest to see God bless and forgive?
- Jonah wanted to sit back and watch the city burn. Do you ever secretly root for the downfall of people you deem evil, rather than praying for their transformation?
- God ends the book with a question about His pity for the "great city" How does God's view of "misguided" or "lost" people challenge the way we look at secular or hostile cultures around us?
- The book of Jonah ends abruptly without Jonah's response. Why do you think the author leaves it open ended? How would you answer God's final question in your own life?

REFLECTIVE EXERCISE:

If you are struggling with unforgiveness or the ability to love your enemy. Take some time this week to sit down with Jonah 4 and prayerfully read it through a few times. Then take a blank piece of paper. Think about that person who is your enemy and write down every single character flaw that you hate about them. And then ask yourself "Have I ever displayed this same kind of behavior towards them?"

REMEMBER:

The first step towards loving our enemies is recognizing the common, broken humanity that we all share.

SOURCE:

Timothy Keller "Rediscovering Jonah/The Parodical Prophet" Penguin Books

Tim Mackie "Running From Your Life" <https://doorofhopepdx.org/>

Craig Groeshel "Jonah" Life Church Open Network

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