

## JONAH: THE WRONG-WAY PROPHET (Part 7)

### “Running Ahead of GOD-God’s *POUTING* Prophet in Rejection” (Jonah 4)

**INTRO:** Jonah’s final chapter is a dialogue between a pouting prophet running a head of his God. God deals with Jonah in a personal way. Ch 3 - God deals with *lost multitudes*. Ch 4 deals with one of *His children*. Contains some of the book’s richest parts in the life of a complicated man. Review . . .

#### I. (v.1) A STRANGE RESPONSE

- A. Expectation - You’d think after what took place in Nineveh, he’d be ecstatic. Expect to see him rejoicing and discipling. Instead, the most amazing response to a spiritual awakening ever, esp. by the preacher. “But” . . .
- B. Exasperation - Jonah was displeased to the point of flaming anger (v.1), because God stayed His wrath and preserved Assyria to later scourge His people. He wasn’t a happy camper. Jonah wasn’t mad at the Ninevites for getting saved, but at God for saving them! Hard to imagine God’s own prophet being mad at the grace and mercy of God. “Angry” is “to burn hot.”
- C. Exhortation - Anger is a terrible sin when directed at wrong things. It was the first sin after the fall (Gen. 4:6). Jonah was angry at God’s change of plans.

#### II. (vv. 2-3) A SELFISH PRAYER - Rebukes God

- A. (v. 2a) “*I told you so*” - God did the very thing Jonah was afraid He’d do. This has happened to all of us - God doing the very thing we don’t want Him to do, but expect He will.
- B. (v.2b) “*I know you well*” - Jonah knew well the character of God (Exo. 34:1-7). His theology was sound, but his heart was sick!
- C. (v.3) “*I resign, again!*” - Jonah, like Moses, Elijah, Job, wanted to die. Immature Christian’s always struggle coping with problems and facing responsibility (want easy way out). It’s possible to do the will of God without the heart of God.
- D. This is no prayer of praise, but of bitter complaint and deep anger. Jonah did not agree with the ways of God and he was hot. It was a selfish and foolish request. Thank God for unanswered prayer!

#### III. (v.4) A SENSIBLE QUESTION

God is so patient with Jonah. Why? All along God had another purpose in mind beyond the saving of the Ninevites. He was training one of His children. This requires breaking of self will to accept God’s.

#### IV. (v.5) A STUBBORN WITHDRAWAL

What does Jonah do? How does he respond? He retreats and hides, He should’ve been rejoicing and discipling all these new converts. He removes himself, becoming uninvolved, builds a little comfortable shelter and assumes the position of a self-centered spectator, watching the world go by. He went “east” (Gen. 3:24; 4:16; 13:11-13).

## V. (vv.6-8) GOD’S SOVEREIGN PROVISION

See God deal in love, mercy, and power with His angry servant.

- A. (v.6) VINE provided comfort for Jonah. It made Jonah “exceedingly glad”! Jonah is a complex, inconsistent child of God. He had no joy over a city’s revival (even angry), but is “very happy” over a little creature comfort. It is telling what makes us angry and what brings us joy - says a lot about our values. Jonah’s personal comfort was more important to him than conversion of an entire city. We get upset at the wrong things and get happy for wrong reasons. ILLUS: Americans spend more money on dog food than Christians give to all churches of all denominations! *We do want God’s blessings, but want to skip his lessons.*
- B. (v.7) WORM provided to remove the comfort
- C. (v.8a) WIND provided - Jonah was wind-blown and sun-burned. He was not only hot on the inside now! All three instruments of God. Sometimes God provides comforts, often He removes them - either way He is God and is sovereign.

## VI. (vv.8b-9) A SOLEMN DIALOGUE

- A. (v.8b) “Please, let me die!”
- B. (v.9a) God’s second question. What is really important? Plants or people?
- C. (v.9b) “I’m mad enough to die!” He was more concerned for that plant and his comfort than their souls. His love for nation (okay in itself) had obscured true values. Jonah stubbornly refuses to yield.

## VII. (vv.10-11) A STRONG ARGUMENT (cp. v.4)

God argues that Jonah is wrong in values on two points:

- A. (v.10) God has sovereign control -
- B. (v.11) God has compassion - God’s third and final question, “Don’t you care?” ILL – Movie with bad ending? “also much cattle?”
- C. God says, “I have a heart of compassion. I wanted Nineveh to repent and here you are, all bent, because you disagree with my plans - and don’t like the weather in Nineveh. You’d rather have me put a plant over your head for shade than see those people saved.” This is the heart of a selfish, proud, bigoted backslider! Interestingly, God had no problem with the sea, sailors, fish, Ninevites, vine, worm, wind - only with his own child digging in his heels. Book’s lesson? Jonah was more concerned about Jonah than Nineveh.

**CONC:** Some people are only happy with God when God makes them happy. What happened to Jonah? Did he repent again? Book ends abruptly and left hanging - only in the presence of God. This is not the story of a man or a city, but of God. Jonah’s silence is testimony he got the message. This book is evidence of that. Only one man knew all the details, and that man cared enough to write his story down.