

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Jonah's Anger at the Lord 's Compassion

Jonah 3:10 [the last verse from chapter 3]

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.

¹ But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.

Q1. Why was Jonah “displeased”?

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Q2. Do you think that Jonah was nationalistic? And what was the relationship between Jonah’s Judah and Nineveh (Assyria)?

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Q3. Does Scripture say something like “salvation is from the Jews”?

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John 4:22

[Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman at the well,] You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we [Jews] worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Q4. Do you think that Jews of Jonah’s time believed that salvation was exclusively for the Jews?

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Q5. In the Jews’ opinion was salvation for anyone else?

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Genesis 22:15-18

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time ¹⁶ and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, ¹⁸ and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

Q6. In Genesis 22:18, what did God mean when He said, “through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed”? Does that sound like an “exclusive” club? Did the Jews seem to forget “sharing”?

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John 4:22

[Jesus declared,] “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we [Jews] worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.”

Q7. What did Jesus mean when He said, “salvation is from the Jews”?

Acts 9:10

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision... ¹⁵ The Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man [Saul who became Paul] is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Acts 11:1

The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the [Jewish] believers criticized him [for having fellowship with Gentiles]... ⁴ Peter began and explained everything... ¹⁷ [Peter said,] “So, if God gave them the same gift as He gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?” ¹⁸ When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."

Day 2

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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."

Q8. Would you consider Jonah’s words in verses 2-3 to be a prayer? Why? Or why not?

Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Q9. Regarding Philippians 4:6, what does “everything” mean to you?

1 Timothy 2:1

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone...

1 Timothy 4:4

For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,

Q10. Why did Jonah want to die?

Q11. When Jonah returns home and tells his friends and fellow-priests that he helped save their bitter enemies from certain destruction, what might be their reaction to Jonah? Understanding? Friendship? Anger?

Day 3

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

Q12. Did Jonah have a right to be angry with God?

Q13. Do we have the right to be angry with God?

Q14. If we are angry with God, does God want us to talk to others about our anger? Or should we pray (talk to Him)?

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.

Q15. Why did Jonah sit and wait "to see what would happen to the city"? Was Jonah still "hopeful"?

Day 4

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

Q16. Some versions refer to the "vine" as a "gourd" (KJV) or "plant" (NKJV). At any rate what does the luscious shade from the "vine" one day followed by its withering the next day mean to you?

 Gourd: Jonah's gourd: bearing the Hebrew name Kikayon (found only here), was probably the kiki of the Egyptians, the croton. This is the castor-oil plant... "It is grown in great abundance on the alluvial banks of the Tigris and on the plain between the river and the ruins of Nineveh." At the present day it is trained to run over structures of mud... to protect... from the heat of the noon-day sun. It grows with extraordinary rapidity, and when cut or injured withers away also with great rapidity. (M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Third Edition, published by Thomas Nelson, 1897. Public Domain, copy freely)

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."

Q17. What do you think God was trying to teach Jonah between the vine, the worm, and the scorching wind?

 God prepared a wind to make Jonah feel the want of the gourd. It is just that those who love to complain, should never be left without something to complain of. When afflicting providences take away relations, possessions, and enjoyments, we must not be angry at God. What should especially silence discontent, is, that when our gourd is gone, our God is not gone. Sin and death are very dreadful, yet Jonah, in his heat, makes light of both. One soul is of more value than the whole world; surely then one soul is of more value than many gourds: we should have more concern for our own and others' precious souls, than for the riches and enjoyments of this world. It is a great encouragement to hope we shall find mercy with the Lord, that he is ready to show mercy. And murmurers shall be made to understand, that how willing soever they are to keep the Divine grace to themselves and those of their own way, there is one Lord over all, who is rich in mercy to all that call upon him. Do we wonder at the forbearance of God towards his perverse servant? Let us study our own hearts and ways; let us not forget our own ingratitude and obstinacy; and let us be astonished at God's patience towards us. [©1706, Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible by Matthew Henry, page 815, commentary on Jonah 4:5-11, <https://archive.org/details/matthewhenryscon00henr/page/814/mode/2up>]

Day 5

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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."

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?"

Q18. Why did God send Jonah?

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Q19. If the Ninevites had not listened to Jonah’s message and repented, what would have been their fate?

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 It could be argued that those “who cannot tell their right hand from their left” could represent right from wrong, because the Ninevites did not have God’s Law through Moses.

Q20. Thinking back on these four chapters of Jonah, what do you think is the main lesson(s) we should take from Jonah?

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