

Read Jonah 4:1-11

1 This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry. **2** So he complained to the LORD about it: “Didn’t I say before I left home that you would do this, LORD ? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people.

3 Just kill me now, LORD! I’d rather be dead than alive if what I prophesied will not happen.” **4** The LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry about this?”

5 Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see what would happen to the city.

6 And the LORD God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there, and soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah’s head, shading him from the sun. This eased his discomfort, and Jonah was very grateful for the plant.

7 But God also arranged for a worm! The next morning at dawn the worm ate through the stem of the plant so that it withered away. **8** And as the sun grew hot, God arranged for a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah. The sun beat down on his head until he grew faint and wished to die. “Death is certainly better than living like this!” he exclaimed.

9 Then God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?” “Yes,” Jonah retorted, “even angry enough to die!” **10** Then the LORD said, “You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly.

11 But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn’t I feel sorry for such a great city?”

When the Lord changed His mind about destroying Nineveh, was Jonah happy that the people of Nineveh had repented (v. 1)? No. He was very mad. God had shown mercy and compassion for Jonah but Jonah had no compassion for Nineveh’s people

What did he do now that he was angry (v. 2)? He complained to the Lord. **What was he complaining about?** He did not like the despicable, cruel Assyrians. He was afraid that Ninevites might repent and he wanted Nineveh to be destroyed. He felt they deserved God’s judgment not His mercy.

What did Jonah tell the Lord to do next (v. 3)? Just kill me. I’d rather be dead than see the people of Nineveh rescued. After all, they were enemies of Israel. Jonah was so emotionally upset that he lost all reason for living.

What did the Lord say to Jonah (v. 4)? Do you have any right to be angry because of something that I did?

What did Jonah do next (v. 5)? He went outside the city and found a place to sit down and he sulked and felt sorry for himself. **What did the Lord do for Jonah (v. 6)?** He caused a plant to grow up and give shade to Jonah. Jonah liked it. He was glad about his own comfort but wasn’t concerned about the spiritual destiny of the Ninevites. He was selfish...and prideful.

What did God do the next day (vv. 7-8)? He caused a worm to eat/kill the plant and for a very hot wind to blow on Jonah. **How did Jonah respond?** He thought it would be better to die rather than suffer like this.

How did God answer Jonah (vv. 10-11)? Shouldn’t I care about all the people in Nineveh who aren’t going to heaven? God was concerned about the city but Jonah was not.

What is a primary lesson of this little book? God loves the *world*—not just the Jews, but the Gentiles as well.