

A LOVE WITHOUT LIMITS

Jonah 4:1-11

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, 'O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country?'

That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing.

Jonah 4:1-2

JONAH'S SPEECH

Jonah 4:1-4

JONAH'S REACTION

- Jonah expresses his anger & displeasure because God demonstrates mercy to Nineveh (v1-2a)
- He prays that God will take his life (9x I & me)

JONAH'S CREEDAL PRAYER

- Gracious – kindness, God's help for those troubled
- Merciful – root=womb – God's motherly love surrounding the beloved with care & protection



- 'Slow to anger' – the patience of God
- Steadfast love – God's hesed – enduring love – God's relationship with his people

- Goodness – a characteristic of God (Psalm 145:8)
- Compassion – mercy for all

GOD'S QUESTION

"Is it right for you to be angry?"

- Jonah does not answer
- He walks out – detaches himself from the city of Nineveh
- An attitude of prejudice & exclusivism

GOD'S ACTIONS & SPEECH

Jonah 4:5-11

- God's words are prefaced by Jonah leaving the city (v5)
- He builds a shelter and watches for its destruction

GOD'S THREE APPOINTMENTS

- A bush – provides shelter (v6)
- A worm – to destroy the bush (v7)
- A hot east wind – beating upon Jonah (v8)
- All become an object lesson for Jonah

GOD'S WORDS TO JONAH

Jonah 4:9-11

AN ARGUMENT

- From lesser to greater God argues – you are concerned for the bush that you expended no energy on
- How much more am I concerned for the city of Nineveh?

GOD'S COMPASSION

- God is concerned for the people and animals of the city
- 'have pity' – literally cry over (have tears)
- A picture of God crying over his creation

SPIRITUAL CONCERN

- God recognizes the Ninevites' as spiritual babies
- "Who do not know their right hand from their left" (v11b)
- Adult people but with obtuse spiritual insight

GOING FORWARD

A FINAL QUESTION

Are we angry believers?

- Do we begrudge God's concern for all peoples of the earth – regardless of creed or ethnicity?

INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS

- The book of Jonah addresses the issue of hate, tribalism, & prejudice that we see rising up in much of populism today

THE 'OLD PERSON'

- Jonah is an example of how the 'old person' can quickly rise up after the 'new person' is revealed