

Theme: Jonah's unrepentant rebellion regarding God's mercy towards the Ninevites ('sinners' whom Jonah does not think deserve mercy) comes to the surface in this final chapter, but God in His grace continues to pursue the rebellious prophet to the end.

## I. Intro – “I was trying to reason with her!”

- A. Playing Monopoly and arguing with Denise
- B. Caught trying to bang down her door
- C. “But I was only trying to reason with her!”
- D. Sometimes a simple question can show our sin
- E. Jonah is now seen to be a rebel without a cause

## II. God's Mercy and Jonah's Anger

- A. The Ninevites had repented of their evil (3:10)
  - 1. God's Word had brought about sincere repentance
  - 2. Other prophets longed for this type of response!
- B. God is merciful and spares Nineveh (3:10)
- C. This makes Jonah angry! (4:1)
- D. The play on root of **עָרַב**- evil; disaster; displeasure
  - 1. Ninevites **evil**; **disaster** not sent; **displeased**
  - 2. **Exceedingly/greatly displeased**
  - 3. This makes Jonah ANGRY!!

## III. The Rebel's Attitude & Motives

- A. Jonah motive in fleeing - did not want Nineveh spared

- 1. This - I knew you wanted to spare Nineveh! (4:2)
- 2. That is why I fled! (4:2)

## B. Jonah's assessment of God's character (4:2)

- 1. Gracious, merciful, slow to anger, etc. (4:2)
- 2. Exodus 34:6 - exact quote until “relenting”
- 3. Israel had sinned; Moses prayed; God forgave
- 4. Quoted many times in OT - basis of Israel hope
- 5. Basis of Joel's hope for Israel (Joel 2:13-14)
- 6. Joel's words are same as the king - who knows?
- 7. God extended grace to Israel many times!
- 8. But Jonah does not want this for Nineveh!

## C. The depth of Jonah's rebellion - kill me! (4:3)

- 1. Would rather die than have Nineveh forgiven!
- 2. How different than Paul (Rom. 9:1-3; 1Co 9:19-23)
- 3. How different than Christ! (Romans 5:8)

## IV. Final Scene - The Rebel Without A Cause

- A. Jonah's continued hope for Nineveh's destruction (v5)
- B. God pursues the rebel through the vine, worm, and wind
  - 1. Vine, worm, wind, & sun - dangerous climate (vv6-8)
  - 2. Jonah despairs of life - possibly sunstroke (v8)
  - 3. The LORD God appointed vine, worm, wind (vv6-8)

- C. God's purpose - to pursue Jonah and change him
  - 1. To save Jonah from his discomfort (v6)
  - 2. Discomfort - רעה - evil displeasure - same root!
  - 3. Double entendre - discomfort & evil attitude
  - 4. NET Bible quote on Jonah 4:6
  - 5. This is why he send the worm and scorching wind

- D. The climax - God's dialogue with Jonah (vv9-11)
  - 1. v9 - Do you do well to be angry? - same as v4
  - 2. v9 - Jonah's stubborn response - YES - I want to die!
  - 3. The object lesson - work & value
    - a. v10 - work - you did nothing for it Jonah!
    - b. v11 - value - little plant vs. great city, animals, people

- 2. Some Christians & Christopher Hitchens - God took your voice!
- 3. How is my attitude towards the lost? My enemies?
- 4. Do I long for God to show them mercy and save?
- 5. Am I like Christ & Paul - or Jonah?

C. The Lord's Supper - Gratitude & Confession

**Rebel Without A Cause**

Jonah 4  
 July 26, 2011  
 Communion  
 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

**V. Applying the Word**

- A. Am I grateful for God's grace in my life?
  - 1. Jonah rejoiced at God's grace in his life
  - 2. He was grateful for the fish, the plant - & salvation!
  - 3. Am I grateful for God's many blessings in life?
  - 4. Am I especially grateful for salvation?
  - 5. Do I personally give thanks for Christ's work for me?
- B. Do I want to see God's grace given to others?
  - 1. Do I cry out for God to show mercy - or judgment?

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, Exodus 34:6

Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. 14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, Joel 2:13–14

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. Romans 9:1–3

Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. 1 Cor 9:19-23

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Here the narrator puns on the meaning “discomfort” created by the scorching desert heat, but God’s primary motivation is to “deliver” Jonah — not from something as trivial as physical discomfort from heat — but from his sinful attitude about God’s willingness to spare Nineveh. This gives the term an especially ironic twist: Jonah is only concerned about being delivered from his physical “discomfort,” while God wants to deliver him from his “evil attitude.” - NET Bible notes on Jonah 4:6

10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. 2 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.” 4 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. 6 Now the LORD God appointed a plant 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. 7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. 8 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.” 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 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. 11 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?”