

Grace in Pursuit: Jonah's Object Lesson
Jonah 4:5-11

Introduction

This Sunday, we will share Jonah 4:5-11. In this passage, God shares with Jonah an object lesson that should help Jonah to see that his anger toward God and attitude toward the Ninevites is displeasing to God.

Jonah 4:5-11 (NASB)

Then Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. So the Lord God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant. But God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day and it attacked the plant and it withered. When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life."

Then God said to Jonah, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death." Then the Lord said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?"

Basic Outline for Sunday's Message

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- I. A Shady Deal
 - A. Jonah's Shelter
 - B. God's Shelter
- II. A Repeated Question
 - A. God's Inquiry

- B. Jonah's Response
- III. A Final Lesson
 - A. Selfishness
 - B. Graciousness

Study Questions

1. Why do you think God chose this object lesson for Jonah?
2. The Scripture repeats the phrase, "God appointed..." three times in this section of Scripture. What significance does this have for us today?
3. At the preaching of God's Word, the Ninevites repented. It does not seem through the information that we have been given that Jonah ever repented of disobeying the Lord and having hatred toward the Assyrians in Nineveh. Why does it seem that it was easier for a pagan people to repent than it was for a chosen prophet to repent?