

**Message #8****Jonah 4:4-11**

Jonah is not only a depressed prophet, he is depressing. His whole story is depressing. It opens with him running from the will of God and it ends with him hating the work of God. There is no evidence that Jonah ever got right with God. When we leave the book, he is sitting in the blazing sun, hoping to die all because God spared Nineveh.

In the final verses of Jonah, there is a powerful lesson to see and learn:

**WHEN A CHILD OF GOD KNOWS THE TRUTH OF GOD AND REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE TRUTH OF GOD, HIS LIFE WILL END IN ANGER, HATE AND DEPRESSION.**

If you want to see a totally depressing person in this life, find a believer who knows God's word and will but refuses to submit to it. They'll be as hostile and hateful as Jonah.

Jonah is so out of step with God at this point that the souls of men are not even worth as much as a plant. Jonah's story ends with him more concerned about something material, rather than something eternal.

Now in these final verses, there are six final parts:

**PART #1 – The first question of God. 4:4**

Now Jonah has just asked God to take his life (4:3). Thank God He doesn't answer Jonah's stupid request. Jonah has already tried to end his life once, when he went overboard in the Mediterranean and God appointed a fish to reverse his decision. Now in view of his request to God, God asks him a question—does Jonah have a right to be angry?

Here is some good insight as to how to deal with one who is suicidal—ask them a question.

Note 1) Thank God He is not fickle like we humans and does not answer stupid and emotional prayer requests the way we want.

Note 2) Jonah has no right to question God or to be angry at God.

I love the words of Paul – who are we to talk back to God about what He does or doesn't do? Romans 9:20

Note 3) God is gracious to even still care about Jonah.

God can legitimately, as God, end Jonah's life in direct answer to Jonah's prayer. The fact that God puts up with Jonah and then communicates with him is a remarkable demonstration of His grace.

**PART #2 – The physical response of Jonah. 4:5**

Jonah does not even answer God. He went out to the east side of the city, built himself a little shelter and sat in the shade waiting to see what would happen to Nineveh.

The east side of the city contains mountains that would give Jonah a good vantage point. Two suggestions are given as to what Jonah was waiting for concerning Nineveh:

- 1) Waiting for the 40 days to be complete to see if God would eventually destroy it.
- 2) Waiting for Nineveh to lapse back into wickedness in view of what he saw as phony repentance.

When a child of God gets out of step with the will of God, his communication with God stops. He no longer has a desire to talk with the Lord and he no longer has zeal to serve God; he just wants to sit and watch the world go by.

**PART #3 – The first appointment of God. 4:6**

He is happy that he is escaping the temporal heat of the sun, but he is angry that the people of Nineveh are escaping the eternal heat of hell.

Here is a wonderful truth for God's people – God still cares for them even when they are totally out of step with Him. He still lets His people experience comforting things in life even when they are in rebellion. We may notice that it is something temporal that brings happiness to one in rebellion, but God is the God who even allows temporal blessings to come.

**PART #4 – The second appointment of God. 4:7-8**

Notice Jonah is more depressed that a plant died, but would have been happy if all the people of Nineveh had died. He is depressed over the death of a plant, but he is also depressed over the life of a city.

**PART #5 – The second question of God. 4:9**

Jonah would not have been made if God had killed the people, but he is mad because God killed his plant.

The truth is, a good reason for Jonah to die would be because he is a rebellious prophet who dares to argue with and question God. Jonah was angry because he had lost a little physical comfort. But he was also angry because the people of Nineveh did not lose their eternal comfort.

**PART #6 – The application of God. 4:10-11**

Jonah was all upset about a plant that lived on earth for one day. He had more compassion for a plant than he did all the people of Nineveh. Had God judged Nineveh, 120,000 people, who didn't even know their right hand from their left, would have perished along with many animals.

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach and Jonah not only didn't love the people, he hated them. There are many misguided saints that believe we must first build relationships with people to witness to them. As I see it, God many times gives us opportunities to witness to people before we have a relationship with them.

It is our job to proclaim God's truth regardless of what we feel about the person or people. We may love them, we may not know them or we may not like them; but that does not stop our responsibility to care for their souls.

The book of Jonah starts with a story of a prophet who is all messed up and ends the same way. This story does not have a happy ending. Will this be the story of our lives? Will our life end with us caring more about our temporal comforts rather than God's eternal plan?

Happiness comes when we are in tune with the word and will of God!