

Happily Ever After? (Jonah 4:1-4)

- I. **Introduction**
 - A. Happy Endings vs. Real life
 - B. What if Jonah's story ended at chapter 3?
 - C. Chapter 4 is the greatest enigma in the book of Jonah
 - D. Reading the text and setting the course for the message

- II. **Jonah ruins the happy ending by getting angry at God (Jonah 4:1-3)**
 - A. Jonah counted God's merciful act in saving Nineveh, as sin!
 - 1. Recall the historical evil of Assyria
 - 2. Jonah's reaction is similar to the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:25-30)
 - 3. Jonah's pity party (Jonah 4:2-3,5,8)
 - B. Had Jonah repented in the belly of the fish, or not?
 - 1. Jonah wasn't the first to experience something like this (1 Kings 19:4-5)
 - 2. And he wasn't the last to experience it either (Luke 7:20)
 - 3. Jonah's failure is a reminder to us of our *continual* need for the Gospel – and our *continual* need to repent and believe it!
 - a. are we new creations or not?
 - b. Jonah's no worse than you – he IS you!
 - 4. We sin like Jonah any time we get angry at God's providential activity in the affairs of men – He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy – and that needs to be ok!
 - C. Chapter 4 doesn't ruin the happy ending at all, but instead focuses our attention to where it should be directed – the mercy of God!

- III. **Jonah's passion provides a contrast to God's compassion (Jonah 4:2)**
 - A. The best teaching is done by contrast
 - B. Jonah prayed, and God answered – showing the relationship
 - C. Jonah had a correct understanding of God's nature
 - 1. Gracious
 - 2. Merciful or compassionate
 - 3. Slow to anger
 - 4. abounding in love
 - 5. relents to do harm
 - D. Why did Jonah despise these attributes of God?
 - E. How is it that we despise these attributes of God?

- IV. **God asks Jonah and us to evaluate our hearts (Jonah 4:4)**
 - A. Is it right for you to be angry at whatever circumstances are making you angry, when God has good intent in ordaining it?
 - B. Do you know your propensity to despise mercy?
 - C. As a church let us be charitable to other churches that differ in their expressions and practices ... *If Christ be preached...!*