
“God’s Extraordinary Patience”

Jonah 3:10, 4:1-11 ESV

¹⁰When 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.

4 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ²And 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. ³Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴And the LORD said, “Do you do well to be angry?”

⁵Jonah 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. ⁶Now 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. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. ⁸When 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.” ⁹But 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.” ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹And 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?”

1) God’s always looking to be merciful vs 3:10

“3:10When 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.”

God is still patient and merciful today...

³Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. ⁴They will say, “What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was

first created.” 5They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of His command, and He brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. 6 Then He used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood.

7And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed. 8But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. 9The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, He is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. (2 Peter 3:3-9 NLT)

2) God's people can know His character and still miss His purpose/passion vs 1-4

4:1But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. 2And 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. 3Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.' 4And the Lord said: Do you do well to be angry?

3) God's sovereign grace and mercy will expose our character (incl. pride/prejudices/presumptions) v5-10

5Jonah 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. 6Now 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. 7But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. 8When 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.' 9But 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. 10And 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.

4) God pities those who've never heard – May we be like Him. vs 11

11And 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?

Let's not be like a Jonah – Let's be like God and serve in our positions as ambassadors for Jesus...

14For the love of Christ compels us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15and He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised. 16From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the

flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard Him thus no longer. 17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Him-self, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 ESV