

Old Testament Survey

Jonah



When you just don't want to

Main Point

When God reveals Himself to us, He reveals ourselves to us



Recap

- ❑ **Jonah called to Nineveh**
- ❑ **Refuses to go**
- ❑ **Thrown from a ship into the sea**
- ❑ **Eventually goes to Nineveh**
- ❑ **Nineveh repents and God relents**



But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD, “Isn’t this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

Jonah 4: 1-2 NIV



Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”⁴ But the LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

Jonah 4: 3-4 NIV



God's Compassion / Jonah's Anger

- ❑ Jonah “knew” God would do this
- ❑ Jonah finds fault with God's attributes
 - ❑ Nineveh didn't deserve having these from God



PERSONAL PROBLEMS

EVENTS

**I'M
ANGRY!!!**

CANCELLED PLANS

MEMORIES

Our Anger

- ❑ Do you get upset when God is compassionate to the jerks in your life?
- ❑ Jesus came to forgive the jerks
- ❑ Jesus came to forgive us for our anger
- ❑ Forgiveness frees us from anger



Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant[a] and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant.

Jonah 4: 5-6 NIV



But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live." But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" "It is," he said. "And I'm so angry I wish I were dead."

Jonah 4: 7-9 NIV



God's Sovereignty / Jonah's Frustration

- ❑ Jonah wants to see what will happen to Nineveh
- ❑ God provides a plant
- ❑ God takes away the plant
- ❑ Jonah cannot figure out what God is doing



I'M
FRUSTRATED!!

THE FITTED SHEET



Our Frustration

- ❑ Is something God doing frustrating you?
- ❑ Trying to figure out God is trying to put the circle in the square hole
- ❑ Jesus taught people to follow not figure out
- ❑ Reveal yourself as a follower



But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?”

Jonah 4: 10-11 NIV



God's Love / Jonah's Selfishness

- ❑ Jonah was mad about the plant
- ❑ He had nothing to do with the plant
- ❑ God should care about all of Nineveh
- ❑ Jonah only thinks of himself



SELFISHNESS



Our Selfishness

- ❑ We can get caught in “what about me” mode
- ❑ Look at the interests of others first
- ❑ God’s love isn’t a resource we have to protect
- ❑ God’s love should reveal selflessness



Wrap Up

- ❑ God will reveal His compassion, sovereignty and love
- ❑ We can be free from our anger. Frustration, and selfishness
- ❑ Let God reveal you, and then help that grow your relationship with Him



Audio file

[Jonah 4 Audio.mp3](#)

Transcript

What says the most about me? I'm actually going to go with my car, my van drive a soccer dad van, the red one. I talk about my van a lot. I feel like it says a lot about me. Drive the minivan. I have to haul stuff. I have kids. So I think it does say something. About me, but many different things reveal different things about us. And yes, there are way more than the four up there. I would say other things should reveal more about us than that, but today we're going to kind of get at how we are revealed some things about us are revealed and it's going to happen. By God revealing who he is to Jonah based on God's actions. So God's going to reveal himself to Jonah. Kind of threw some things. That in turn is going to kind of give us a look at who Jonah is based on what God does. And we're going to kind of go at that too, because here's what I think we should look at when God reveals himself to us. He reveals ourselves to us, so when we see who God is and how God acts, that actually is going to reveal some stuff about us. And here's the thing with today, the initial things it reveals is not always great. It can be a little messy. It can be some things we don't want to know. For example, we're going to look at three things we're going to see frustration, we're going to see anger and we're going to see selfishness are some things we're going to look at today. We don't love those things, but if we're being honest, sometimes we get those feelings. And I don't bring these up to kind of like knock us down or make us feel bad or anything. I bring them up so that we can be honest about them. And then we. Can see how we can actually. Be free from them through what Jesus did, because what they do is they really hold us back, so we're going to finish up Jonah today. Jonah Chapter 4, our final week in Jonah. So if you haven't been with us, you need a quick recap. Let me catch you up real quick. We have our guy, Jonah. Jonah is a prophet. He was called by God in chapter one to go to a place called Ninevah. Ninevah, a not godly. City whatsoever. A lot of nasty things happening. God tells Jonah. Go there. Prophecy against this. Say I see the evil things Jonah's like. I'm not going to do that. So he runs the complete other direction on a ship. God's not happy. With this, not surprisingly so, he sends a nasty storm that's going to potentially sink the ship. The sailors throw Jonah overboard. Storm calm. God sends a big fish to swallow Jonah. This actually saves Jonah's life. The fish is there to save him. Well, in the fish, Jonah, praise is thankful to God for saving him right then. Last week, God calls Jonah again, now saying, hey, remember that thing you didn't do before? Go do it. So he does. He goes to Ninevah. He gives the prophecy against their evil ways, and ninova actually repents and turns from those evil ways. So God relents and doesn't bring the overthrow or destruction, and that is where we are now, and we're going to see how Jonah feels about all this. So we're going to be in Jo nah Chapter 4. We'll break it into three parts. We will look at the whole chapter. It'll be right up here. Otherwise, there's bibles at your tables that are bookmarked. If you would like to follow along in those, I'm going to start by reading. Chapter 4 verses one through 4 to get us started. It says this, but to Jonah this seemed very wrong and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord. Isn't this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are gracious and compassionate. You are gracious and compassionate. God, slow to anger and abounding in love. A God who relents from sending calamity. Now Lord take away my life, for it's better for me to die than to live. But the Lord with pride is it right for you. To be angry. So God reveals his. Compassion and in turn, this is

going to reveal Jonah's anger. Jonah gets angry, alright? God relents because Ninevah repented. God seeded his anger at the ninevites. They repented. Well, now Jonah's anger kind of spikes, Jonah says. This is why I. Didn't want to go in the 1st place. Now we know we talked about a little bit in chapter one like we don't yet know why John doesn't want to. He brings it right here. He says. God, I know. You're gracious, compassionate, loving, and you're not going to. You're going to not send this calamity, and this is actually a citation of Joel. Chapter 2, verse 13, which would have been very familiar to the hearers of the Book of Jonah. He's basically describing all these great attributes of God. He's like I knew you were, that I knew you were going to bring me anger. You've no follow through. It's almost like he's saying, God, these things make you weak. You can't be tough guy. I knew it. You said you destroyed Nova, but you just couldn't do it. You're too compassionate. This makes Jonah angry. Except here's the thing. All of these great attributes of God are what saved Jonah's life in Chapter 2, when Jonah swallowed by the fish got to. Compassion on Jonah? Right. He saved Jonah. So Jonah benefited from these things, but he didn't want Ninevah to have that same benefit. He made him angry. He resented God because he was giving it to Ninova 2. Jonah is a living miracle. Because of God's grace, he should be ecstatic about. Attributes of God. But he's not. And it's since he wants to just take him and say no, this is not who God should be to these people. So God just responds with a question, is it right for you to be angry? Jonah doesn't actually answer that, so think about for a second what makes you angry. There's probably a list for some of us. There's a bigger list than others, but some things make us all angry. I looked up a little bit from health line. They list some things that generally make people angry. Things like maybe a missed promotion or relational difficulties. Things other people caused, like a cancelled plan with somebody, makes people angry. Events in the life, a traffic accident was one. They listed bad memories might make you angry. There are a lot of different things that can make. Us angry, but what about? Somebody getting something that you just don't think they deserve, does that make you angry when God's compassionate to someone you don't think is worthy of compassion? Does that make you angry? Look at Jonah. God was compassionate to Ninevah. Jonah didn't think they deserve this compassion. So what about us? Did the jerks? The bullies, the Jaks, the Mean Girls, we could keep going. If we see God being compassionate to them, how does it make you? Feel are you all warm and fuzzy and be like, yeah, God's compassion to me, he's compassionate to this dude. That was a jerk to me my whole life. We might get a little bit angry, right? We want them sometimes. And I say this including myself, to get their own version of Ninevah to get being overthrown or destroyed because we don't think they deserve it. They deserve what's coming to them, but it doesn't happen because God is loving and compassionate towards us and to them. But what we do is almost create this version of God that we want our own agent of justice, our own like muscle guy. If you know any mob like mob shows or TV. The the big boss, right? He's always got the muscle guys around him, right? The guys in all black. And I always want to be the muscle guy. But I'm a little guy, so I don't ever get to do it, but that's just what I want to be the dark sunglasses. But we want like God to be our muscle in this and just to take care of it, right? Then we resent God when he doesn't. The issue is God's not being the God we created, but he's being the God he actually is because he does take care of it. He takes care of the situation, but in his own way he deals with the jerks in his way. Because he sent Jesus to forgive them for being jerks. He also sent Jesus to forgive us. For harboring anger towards them. See, they're forgiven for being jerks, just like I'm forgiven. If I'm ever a jerk. First Timothy 115 says here's a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst. This is Paul writing it Paul saying I'm a terrible Sinner. He forgave me, so he's going to forgive. See we sin and harbour. Anger and Jesus came to forgive us, just like he'll forgive anybody else that comes to him and repents and think about that

forgiveness as free. We can release the anger that we're holding towards somebody because that anger doesn't get us anywhere. If you think about a time you've been angry. Do you get tired after being angry? Cause being angry is exhausting. We can be free from that because of what Jesus did on the cross with forgiveness. So when God reveals his compassion for others, let it reveal if you're harboring any anger or any resentment. But then remember, you have freedom from that. And I'm not telling you to never get angry. You're going to get angry. I get angry. But just remember, we don't want it to control. Or dominate us. Be free from it, so let God's compassion. Reveal your freedom. Let's keep going. 4 versus 5 through 9. Let's look at. The next part. But Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade, and waited to see what would happen to the city. Then the Lord God provided A leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head and to ease his discomfort. And Jonah was very happy about the plant. But at dawn the next day, God provided a worm which chewed the plant so that it withered. When the sun rose, God provided A scorching E wind, and the sun blazed on, Jonah's head said. He grew faint. He wanted to die and said it would be better for. Me to die than to live. But God said to Jonah, is it right for you to be angry about the plant? It is, he said. And I'm so angry, I wish I were dead. We'll stop there. But God reveals here his sovereignty, which reveals Jonah's frustration. When I say sovereignty, I'm looking at kind of God being over and above and in control of everything. So what happens here is Jonah leaves the city of Ninevah. He's been there, he's proclaimed this prophecy and he kind of gets away from it out a way to kind of see what's going to happen. Maybe God will provide some sort of explanation, but he goes and he watches. Now he needs to be protect. Expected from the elements where he is, we're looking at cool night breezes, pretty hot sun during the day, so he kind of creates this creates this makeshift shelter. But then God also helps him out. God provides a big leafy plant. Think of Jack and the Beanstalk type of plant here, like the big like the fish. So God provides this to shade him and keep him protected. This is good. But then after he's got this, God says. This tiny, tiny little worm. This little worm that just kind of eats through the plant, so it Withers and the. Plant dies, so now the blazing sun comes up and this plant is gone and we're looking at temperatures of upwards of 110 degrees where Jonah is, and he's like this heat is unbearable. I just want to die. This is like me and the dead of summer. My wife loves it. Me and the. Heat. I'm like, ah, right. This is where Jonah's at. So God's like, OK. Should you be angry about that plant about the. Plant and Jonah with a desperate yes, I should be angry. You gave me something great, something comfortable. And then you took it away. And then he's like, man, God, that you you don't make any sense because you gave me this great plant that helped me and then took it away. You also with Ninevah, you promised to overthrow him and destroy him, but then you didn't do that either. He's like, I don't get it. Jonah is basically at the end of his rope, physically, mentally. Spiritually, he is just straight up frustrated. He's like God can provide and destroy, but he can't figure out how. What is God doing? So he's angry about what he lost, but he's frustrated because he just. Doesn't get it. Now we all get frustrated sometimes. Chris, can you grab me? I have a sheet over there. You throw that to me, please. Have things that frustrate us. I'm going to show you one of mine. I do the laundry. In the Woodhouse and the laundry guys, part of my job as the House husband this. Is the bane of my laundry existence. This is the fitted sheet. These do not fold. OK, they do not fold. They cover up the bed nicely, but they're impossible to fold. Well, I have watched YouTube videos. I've seen my wife do it and I don't get it. I kind of come like this and then. Right. And it goes like this and then? It just kind of that like that's what I. Do it's gotten to the. Point where I wash. It and I just put it right back. In the bed. So I don't have. To fold it, that's what. I do. It's so frustrating. We get frustrated. God is over and in control of everything, and we don't get it. We can get frustrated. Jonah is frustrated to the NTH degree here. He is angry. He

leaves the city. Things are going to get better with the plant. But I think it bad again because the plant dies. He's like God, what are you doing? Right, he's frustrated, not figuring it out. It's like me and the sheet I'm frustrated cause I can't get that thing folded and I should be able to. So think about being frustrated. Different things in life make us all frustrated. I would guess many of us I know for me, we don't make great decisions or act in great ways when we're super frustrated. So think about it is something God doing or showing you. Did you get your version of the plant right? Did you get something good, something helpful like a breakthrough? And then did a worm get it? It fell apart. And you're just, like, why? And you can't wrap your head around it. You just can't figure out. Or maybe you've watched something happening around you and you're just hoping at some point, God, you gonna make this make sense. You're gonna help me figure this out because it just doesn't seem like it's working, right. We want to understand and figure out, but we just can't do it. Trying to figure out God is like the kids toy when you put the circle in the square hole and it doesn't. You'll work at it. You'll put a lot into it. You might hit it. Really hard, but in the end it's just gonna get stuck and you're just gonna get frustrated. We can't figure God out because we're not God. We weren't created to figure him out. I've said before I am a big country music fan. There's a Chris Stapleton song called Broken Halos that has a lyric that says don't go looking for the reasons don't go asking Jesus why we're not meant to know the answers. They belong to the by and by. Don't go looking for it if you don't trust country music like I do, you can trust Jesus because he also teaches us to follow, not to figure that out. Figure out Jesus says it. Chris Stapleton says it all right. It's gotta be good, right? We're not supposed to figure out what God is going to do next or why he's doing what he's supposed to do. We're just supposed. To follow God in love, in truth, and in compassion follow God, not figure him out. Now we might naturally try to do this. I do it all the time. OK, this happened. God, why is it happening? We try to push that down and instead just follow. So when God reveals that sovereignty that he has that being over and in control of everything, let it reveal yourself as a follower. Not somebody that just gets frustrated. Let's finish up Jonah. His verses 10 through 11 here. It says this, but the Lord said you have been concerned about this plant that you didn't tend to it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight and should I not have concern for the Great city of Ninevah, in which there are more than 120,000 people who cannot tell their right hand from their left and also? So God reveals his love here, and actually I think reveals Jonah's selfishness is what I think. We see. God kind of gives a teaching lesson. Jonah is mad about the plant, right? It shows up miraculously one day and then it's gone overnight. Just just like. That Jonah had compassion for the plant. Jonah cared about the plant. Jonah is angry. When this plant died, it was selfish because it helped him. And he cared about it. God saying you didn't plant it. You didn't tend to it. You didn't water it. You didn't talk to it or all the other things. That will make you grow, but you're mad about it. So God saying. Shouldn't I then care about? Ninova there's 120,000 people there that are created in my image that I created that don't yet know me. That's what he's saying when he says, don't know their right from their left yet. That's they don't have this moral compass. They don't have God's conviction in them yet. So he's saying they don't know me yet, but they're still mine. They're made in my image. I should still love them. Jonah doesn't want that love for them. He only wants love for the things that help him. Selfish Jonah only sees God as in essence kind of loving Israel, which is God's chosen people at this time. But what God's saying is it's bigger than that. He loves Israel and he loves the world. Just like if we were thinking about it now. God doesn't just love our church. God loves the people outside of the church as well. Jonah lost sight of that and only thought about himself. This week, Joel and I went over to we have a neighbor that lives across the street, older woman that we sometimes we chat with and talked to. We went over and said hi, we asked what she was doing for the day and she said she was going to go play

play games at the Middleton Senior Center. And I said, oh, it reminds me of my grandma before she passed away. Who played a lot of dominoes and Scrabble. In the senior apartments and I remember 1 Christmas. We got my grandma, a new Scrabble dictionary for Christmas, and I think it just turned out to be probably like the best Christmas gift. We ever gave her. She played a lot of Scrabble and I said OK, grandma, you know, at the table when you're playing with your friends, you know, like, share the dictionary. She looks at me. Goodness, no, Jeffrey. This is mine. I was like, whoa, like my grandma is like this generous kind woman who would. To share everything but not her Scrabble dictionary. I don't know if they're playing for, like, big bucks around the old folks home or what was going on, but she's like, no, this is mine. I'm selfish with this. I don't share this. In the same way, if somebody else that that dictionary had it, she'd want it, but she would get it. Being selfish with that dictionary, God's love sometimes reveals our own selfishness. God reveals his love for all people. And sometimes that can make us think. What about me? We can get tempted to get into the what about me? Or where's my love mode? It's a trap that. We have to be. Aware of and I think it can. Happen a couple ways. It can be. We experience God's love and we're actively having it and. We just try to hold it. For ourselves, we don't want it to go anywhere else. Or we're not experiencing. We don't feel it and we see somebody else that has it and we think why don't I get that? It's gotta pull back. And I should have it. Philippians 2 three through 4 says this do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, rather in humility, value others above yourself, not looking at your own interests. But each of you to the interests of others. I think the idea is to look at the interests of others first. Because if we don't feel God's love for ourselves or we just try to hold it, that's when the selfishness kicks in. So start by looking out to others, not out for yourself, because see God's love isn't some scarce resource that we have to to conserve and just have her. It's gonna run out. No, it's it's never ending. It's always there. Right there is a lifetime supply. I've ever heard when people win contests and win lifetime supplies of things. I've heard of 1 where it's like cereal. They're like, well, yeah, I got, like, a box a month. Right. So like, they didn't really feel like a lifetime supply. God's love is so different because it is constantly there all the time. If there's one thing in our lives we don't have to be stingy or selfish with, it's God's love. We want that to share. So instead of being selfish when God reveals his love. God reveals that love, let's try to reveal selflessness. Let's try to be selfless with God's love. So whether we're ready or not, God is going to in ways reveal himself to us, and it's very possible that will reveal things to us about ourselves. So God's going to reveal at times his compassion, his sovereignty and his love. And that may reveal our own anger, our own frustration, our own selfishness. But we can be free from that. And that's kind of the point. It's natural to feel those things, but because of Jesus, because of forgiveness, because of what he's done, we can be free from all of that and just let it go and teach us to follow God. So like God revealing himself, reveal to you all those things that will help you. Grow in him. So allow God to reveal you to you. And then remember what Jesus has done? And let's be true followers of God. OK. Got to thank you for today. I got to thank you for this last part of Jonah. I got that you showed your character and who you are to Jonah. God, that you show that you are a compassionate God, that you're sovereign, you're over everything and you're in control and God also that you love and that you love everyone, that you do have love for. For your church gap, but for people outside too, that they're all created in your image, God and. That you love them. So I pray God that as we see those things in you. That would just be something as a reminder to us that if we're frustrated, if we're angry, if we're selfish, God to to remember, we can be free from those things that just hold us back from growing in you and sharing you with others. So, God, I pray that we would focus on following you, not trying to figure you out, not trying to just hold you for ourselves,

but following you and sharing you God. I pray you would help. Us all do that in. Your own way this week.
Praise in your name.