

## **A Study of Jonah 4**

*But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. <sup>2</sup>And 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. <sup>3</sup>Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.”<sup>4</sup>And the Lord said, “Do you do well to be angry?”<sup>5</sup>Jonah 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. <sup>6</sup>Now 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. <sup>7</sup>But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. <sup>8</sup>When 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.”<sup>9</sup>But 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.”<sup>10</sup>And 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. <sup>11</sup>And 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?”*

To get the full impact of chapter 4 to the original readers/hearers, we need to remind ourselves of their context. Assuming that their original audience was the mid-8<sup>th</sup> century Israelites, what have we learned about them through our study of the minor prophets?

With this in mind, what would these Israelites have found shocking in Jonah’s story?

How are Jonah’s beliefs similar to the beliefs of these Israelites?

This chapter is less about Jonah’s beliefs and more about his heart. What is revealed in

Verses 1-3

Verse 5

Verse 6

Verse 8-9 – Why is Jonah angry?

Verses 10-11

How can we summarize God's rebuke of Jonah?

Given the similarities, other than Jonah, who else is God's rebuke directed at and how might it have been received?

When we think about this story today, what are some of the major points that connect with our context – whether it be personal, our church, or modern Christianity in Hawaii, America, or around the world?

This is another example of an important connection made throughout Scripture. Read Matthew 22:34-40. What is this connection?

How does this connection help us see the evidence of a repentant heart?

Most Christians can immediately see how a greater love for humanity that does not come from a growing love for God is not the gospel of grace. However, many cannot see how the inverse is true. How does a growing love for God without a growing love for others lead away from or weakens a right understanding of the gospel of grace?

How does this relationship between love for God and love for others show the importance of the church – especially with regards to discipleship and true Christian fellowship?