



Ugly (Jonah 4:1-11)

Polar Opposites

“But *it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. So he **prayed** to the Lord, and said, **“Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that *You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.* Therefore now, O Lord, **please take my life** from me, for it is **better for me to die than to live!**”** Then the Lord said, **“Is it right for you to be angry?”** So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, **till he might see what would become of the city.** And the Lord **God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah,** that it might be shade for his head **to deliver him from his misery.** So Jonah was **very grateful for the plant.** But as morning dawned the next day **God prepared a worm,** and it so damaged the plant that it withered. And it happened, when the sun arose, that **God prepared a vehement east wind;** and the sun beat on Jonah’s

head, so that he grew faint. **Then he wished death for himself**, and said, **“It is better for me to die than to live.”** Then God said to Jonah, **“Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?”** And he said, **“It is right for me to be angry, even to death!”** But the Lord said, **“You have had pity on the plant** for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And **should I not pity Nineveh**, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who **cannot discern between their right hand and their left**—and much livestock?”” Jonah 4:1-11 NKJV

Jonah 4:1-11

☑ ***“But *it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.”***

Jonah 4:1 NKJV

☑ **What is “it” that displeased Jonah?**

☑ **{it} “Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and **God relented** from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.” Jonah 3:10 NKJV*

☑ Ugly! It is hard to believe that after everything Jonah experienced that this is what is still in his heart!

☑ **Recap**

- ☑️ Jonah was called by God and he ran in the opposite direction.
 - ☑️ Jonah was exposed by God and he jumped in the ocean.
 - ☑️ Jonah was saved by God from perishing and he complained about his circumstances.
 - ☑️ Jonah was delivered into his destiny by God and he just witnessed a miracle!
 - ☑️ And Jonah's reaction to this is that he... became angry.
 - ☑️ Don't you just want to incinerate Jonah with a bolt of lightning? Jonah is lucky I'm not God!
- ☑️ *"So he **prayed** to the Lord, and said, "Ah, Lord, **was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. Therefore now, O Lord, **please take my life** from me, for it is **better for me to die than to live!**"***" Jonah 4:2-3 NKJV
- ☑️ **Now we find out exactly what Jonah was thinking**
 - ☑️ This is what we read in Jonah's running account... *"Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me."*

But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.” Jonah 1:1-3 NKJV

- ☑ We only witness Jonah’s action: we don’t quite know his exact sentiments at the time he bolts in the other direction.
- ☑ Even when he is exposed on the boat, all we see is that he admits it’s his fault, but we still don’t know exactly WHY he ran!
- ☑ *“And he said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. **For I know that this great tempest is because of me.**””*
Jonah 1:12 NKJV

☑ **But now we know...**

- ☑ Jonah ran away because HE KNEW that Yahweh would forgive the Ninevites and Jonah would rather God NOT!
- ☑ *“for **I know** that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, **One who relents from doing harm.**”*
- ☑ **Jonah’s heart is so UGLY that he’d rather be dead than see the Ninevites forgiven!**

- “O Lord, **please take my life** from me, for it is **better for me to die than to live!**”

- “Then the Lord said, **“Is it right for you to be angry?”**” Jonah 4:4 NKJV

- Try to wrap your mind around this...**
- Jonah somehow feels that he has the right to feel angry that God would dare to forgive a repentant people.
- It’s absurd to imagine, but this is how the prophet of the Lord responds.

- This reminds me about how Paul handled the Jacob Esau controversy...** “As it is written, “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.” Romans 9:13
- “What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.” ... Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?” But indeed, **O man, who are you to reply against God?** Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, “Why have you made me like this?” Does not the potter have power

over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? What if God, wanting to show His wrath and **to make His power known**, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, *and that He might **make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy**, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?* As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved.""
Romans 9:14-25 NKJV

☑ *"So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, **till he might see what would become of the city.**"*
Jonah 4:5 NKJV

☑ **Jonah still has high hopes that God will smite Nineveh**

☑ He settles in under the shade; gets out his popcorn and binoculars, and waits for the fire and brimstone to incinerate these pagans.

☑ The problems is that... NOTHING HAPPENS!

☑ Why? Because they had REPENTED!

- ☑ *“So the people of Nineveh **believed God**, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. ...But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, **let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.**”* Jonah 3:5, 8 NKJV

- ☑ *“And the Lord **God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah**, that it might be shade for his head **to deliver him from his misery**. So Jonah was **very grateful for the plant.**”*
Jonah 4:6 NKJV
- ☑ **So God allows Jonah to settle in...**
 - ☑ Get comfortable Jonah; enjoy the shade. The scorching sun would otherwise be miserable if I had not provided the covering of this plant to shield you.
 - ☑ And of course, Jonah is very grateful for the provision of a merciful God.
 - ☑ By the way, this is the same, merciful God that rescued Jonah from the ocean, even in the midst of his rebellion

- ☑ *“But as morning dawned the next day **God prepared a worm**, and it so **damaged the plant** that it withered.”* Jonah 4:7 NKJV
- ☑ **God’s covering will not last forever, if...**

- ☑ God removes the plant.
 - ☑ Why? He's looking for a heart change in Jonah.
 - ☑ "Jonah I covered you yet again when you did not deserve it. If you recognize My nature, wouldn't it be right for me to extend the same mercy to others?"

- ☑ *"And it happened, when the sun arose, that **God prepared a vehement east wind**; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. **Then he wished death for himself**, and said, ***"It is better for me to die than to live."***"* Jonah 4:8 NKJV
- ☑ **Out of the frying pan and into the fire...**
 - ☑ Now That God's covering is removed, and the heat is turned up, do you recognize the OBVIOUS difference?
 - ☑ Jonah feels so miserable that he would rather be dead.
 - ☑ You would think, at this point Jonah, would realize the important life lesson.
 - ☑ God provides where you don't deserve it and you should realize that is precisely how he wants to deal with others.

- ☑ *"Then God said to Jonah, ***"Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?"*** And he said, ***"It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"***"* Jonah 4:9 NKJV
- ☑ **The Magic Question...**

- ☑ Okay Jonah, now that you have experienced, yet again, the covering of a merciful God, when you simply do not deserve it, are you still angry?
- ☑ **YES!**
- ☑ I am so angry that I'd rather be dead than relent!
- ☑ **Let's recap Jonah's story yet again!**
- ☑ I know I was called by God and I ran in the opposite direction.
- ☑ I know I was exposed by God and I jumped in the ocean.
- ☑ I know I was saved by God from perishing and I complained about my circumstances anyway.
- ☑ I know I was delivered into my destiny by God and I just witnessed a miracle!
- ☑ And I know my reaction to this, becoming angry, is utterly absurd.
- ☑ But, my heart is SO UGLY that I just want God to incinerate these people even though God did not incinerate me when I deserved it!
- ☑ **Jonah... let Me remind you how you were treated...**
- ☑ "Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly. And he said: **"I cried out** to the Lord because of my affliction, And **He answered me.** "Out of the belly of

Sheol **I cried, And You heard my voice.**" Jonah 2:1-2
NKJV

- ☑ You cried out and God answered; You cried out and God heard your voice.
- ☑ And yet, when the Ninevites believed God and repented from their evil ways and violence, you STILL want God to destroy them!
- ☑ **And yet Jonah, this is how you treated others...**
- ☑ Read the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21-35)
- ☑ **Step-by-Step Explanation**
- ☑ Peter inquires about how forgiveness works. Is there a limit to the magnitude of offense that can be forgiven and how often? NO!
- ☑ Y'shua gives us an extreme allegory to demonstrate how forgiveness works!
- ☑ **The king has debts to settle with his servants...**
- ☑ One servant owes him ten thousand talents (an insurmountable, essentially permanent debt)!
- ☑ He obviously has no way to pay, so he is about to be sold into slavery with his entire family.
- ☑ He begs his master to have patience, to give him time to pay (which is also obviously ridiculous).

- ☑ But, his master is moved with compassion and forgives the entire debt.
- ☑ **But, then that same forgiven servant goes out and approaches a brother who owes him one hundred denarii.**
- ☑ He threatens him with physical violence and demands immediate payment.
- ☑ Just as he himself had done earlier, his brother begs him for patience—to give him time to pay (something that would actually be possible).
- ☑ But, unlike his compassionate master, he would not offer the same forgiveness to his brother.
- ☑ **When others notice the inequity, they notify their master.**
- ☑ The master calls in the man who had been forgiven what equates to 2600 lifetimes worth of debt and rebukes him!
- ☑ You wicked man; I forgave you an insurmountable debt and you could not show any pity for someone who owed you pennies in comparison?
- ☑ Jonah, “Does this sound familiar?”
- ☑ For such an atrocity I am reversing my forgiveness; your debt is reinstated and you will be punished daily until you pay every last cent (a sentence of permanent torture).

- ☑️ Jonah, “Would you like to be treated this way?”
- ☑️ Lesson: If you do not forgive your brother, My Father will not forgive you. (Matthew 6:12-15)
- ☑️ See [Legal Matters](#): for all the details of how to calculate the insurmountable debt! And you will see just how Ugly Jonah’s heart truly is!
- ☑️ **Why does God care so much about Nineveh?**
 - ☑️ The Parable of the Lost Sheep: the ones furthest from God are His greatest priority.
 - ☑️ Y’shua chases down the lost...
 - ☑️ Read the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18:10-14)
 - ☑️ Y’shua is most concerned for those who are wrestling, doubting and struggling.
 - ☑️ *“And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, **“How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?”** When Jesus heard it, He said to them, **“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. *I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*”**”*
Mark 2:16-17 NKJV

☑ *“But the Lord said, **“You have had pity on the plant** for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And **should I not pity Nineveh**, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who **cannot discern between their right hand and their left**—and much livestock?””* Jonah 4:10-11 NKJV

☑ **Ugly**

☑ You have more pity on a plant than on 120,000 human souls that are in desperate need of God’s love and forgiveness.

☑ **First Century Jonah-like Hypocrisy**

☑ “Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, **“Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”**—that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, “What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? **Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep?** Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the

Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.” Matthew 12:9-14 NKJV

☑ **The Correct way of thinking!!!**

☑ “Finally, all of you be of one mind, **having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.** For “He who **would love life** And see good days, **Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.** For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” I Peter 3:8-12 NKJV [from Psalms 34:12-16)

☑ And let’s take Peter’s reference to David a step further...

☑ “*The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles. **The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.***” Psalms 34:17-18 NKJV

☑ A contrite spirit...

☑ “*So the people of Nineveh **believed God**, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least*

*of them. ...But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, **let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.***” Jonah 3:5, 8 NKJV

☑ Peter continues...

☑ “**And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?** But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed. “And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.” But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, **that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.** For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.” I Peter 3:13-17 NKJV

☑ **Judgment for Ugly Hearts**

☑ The Ninevites...

☑ “*And we know that **all things work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*” Romans 8:28 NKJV

☑ The Hypocrites...

- ☑ ***“The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.”*** Matthew 12:41 NKJV

NEXT TEACHING

In Him in You (Colossians 1:1-24)