

Jonah Chapter 4 Jubilee In Heaven

Jon 4:1 ¶ "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. 2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore, I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. 3 Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. 4 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?"

Obviously, Jonah preached the message "**Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.**" We believe that Jonah was angry for two reasons: his hatred for the Ninevites and fearing to be called a false prophet. Jonah sees and hears the whole city sitting in ashes and sackcloth, repenting, and turning from their evil ways, and Jonah becomes very angry. He prayed to God and said, was not this what I said to you before I fled to Tarshish? We learn here: Jonah had already made his argument to God for not going to Nineveh, and his reason for fleeing to Tarshish. Jonah says I fled to Tarshish, because I knew that you were a merciful and gracious God, and if the people of Nineveh repented and turned to thee, you would not destroy the city.

Aren't we all glad that our Saviour bears no hatred for us as sinners, as seen in **Eph 2:4-7; 4 ¶ "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.**" Jesus also had a desire to be completely obedient to God the Father.

Jonah request that God let him die, rather than be thought of as a false prophet. God's reply is, "**Doest thou well to be angry?**" This is God's way of saying to Jonah: why do you not rejoice in the salvation of these people? What Minister of the Gospel would become angry with God, when God brings a sinner to repentance and into the New Testament Church? That would be heresy, and it would defame the name and power of God if they acted as Jonah is right now. It would demonstrate that they are in the darkness as seen in, **1Jo 2:9-11; 9 "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."** Also, they would have failed to fulfill the new commandment Jesus gave in, **Joh 13:34 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."** As we consider these truths, we see that Jonah is blinded with darkness right now.

This is a great warning to the New Testament Church. The church should be very careful in who they ordain as ministers, deacons, and in the pastors they choose. The church is looking for men who show the attributes of Jesus Christ. Men who love both friends and enemies but hate sin in either.

5 ¶ "So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. 6 And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So, Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. 7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. 8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live."

Jonah leaves the city and goes east, which is even further from his home. He builds a booth to rest in while he waits, to see if God will indeed destroy the city Nineveh. Jonah knows that the whole city is repenting and praying to God for mercy. Jonah's booth would have to be open on the west side for him to see the city, and we understand that his booth will not protect him from the burning evening sun. God, in his bowels of mercy and wisdom, prepared a gourd to come up and shade Jonah from this evening sun. Jonah was very glad for the gourd that miraculously grew up overnight and provided him with evening shade. God also prepared a worm which smote the gourd the next morning that it died and did not provide any shade to Jonah. God also prepared a vehement east wind, and the sun was very hot upon his head, insomuch that he fainted, and wished that he could die.

This a good example of when we get out of the will of God, and we delight in the affections of the flesh nature, God will execute some judicial judgment upon us to bring us back to him, and bring us to an understanding of God's way of salvation, and that God saves whom he will, whether we like it or not.

9 "And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. 10 Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: 11 And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

God questions Jonah of his anger because of the gourd dying. Jonah, who has not yet got the lesson, replies that he does well to be angry. God tells Jonah: you had pity for the gourd, and yet you are angry because I have saved the Ninevites through your preaching. A city wherein are twelve thousand souls that cannot discern between their right and left hands. We trust that God uses the gourd to remove the darkness from Jonah's heart and gives him a right understanding.

We can learn from Jonah's actions, how we ought not to act toward God and our fellow man. We can see why Jesus gave the New Commandment. We are very glad that in Jesus is no darkness at all. We are glad that Jesus willingly completed the Father's will. We understand that God has always had a plan of salvation for all his people, and even disobedient man cannot keep that from coming to pass. Wherefore, we give praise and thanks to our Saviour and King, Christ Jesus, who was a willing and obedient servant to God the Father, even unto death. This same Jesus set an example for us to follow. We thank God, for the prophetic picture of the age of salvation by grace coming to the Gentile people in this book of Jonah. Thank you, King Jesus. Amen!

Now, let's remember some of the miraculous things God did in the book of Jonah:

- God sent a prophet of Israel to preach the word of God to a Gentile city of its great wickedness.
- Jonah refused to do God's bidding and gets on a ship to Tarshish, going the opposite direction God sent him in, and God causes a great tempest to come upon the ship.
- God uses the tempest to bring salvation to the boat load of Gentile sailors.
- God prepares a great fish to be Jonah's tomb.
- God has the fish in the right place, at the right time, to swallow Jonah when he is cast into the sea.
- God causes the sea to become calm and receives sacrifice and vows from the newborn sailors.
- God leaves Jonah in the tomb of the fish's belly three days and three nights, to be a prophetic sign of what would happen to Jesus when he came to earth.
- God resurrects Jonah in his tomb in the fish's belly, and Jonah declares to God he will do his bidding, and God tells the fish to vomit Jonah out on dry ground.
- Jonah, having his heart humbled, does the bidding of God and preaches the word of God to Nineveh.
- God sends the Holy Ghost to the Ninevites, and the preaching of Jonah is heard and adhered to, and God gives the Ninevites repentant hearts and turns them to himself.
- God saves the whole city of Nineveh.
- God causes a gourd to grow to maturity in one night, to bring comfort to Jonah.
- God causes the gourd to die in one night.
- God uses the life and death of the gourd, to get Jonah to understand what he has done in saving the Ninevites.
- God gives us the prophetic picture of the coming of Jesus and the work of salvation that he will perform. Surely, we should give praise and glory to such a miracle working God.

We are told in **Lu 15:7** "***I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.***" When the whole city of Nineveh repented, just imagine what a jubilee of joy was heard in heaven. But this is no jubilee of joy to be compared to the one that is coming with the return of King Jesus to gather all of God's people to their eternal home. Hallelujah! Amen!