

063024

Under the Plant

Jonah 4:1-11

Eugene Kwon



Background

The people of Nineveh's repentance at Jonah's preaching was both immediate and complete -- even their *animals* were humbled in sackcloth! Mission accomplished! What a happy ending, right? Well, not for everyone; *someone* wasn't very happy at all! And expressing his unhappiness is arguably the most important event in the whole story. Join us this Sunday as we listen in on the climactic conversation between Jonah and God in our final sermon from the Book of Jonah!

Sermon Text: *Jonah 4:1-11 (NASB)*

1 But it greatly displeased Jonah, and he became angry. 2 Then he prayed to the LORD and said, "Please LORD, was this not what I said when I was still in my own country? Therefore in anticipation of this I fled to Tarshish, since I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in mercy, and One who relents of disaster. 3 "So now, LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life." 4 But the LORD said, "Do you have a good reason to be angry?"

5 Then Jonah left the city and sat down east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade, until he could see what would happen in the city. 6 So the LORD God designated a plant, and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head, to relieve him of his discomfort. And Jonah was overjoyed about the plant. 7 But God designated a worm when dawn came the next day, and it attacked the plant and it withered. 8 And when the sun came up God designated a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint, and he begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life!"

9 But God said to Jonah, "Do you have a good reason to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "I have good reason to be angry, even to the point of death!" 10 Then the LORD said, "You had compassion on the plant, for which you did not work and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. 11 "Should I not also have compassion on

Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 people, who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left, as well as many animals?"

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sunday questions

- a. After 4 weeks in Jonah, what was your highlight(s) from this study?
- b. How do you respond to God's unbelievable patience with Jonah in this book? Paul also makes a point of God's patience in the beginning of Romans. Compare God's patience with your own patience. Share your thoughts.
- c. Eugene said that how an author ends a story suggests what they want a main takeaway from the story to be. Jonah's story ends in the "middle" of a conversation suggesting that a main takeaway is that God wants to have a conversation with us. How do you respond to this truth? Was it a surprise for you?
- d. God loves us so much, He welcomes our honesty in conversation, like the Psalmist, like Job and like Jesus in the Garden. What specific conversation items would you like to share honestly with Him today?
- e. Spend this week reflecting on God's love for you. An idea is to consistently recite the famous line from the Psalms:
The Lord is good and his steadfast love endures forever (Ps 100:5; 136:1-26, etc).