

Jonah: The Reluctant Prophet - 21

Introduction: We finished two weeks ago with Jonah sitting in a booth. He left the city and sat on the east side of the city, waiting to see what would become of Nineveh.

Text: Jonah 4:1-11

Two weeks ago, we looked at:

B. Jonah's Condition v1-9

1. His Words v2,3,5,9
2. His Actions v1-4, 5-6

But now we begin with **verse 5** and see Jonah sitting under a booth. The book of Jonah closes with several object lessons given to Jonah by the Lord.

Let's read starting in **verses 6-11**.

C. Jonah's _____ v4-11

1. The Questions v4,9
2. The Object Lessons v5,6-10
3. The Conclusion v10,11

This morning, I want you to realize that **God is always teaching His people**. God is teaching you this morning. God is teaching me this morning. Is it necessary? I pray you would agree with me that it is.

The Bible tells us in **Romans 8:29** speaking about Christians, *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."* The verse prior declares, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* **Romans 8:28**

What is 'the good' that God is working on in your life?

My friend, God is conforming us to the image of His dear Son which is the most blessed thing! The Bible clearly makes us distinction for you and me, that as His

children that we are being conformed to the image of His Son and we are to resist being conformed to the image of this world.

*“And **be not conformed to this world**: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

Romans 12:2

God is revealing truth to Jonah. He is helping Jonah to see clearly. God is helping Jonah to see Himself and this world as he truly is. **I would to God that every Christian fully understand their purpose this morning.** Just as God is teaching Jonah in this passage we would understand this morning, that this lesson is for us.

As we look at these verses, we can't help but notice the verb '**prepared**'.

The Lord God commanded that the gourd should sprout and come up over Jonah. **v6**

The Lord commanded that the worm should smite the gourd. **v7**

The Lord commanded that the vehement wind should come from the east. **v8**

The Lord commanded the Sun to shine. **v8**

He assigned the gourd to this purpose.

The Bible says concerning His creation, **Romans 1:20** *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:”*

Psalm 19:1 *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”*

God's assignment to this gourd is to overshadow Jonah. God in conjunction with these object lessons asks three questions.

One of those questions is found in our concluding statement in **verses 10 and 11**.

1. The _____ v4,9 (11)

The questions are thus:

- *Doest thou well to be angry?* **v4**

- *Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?* **v9**

- And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle? v11

We see not only these questions but also the object lessons.

2. The _____ Lessons v5,6-10

Please do not miss this, the Bible points out to us that God caused the gourd to come up to *“deliver him from his grief...” (vs 6)*.

This is the real-time display of **Romans 8:28** in the life of Jonah. God is working in our lives to deliver us from the dredges of wicked living. We understand as a Christian that we are eternally secure because of the Lord Jesus Christ. We possess eternal life at the moment of Salvation.

John 3:36 *“36 He that believeth on the Son **hath everlasting life**: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”*

But at this moment, Jonah is living in the filth of sin. ‘His feet need to be washed.’ So, He begins by causing a gourd to come up over Jonah’s head.

God’s ways are perfect. (You and I would never have come up with this plan to deliver Jonah from this evil. Further, we never could have executed a plan such as this to deliver Jonah from this evil.)

That alone should teach us that we are in dire need of God to work in our lives. This gourd was not the end of the story. The gourd is just one step in God’s teaching process for Jonah.

We might rightly ask the question this morning, what is God teaching you today?

Jonah like you and I would be *“exceeding glad of the gourd.”* Jonah rejoiced with great joy!

Why do think Jonah was glad for the gourd?

Jonah could see the benefit to Himself in this gourd. He was “*exceeding glad of the gourd...*”(v6) but he was “*displeased ... exceedingly....*” (v1) concerning God sparing Nineveh.

Ezekiel 18:29-30, “*Yet saith the house of Israel, **The way of the Lord is not equal.** O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? **are not your ways unequal?** Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.*”

John Butler said this to illustrate this point, “*He was overjoyed to have some relief for his physical body from the hot burning sun; but he had no joy, only anger, when souls were given relief from the burning heat of Divine wrath.*”

Secondly, we ought to understand that this gourd was a product of God’s commandment. If Jonah thanked God, we are not told.

Read **Luke 17:11-19**

*“And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. **And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.** And Jesus answering said, **Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?** There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.”*

Here we see ten lepers separated from the rest of civilization. v12 “*...they stood afar off...*” They were outcasts. They were inflicted with a terrible disease. And as they see the Lord Jesus Christ, they petition Him. They cry out and say, “*Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.*” And the Lord granted deliverance. He required them to act in faith. He instructed them to “*shew themselves unto the priests.*” The Bible says, “*As they went, they were cleansed.*” But the shocking punchline is given to us in **verse 15**, the Bible says, “*And one of them...*” “*...when he saw then he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.*” And Lord Jesus Christ answering said, “*Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*”

This attitude of **thankfulness for the blessings of God, but not thankful to God** for the blessings is evident in the other nine lepers.

What's the lesson? The lesson is:

1. God's design is to work in our lives to conform us to image of His dear Son.
---What is God doing in my life today?
2. You and I like Jonah need the revealing work of God in our lives.
3. In our carnality, our ways our not equal. Our judgment is skewed.
Consequently, like Jonah what we value and prize is often skewed.
4. It is a blessed truth that God loves me and speaks to me through His Word.
5. We have much that we fail to thank God for. Are we just thankful for the blessings or for the God who blesses us?