

# Jonah

---

Week 5 - A Bitter Heart | Un Corazon Amargo

**Text:** Jonah 4:1-4

## Introduction

Before we jump into Today's topic, let's quickly recap.

- Jonah was a prophet, a messenger of God. **His mission?** God called Jonah to preach to Nineveh, a major city of the Assyrian Empire, Israel's greatest enemy. Assyrians were brutal, beyond our understanding. These people were crazy. In other words, to speak God's truth, even when it was uncomfortable.
- **Jonah's initial response?** He ran in the opposite direction. Instead of heading to Nineveh, he hopped on a ship toward Tarshish, as far away as possible from God's plan. But Jonah quickly learns that running from God never works out. A big storm struck, and the sailors threw Jonah overboard to save themselves. God, in His mercy, provided a big fish to swallow him. After 3 days and nights, Johan cried out to the Lord and repented. The fish spit Jonah onto dry land, and he finally went to Nineveh.

- Jonah preached to the Ninevites about the judgment, and immediately, Nineveh responded and repented of their sins. The king called for a city-wide fast, and Nineveh turned away from their wickedness. Because of their genuine repentance, God withheld judgment and showed mercy.

This brings us to Chapter 4. Our brother Jonah, instead of celebrating God's compassion and mercy, gets really angry at God—not because God did anything wrong, but because Jonah is dealing with a deeper issue.

### **1. Align your heart / Alinea tu Corazón.**

**But it displeased Jonah exceedingly,<sup>[a]</sup> 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.”**

**A Jonás no le gustó nada que Dios salvara la ciudad y se enfureció. <sup>2</sup> Entonces**

**oró al SEÑOR y le dijo:**

**—SEÑOR, ¿No fue esto lo que yo decía cuando estaba en mi propio país? Fue por eso que al principio intenté huir hacia Tarsis. Sabía que eres un Dios**

bueno, que muestras gran compasión, no te enojas con facilidad, estás lleno de amor y estás dispuesto a cambiar tus planes de castigo. <sup>3</sup> Ahora SEÑOR, te ruego que me quites la vida, pues prefiero morir a tener que vivir así.

### Jonah 4:1-3

To truly grasp why Jonah made this prayer and struggles so much with God's compassion towards Nineveh, we must take a closer look at what is happening in Jonah's heart and mind.

We remembered that Jonah obeyed God in chapter 3 and finally preached to the Ninevites, but it wasn't genuine obedience. Reluctantly, he preached, and people were saved but the problem with Reluctant obedience is that it can create somethings in your heart that goes against God.

This was not random anger; it came from a more profound struggle in Jonah's heart called **self-righteousness**.

**Self-righteousness** is when you believe you are morally superior to others because of your own goodness, behavior, or religious practices.

**I am better because of what I do, how I live, or how I act compared to someone else.**

As soon as you hear this definition you think “**Nah, I am not like that**”

It doesn't happen overnight. It's something subtle, creeping slowly into our hearts.

Usually, it is a combination of experiences that overrides our God-given identity.

**This experience creates a new narrative in our mind that harms our hearts...**

"They are wrong. I'm right." "They don't deserve grace or forgiveness." "Look at how good I am compared to them." "At least I come to church; they don't." "At least I pray in the morning; they don't." "At least I served once a month.; they don't"

We become entitled to God's mercy and begin to believe that we are the ones in control; we decide who deserves forgiveness. Pride creeps in, and now we think we are better than our enemies.

And that is the key aspect here! We are talking about enemies. We can find more than 20 times in the Bible addressing our love for our enemies.

**But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.**

**Pero a ustedes que me escuchan les digo: Amen a sus enemigos,  
hagan bien a quienes los odian, <sup>28</sup> bendigan a quienes los maldicen y  
oren por quienes los maltratan**

**Luke 6:27-28**

It's easy to show love to strangers and easy to show love to those who have done nothing wrong. But the enemies...

The thing is, we have so much evidence against our enemies! And because our self-righteousness is in control of our hearts, we can justify our disobedience.

The same way that Jonah thought that he was justified and doing the right thing because Nineveh was evil! **That is the same way that we act sometimes.**

---

As you know, I am at school, and currently, I am taking a class that teaches how an individual relates to others, especially in close relationships. **As you know, we have been created for relationships.** I have learned something called Attachment theory. This theory suggests that in our experiences with our caregivers, we can develop secure or insecure attachments. Secure attachment is based on love and trust, and insecure attachment is based on fear and insecurity.

With **Secure attachment**, I feel secure since I trust my caregiver to go and explore the world because I know it's safe to come back. I can go back home because it is secure.

With **insecure attachment**, I am afraid to leave because if I go, I don't think I will be welcome back or even received by my caregiver because I am insecure.

**Understanding this human dynamic, can I suggest today that Jonah's self-righteousness wasn't just anger; I believe it was also rooted in fear.**

I wonder what it meant for Jonah to serve a God who shows radical grace to the Ninevites, the enemy of Israel. This enemy constantly shows violence and cruelty, torturing, enslaving, and brutally killing Israelis.

- If God forgives people as wicked as the Ninevites, what does that say about my own belief and sense of justice?
- If God forgives the wicked freely, how can I trust that justice will be done for me?
- If God forgives the people that is torturing me, how can I trust that God will protect me?

Jonah is angry with God, and he is so insecure and afraid, so afraid that he says this statement.

**Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.**

**Ahora SEÑOR, te ruego que me quites la vida, pues prefiero morir a tener  
que vivir así.**

**Jonah 4:3**

**In other words, If you don't do what I want, I rather die....**

**What is your Nineveh?**

I wonder what it means to you to serve a God that shows mercy to your Nineveh?  
that person who hurt you? That person who marked you? That person that lied to  
you? That person that abandoned you? That person that used you?

I wonder what it means to you to serve a God that...

**And this is what happens when our heart is not right!!** If your heart is full of  
anger, prejudice, pride, and self-righteousness, you forget where it took you from;  
you forget that one day, you were lost and dead in your sin; you forget God's  
miracle in your life, and you forget God's mission. If you forget God's mission,  
which, at the end of the day, is our mission, your calling won't matter, your gift  
won't matter, and your purpose won't matter. If you forget your mission, your  
heart will get **bitter!** The Good News..

**God's mission is still in place whether you agree with Him or not**

I recognize that LOVE LIKE THIS IS HARD!

**What would it look like to see our enemies from a heart allying with God?**

What would it look like to see my dad, who abandoned me when I was 13 years old, who did not care for me, and only calls me when he needs me, and now that I am old and I made without him, I need to honor him? What would it look like to be sent to preach salvation to that person? Preach love to that person?

**It is easy to justify ourselves and think it is ok, but it is not!**

## **2. Take Heart / Animate**

After saying take my life, God responds in a beautiful way.

**And the Lord said, “Do you do well to be angry?”**

**El Señor le respondió: ¿Te parece bien enojarte por esto?**

**Jonah 4:4**

What this question is really saying...

- “Jonah, stop and think –does your anger make sense given my mercy and compassion towards you?”
- “Jonah, whose standards of justice and mercy are you following – yours or mine?”
- “Jonah, your anger is pointing to something deeper that needs healing.”



- “Jonah, I care about your heart. I don’t just want your sacrifice – I want your obedience.”

**Church!** God is not dismissing Jonah’s feelings; God is not dismissing your feelings. They are real; it hurts; what those people did to you was wrong! What that person did to you was not right!

God is taking this opportunity to get closer to you and bring you to another level of discipleship where we fully understand that God’s mission is higher than us!

God is taking this opportunity to remind you..

**...In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”**

**... Aquí en el mundo tendrán muchas pruebas y tristezas; pero ánímense,  
porque yo he vencido al mundo**

**John 16:33**

**Church, TAKE HEART!** The way that God is asking us to Love is not easy; the direction that God is sending us is not easy,

## Conclusion

God has sent us to reach the 1. Maybe that 1 is that person you hate that you don't want to talk to or see, or perhaps you don't even pray for that person because you think he is too far from God. Is too evil to be saved!

I am here to remind us that God's mission is for all people, even those we struggle to love.

We are about to begin evangelistic training next Wednesday, and today, God is inviting you to align your heart with His heart so you can accomplish your calling to...

**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**

**Ve a todo elm undo y predica el evangelio a toda creatura.**

**Matthew 28:19-20**

**Church, TAKE HEART!** I believe some bitterness or anger is holding you back...

Today is the day to surrender these to God. Today is the day for God to fill you with His love—His sacrificial love and transform how you walk, talk, see, think, and pray. To transform every aspect of your life so you can be a living scarify to His Glory.

**“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”**

**Abandonen toda amargura, ira y enojo, gritos y calumnias y toda forma de malicia. <sup>32</sup> Más bien, sean bondadosos y compasivos unos con otros y perdónense mutuamente, así como Dios los perdonó a ustedes en Cristo.**

**Ephesians 4:31-32**

**Church, TAKE HEART!**

**“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”**

**Por lo tanto, como pueblo escogido de Dios, santo y amado, revístanse de afecto entrañable y de bondad, humildad, amabilidad y paciencia, <sup>13</sup> de modo que se toleren unos a otros y se perdonen si alguno tiene queja contra otro. Así como el Señor los perdonó, perdonen también ustedes.**

**Colossians 3:12-13**

## **Church, TAKE HEART!**

**“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”**

**Les daré un nuevo corazón y derramaré un espíritu nuevo entre ustedes;  
quitaré ese corazón de piedra que ahora tienen y les pondré un corazón de  
carne.**

**Ezekiel 36:26**