

WHEN GOD BLESSES WHAT YOU DON'T APPROVE

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“But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. He prayed to the LORD, ‘Isn’t this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.’ But the LORD replied, ‘Is it right for you to be angry?’ Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, ‘It would be better for me to die than to live.’ But God said to Jonah, ‘Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?’ ‘It is,’ he said. ‘And I’m so angry I wish I were dead.’ But the LORD said, ‘You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?’”

Jonah 4:1-11 (NIV)

- 1. Jonah didn’t think Nineveh deserved what God wanted to give them.**
- 2. God’s grace provokes our preferences.**
- 3. Denying people grace will leave you isolated and “misunderstood”.**
- 4. Fighting the will of God will always leave you in a storm.**

“The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.” Jonah 3:5 (NIV)

“From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. He said: ‘In my distress I called to the LORD, and He answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and You listened to my cry. You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all Your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, ‘I have been banished from Your sight; yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.’ The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But You, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit. ‘When my life was ebbing away, I remembered You, LORD, and my prayer rose to You, to Your holy temple. ‘Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them. But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to You. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’ And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.”

Jonah 2:1-10 (NIV)