

Jonah— When Your Emotions Are Out of Control

Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time ...

Jonah 3:1 NIV

When God saw what [the Ninevites] did and how they turned from their evil ways, [God] relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened. Jonah 3:10 NIV

But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. ²He 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. ³Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.” Jonah 4:1-3 NIV

It’s possible to do the will of God without the heart of God.

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. Jonah 4:5 NIV

- **Because of Adam’s sin, God sent Adam out of the Garden to the east. (Genesis 3:24)**
- **Cain left the Lord’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. (Genesis 4:16)**
- **When Abram and Lot parted, Lot chose to go east to Sodom. (Genesis 13:11-13)**
- **With their backs toward the temple of the LORD, men faced east and worshiped the sun. (Ezekiel 8:16)**

It's possible to claim God, yet live with your back to Him.

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. Jonah 4:6 NIV

wayisma: rejoice greatly; exceedingly overjoyed

But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. [Jonah] wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live." Jonah 4:7-8 NIV

Jonah's Root Issues

- **Erratic mood swings** ranging from courageous obedience to extreme dissatisfaction and anger, suggesting underlying frustration and the need to control
- **Entitlement tendencies** focusing on his own views of justice and expecting God and others to operate within his parameters
- **Depressive symptoms** manifesting through feelings of burnout, sadness, anger, and hopelessness

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."¹⁰But 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. ¹¹And 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 4:9-11 NIV

“... and now something greater than Jonah is here.”

Matthew 12:41 NIV

TALK IT OVER

*Read **Jonah 4:9-11**. Where might you be tempted to choose your own will in your life, and how could you trust God instead?*

Have you experienced a time when you chose to skip God's lessons and go straight for His blessings? What opportunities do we miss when we ignore God's lessons?

Where might God be giving you another chance? What choice will you make in response?