

JONAH - STUDY PART 4

Jonah 4:6 – 11 (NIV)

6 *Then the LORD God provided a vine and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the vine.*

7 *But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the vine so that it withered.*

8 *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.*

9 *But God said to Jonah, Do you have a right to be angry about the vine? I do, he said. I am angry enough to die.*

10 *But the LORD said, You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight.*

11 *But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?*



Love as God loves! – from David's notes

Overarching idea:

As God's love embraces everyone, our love should be, similarly, inclusive.

Reflection on 4:6-8

After the bush has withered, Jonah once more sinks into despair. However, his loss of perspective makes the lesson God is trying to teach him starker and clearer.

Questions to consider:

- What caused Jonah's depression?
- How would you describe Jonah's crisis?
- Has God ever taught you something through a disappointment?

Reflection on 4:9-11

The book ends with a question on God's lips. We are left wondering if Jonah will accept God's mercy and become merciful himself or whether his hardness of heart will be reinforced.

Questions to consider:

- How do you think Jonah will respond?
- Does this conclusion to the story remind you of any parable from the New Testament?
- How can we reflect better God's generous love with those with whom we live and work? And together how can we show God's love to those who come to church for the first time, to those who come for baptisms, and to those who have been coming for some time?

The Rich Young Man Matthew 19

16 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?

17 Why do you ask me about what is good? Jesus replied. There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.

18 Which ones? the man enquired. Jesus replied, 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony,

19 honour your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbour as yourself.'

20 All these I have kept, the young man said. What do I still lack?

21 Jesus answered, If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.

22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

25 When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished and asked, Who then can be saved?

26 Jesus looked at them and said, With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

27 Peter answered him, We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?

28 Jesus said to them, I tell you the truth, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.



The eye of the needle is an actual gate into Jerusalem. The interesting symbolism is that a camel must kneel to get through the gate.

Jesus was making a powerful statement about humility

Some examples of Old Testament responses

Signs for Moses – slow of speech! Exodus 4

4:1 *Moses answered, What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you'?*

2 *Then the LORD said to him, What is that in your hand? A staff, he replied.*

3 *The LORD said, Throw it on the ground. Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it.*

4 *Then the LORD said to him, Reach out your hand and take it by the tail. So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand.*

5 *This, said the LORD, is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers— the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob— has appeared to you.*

6 *Then the LORD said, Put your hand inside your cloak. So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, like snow.*

7 *Now put it back into your cloak, he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.*

8 *Then the LORD said, If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second.*

9 *But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground.*

10 *Moses said to the LORD, O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.*

11 *The LORD said to him, Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD?*

12 *Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.*

13 *But Moses said, O Lord, please send someone else to do it.*

14 *Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses and he said, What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you.*

15 *You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do.*

16 *He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him.*

17 *But take this staff in your hand so that you can perform miraculous signs with it.*



Gideon, The least of the weakest! Judges 6

6:11 *The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites.*

12 *When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.*

13 *But sir, Gideon replied, if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.*

14 *The LORD turned to him and said, Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?*

15 *But Lord, Gideon asked, how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.*

16 *The LORD answered, I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.*

17 *Gideon replied, If now I have found favour in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me.*

18 *Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you. And the LORD said, I will wait until you return.*



Isaiah, For I am a Man of Unclean Lips! Isaiah 6

1 *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.*

2 *Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.*

3 *And they were calling to one another:*

Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 *At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.*

5 *Woe to me! I cried. I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.*

6 *Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.*

7 *With it he touched my mouth and said, See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.*

8 *Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, Here am I. Send me!*

