

**“Lesson Learned?”**  
**Jonah 4:10-11**

**Introduction:**

1. This Morning - We Are Going To Look At The Last 2 Verses:
  - In The Book Of Jonah!
    - So Please Head There With Me - To Jonah Chapter 4!
  - We Have Spent **Some Time** In The Book Of Jonah:
    - And Have Been Given Some Valuable Lessons:
      - From The Life Of This Prophet Of God!
  - But The Question I Want For Us To Consider Today Is This:
    - Have We Learned From These Lessons?
      - Have We Learned From God’s Dealings With Jonah?
2. This Question Becomes An Obvious Question For Us:
  - Because As We Come To The End Of This Chapter:
    - And To The End Of This Book:
      - We Wonder The Same Thing About Jonah!
      - Did Jonah Learn **His** Lesson?
  - We Wonder This:
    - Because Of How The Book Of Jonah Ends!
      - Because - After Providing A Plant For Jonah, To Relieve & Comfort Him From The Heat, And Then Taking It Away - We Learn That God Was Using This Plant As A **Object Lesson** For Jonah!
        - **IE:** Like / Need Object Lessons!
      - In 4:10-11 - “Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: / 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?”
        - God Was Teaching Jonah: That He Had More Concern For A Plant, Than For The Souls Of The People In Nineveh, Who Were About To Be Judged For Their Sin!
3. God Was Teaching Jonah About The Focus Of His Heart!
  - And This, I Believe, Is What The Lord:
    - Would Have Us Learn This Morning As Well!
      - What Is The Focus Of Our Hearts?
  - So - Let’s Begin By First Looking At:

**1. The Focus Of Jonah’s Heart!**

- Which God Has Been Revealing To Jonah:
  - All Throughout Chapter 4!
    - And Now - In 4:10 - God Confronts Jonah About The Focus Of His Heart:
      - “Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night!”
  - The Focus Of Jonah’s Heart:
    - Was On A Gift!
      - That He Had Been Given By God!
    - God Tells Jonah:
      - “Thou Hast Had Pity On The Gourd!”
      - Jonah Was Concerned & Troubled About What Happened To The Gourd / The Plant!
    - Now - On The Surface - That Doesn’t Seem So Bad!
      - But Jonah Was So Focused On The Gift, That He Failed To See The Purpose Of The Gift, As Well As The Heart Of The Giver - The Heart Of God!
    - In The Words Of 4:6:
      - “So Jonah Was Exceeding Glad Of The Gourd!”
      - Even To The Point That - “His Life Was Bound Up” With The Life Of That Plant!
        - When The Plant Died, He Wanted To Die With It!
  - Jonah Did Not Consider:
    - The Source Of His Gift!
      - That The Source Of The Gift Was God & His Grace To Jonah!
        - It Was Completely Undeserved!

- 4:10 - “Then Said the LORD, Thou Has Had Pity On The Gourd, For The Which Thou Hast Not Labored!”
    - Jonah Had Done Absolutely Nothing:
      - To Receive & To Enjoy This Plant!
    - He Had Done No Labor:
      - No Work! No Effort On His Part!
    - **IE:** If Only Our Gardens:
      - Worked Like This!
      - If Only Our Vegetable Gardens Would Grow Without Labor & Toil!
    - Jonah Didn't:
      - Plow The Ground / Plant The Seed / Fertilize & Water / Tend To It & Weed Around It!
    - Jonah Did Nothing!
      - Yet He Used The Plant For Shade & Enjoyed The Plant As His Relief!
        - It Was A True Gift!
  - But - He Did Not Consider The Source:
    - Of His Gift!
      - That It Was From God!
      - God Was Showing Jonah His Goodness!
      - God Was Showing Jonah His Grace!
  - Jonah Did Not Consider:
    - The Power Of His Gift!
      - The Power Of The Gift Was God Himself!
        - The True & **Living** God!
    - 4:10 - “Neither Madest It Grow!”
      - Jonah Had Done Nothing To Tend To This Plant!
      - Jonah Could Do Nothing To Grow This Plant!
        - Because The Growth Of Anything Comes Through The Power Of God!
      - Now, To Us, Growth Seems Very Natural!
        - Like The Growth Of A Plant!
          - You Prepare The Soil / Plant The Seed / Ensure It Gets Enough Water & Sunlight / And Soon It Begins To Sprout & Grow!
            - Seems Very Natural!
            - Expect It Every Year!
        - Or - Like The Growth Of A Child!
          - When A Child Into The World / They Are Fed & Nourished / And That Child Grows!
            - Every Single Year!
            - **IE:** Fascinated By Growth Charts!
        - Seems Very Natural!
          - Expect It Every Year!
    - But Who Makes These Things Grow?
      - Not Jonah! Not You! Not Me!
        - But God!
      - Colossians 1:16-17 - “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: / And he is before all things, and by him all things consist!”
    - God Is The Source Of All Life & All Growth!
      - And Although It Seems So Natural To Us!
      - Any Life & Any Growth Is Really:
        - Supernatural!
        - And Evidence Of God At Work!
- And Yet - Jonah Did Not Consider The Power:
  - Of His Gift!
    - That God Was Showing His Power To Him Through That Plant!
      - After All - Its Growth Was Even More Miraculous & Supernatural!
    - It: “Came Up In A Night!” (4:10)
- Jonah Did Not Consider:

- The Nature Of His Gift!
  - The Nature Of The Gift Was That:
    - It Was Temporary!
- 4:10 - “Which Came Up In A Night, And Perished In A Night!”
  - It Lasted For Just One Day!
    - The Lord Gave It To Jonah! And:
    - The Lord Took It Away From Jonah!
  - The Plant Was:
    - A “Son Of The Night!”
      - It Came Up Fast!
      - And It Went Away As Quickly As It Came!
  - The Plant Was:
    - Not Meant To Provide Jonah With:
      - Permanent Comfort & Relief!
    - But That Was Where Jonah:
      - Was Placing His Happiness & His Affections!
  - The Plant Was:
    - To Point Jonah To The Only True Source Of Joy & Comfort!
      - God Himself!
- And Yet - Jonah Did Not Consider The Nature:
  - Of His Gift!
    - That It Was Only Temporary!
- The Gracious Gift Of That Plant:
  - Was Meant To Draw Jonah’s Heart To The Lord!
    - To The Giver!
  - And Yet - Jonah’s Heart Remained Focused:
    - On The Gift!
  - He Did Not Consider:
    - The Source Of His Gift!
    - The Power Of His Gift!
    - Or The Nature Of His Gift!
  - But God Knew That This Would Happen!
    - He Was Using This As An Object Lesson To Confront Jonah About The Focus Of His Heart!
      - For Then We See:

## 2. *The Focus Of God’s Heart!*

- Which God Had Been Revealing To Jonah As Well:
  - All Throughout This Book!
    - So In 4:11 - God Shows How Different His Heart & Desire Is Than Jonah’s!
      - “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?”
  - The Focus Of God’s Heart:
    - Was On Giving!
      - Giving His Mercy & His Grace To Those Who Needed It!
    - What A Difference!
      - What A Contrast!
      - Between God’s Desire & Jonah’s Desire!
    - Because When The Lord Says:
      - “Should Not I Spare Nineveh!”
        - He Is Using The Same Word That He Used For Jonah - “Pity!”
      - Jonah’s Feelings Were For A Plant!
        - God’s Feelings Were Upon A City – The City Of Nineveh!
      - And They Had Been Through The Whole Book!
    - What Was The Focus Of God’s Heart?
- The Poverty Of The City!
  - 4:11 - God Tells Jonah - “And Should Not I Spare Nineveh, That Great City?”
    - For The **4<sup>th</sup> Time** In This Book, Nineveh Is Described As A **“Great”** City!

- This Is How The World Certainly Saw The City:
  - As Great!
    - 3:3 - Described As “An Exceeding Great City Of Three Days’ Journey!”
  - It Was A Great City!
    - In Its Size / Its Influence / Its Power!
  - **IE:** Often How We See A City! It’s “Greatness” In Reputation / “Great City Of Chicago / New York!”
- But How Did God See The City?
  - Great In Its Need!
    - 1:2 - God’s First Call To Jonah - “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me!”
  - Nineveh Was Great In Its Wickedness!
    - And They Needed God’s Mercy & Grace!
- The World Thought Nineveh Was Great & Rich & Wealthy!
  - The Lord Saw That Nineveh Was Poor!
    - And That Is Why He Sent His Prophet Jonah!
  - What Else Was The Focus Of God’s Heart?
- The People In The City!
  - 4:11 - “Wherein Are More Than Six-Score Thousand Persons!” (120,000)
    - **IE:** We Are Often Impressed With The Buildings & The Skyline Of A City! Things To Do / Things To See!
  - But God’s Concern Was On:
    - The People!
      - And Their Souls!
    - God Created Them!
      - And Cared For Them As Well!
      - Not Just Jonah & The People Of Israel!
        - The People Of The World!
  - And That Is Why God Sent Jonah:
    - In The First Place!
      - To Show His Concern & His Compassion Even To The People Of Nineveh!
  - Now - When We See / Hear The Number:
    - 120,000 In The City!
      - We Are Not All That Impressed!
    - After All:
      - People Are Proud That Indianapolis Is The 12th Largest City In The US (850K)! Fascinated That New York Is The Largest City In The US (8.5 Million)! Absolutely Amazed That Shanghai Is The Largest City In The World (24 Million)!
    - So, To Us, 120,000 People Is A Small Number In Comparison!
      - But Not To God!
      - Each One Is A Individual Soul That He Cares For As Much As The Entire Number!
- But Was This Really The Size Of The Entire City?
  - The Next Phrase In 4:11 Is Interesting:
    - “That Cannot Discern Between Their Right Hand And Their Left Hand!”
  - I Believe That This Phrase Describes The Young Children In Nineveh!
    - Reminds Us Of Deuteronomy 1:39 - “Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it!”
  - God Had A Great Concern For The Little Children:
    - Of Nineveh! Those Who Had Not Yet Contributed To The Great Wickedness Of That City!
  - Don’t We See The Heart Of God In This Too?
    - God Loves Children!
      - Matthew 19:14 - “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven!”
  - Didn’t Jonah:
    - See Those Children? Hear Those Children? Have Compassion For Those Children?
- And If There Were 120,000 Young Children In Nineveh:
  - Then The Entire Population Of The City Could Have Been Around 700K!
    - Not Too Far Off From Indianapolis!
- God Was Concerned For The People Of Nineveh!

- And Yet Jonah Was Concerned For A Plant!
  - What Is The Focus Of Our Heart?
  - What Else Was The Focus Of God's Heart?
- The Product Of The City!
  - God Was Not Only Concerned About The People In The City Of Nineveh!
    - He Was Also Concerned For Everything He Had Made & Created That Would Suffer If He Were Send His Judgment!
  - 4:11 - "And Also Much Cattle?"
    - God Cares For His Creatures As Well!
      - This Is How Caring & Loving & Gracious God Is!
    - Luke 12:6-7 - "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? / But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows!"
- What An Amazing & Gracious Heart God Has!
  - The Focus Of His Heart Is On Giving!
    - As Annie Flint Once Wrote - "His love has no limits, His grace has no measure, His power no boundary known unto men; For out of His infinite riches in Jesus He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again!"

### Conclusion:

1. And This Is How The Book Of Jonah Ends!
  - With The Focus On God!
    - And His Grace & Mercy & His Heart!
  - But The Question Lingers In Our Mind:
    - What Happened To Jonah?
      - Did He Learn His Lesson?
    - And: We Are Left To Wonder This!
      - We Are Left Without An Answer To This!
    - And This Is The Lord's Intent!
      - We Will Have To Look Elsewhere To Discover Whether Or Not *Jonah* Learned His Lesson!
2. But - The More Important Question Is This:
  - Have We Learned Our Lesson?
    - From The Focus Of Jonah's Heart!
    - From The Focus Of God's Heart!
  - What Is The Focus Of Our Heart?
    - Is It On Our Gifts?
    - Or Is It On The Giver?
      - Is It On The Lord?
  - Think About The Gifts You Have Been Given By The Lord!
    - The Physical / Material Gifts!
      - Health / Strength!
      - Jobs / Family / Home / Comforts!
    - Where Is The Focus Of Our Heart?
      - More On The Gift? Or On The Giver? The Lord!
    - Colossians 3:1-2 - "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. / Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth!"
    - Matthew 6:19-21 - "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: / But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: / For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also!"
  - Think About The Greatest Gift You Have Been Given By The Lord!
    - A Spiritual Gift!
      - The Gift Of The Lord Jesus Christ! The Gift Of Salvation!
      - 2 Corinthians 8:9 - "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich!"
    - This Is The Greatest Gift Of All!
      - Consider The Source Of Your Gift!
        - God & His Grace!
      - Consider The Power Of Your Gift!
        - God & His Life!
      - Consider The Nature Of Your Gift!

- Eternal!
- So - What Is Your Life “Bound Up” With?
  - The Gift? Like Jonah!
  - Or The Giver?
- 3. And Then - As This Book Concludes:
  - Think About The Focus Of God’s Heart!
    - On People!
      - Shouldn’t Our Hearts Reflect God’s Heart?
        - And To Have The Same Burden For Those Who Are Lost!
    - The Question At The End Of This Book:
      - Is Not:
        - Did Jonah Learn His Lesson?
      - No - It Should Be:
        - Have We Learned Our Lesson?
    - Perhaps The Reason The Book Ends This Way:
      - So Abruptly & Without A Natural Conclusion!
        - Is Because The Lord Wants Us To Finish It!
          - In The Right Way!
      - As Sinclair Ferguson Puts It:
        - “It Carries No Conclusion Because It Summons Us To Write The Final Paragraph. It Remains Unfinished, In Order That We May Provide Our Own Conclusion To Its Message!”
    - So - What Will Be The Focus Of Your Heart?

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