



Title: Jonah 180 III – the God who loves all
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Jonah chapter 1 – the God who pursues. Jonah chapter 2 – the God who saves

Jonah 4:2 key scripture*for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.*

1. God's love persists – even when we drift or run away

Jonah 3:1–4 (ESV) ¹ Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, ² “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.” ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. ⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

“Second time” – God's persistence!

Jonah's perfection or imperfection doesn't qualify or disqualify him for ministry

Jonah arose – back to life. **Some of us were full time followers of Christ, but now we are part time followers of Christ and a full time accountant or engineer.

Seemingly impregnable fortress-city – Walls - 30m high, 15m wide walls, Towers - 60m high, 1500 watchtowers all around the walls. ****God has been preparing the people** – possibly two plagues erupted there (765BC and 759BC) and a total eclipse of the sun.

2. Nineveh's finest hour - our response to God's love

Jonah 3:5–10 (ESV) ⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. ⁶ The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, “By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, ⁸ but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. ⁹ Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish.” ¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Nineveh's finest hour! Everything changes when we meet with God.

Look at the signs of having met with God / knowing God :

- Break power of materialism and lead you to live a radically generous life
- Instead of living for yourself and for the moment, you'll live for Christ and Eternity.
- Your heart will begin to break for the reasons and causes that break God's heart.
- As you get to know Him, you will live boldly for Him.

What symptoms are you displaying?

3. God loves all – the value of a soul

Jonah 4:1–3 (ESV) ¹ *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry.* ² *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.* ³ *Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.”*

**God loves all. Do we?

Central to being an unbeliever is being extremely selfish and self focused.

Israel lost their way. 20 years from then they were destroyed completely. They lost their way and didn't repent. **Yet God is:**

- Gracious – God gives us what we don't deserve.
- Merciful – God doesn't give us what we deserve.
- Slow to anger
- Abounding in steadfast love – overflowing love.
- Relenting from disaster

2 Kings 17:13–14 (ESV) ¹³ *Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets.”* ¹⁴ *But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God.*

Israel wouldn't repent, but the Assyrians did. The modern church is very much like Israel and Judah was at this time. Parts of the church has gone astray...

Jonah 4:9-11 (ESV) ⁹ *But God said to Jonah, “Do you do well to be angry for the plant?” And he said, “Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die.”* ¹⁰ *And the LORD said, “You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night.* ¹¹ *And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?”*

Reflection:

The value of a soul - do we realise the value of a human being?

Do we have God's heart? Do we know Jesus?

God loves all. Will we be Christians? Will we be Christ-like and have His heart? Or will we be like Jonah and Israel and lose our way by knowing about God, but living for self? ****A radically generous life? Living for Christ and eternity? Your heart break for what breaks God's heart? Do you live boldly for Him? If not, then maybe we need to meet with God again... do a 180 and turn to Jesus.