

Day 1

September 14th



Pray | That God would help us be thankful when he shows mercy to our enemies

THIS ISN'T THE WAY IT WAS SUPPOSED TO GO (cried Jonah).

Jonah was angry. Jonah thought God was going to give those Ninevites what they deserved—the judgement and punishment that equaled their wickedness. But then, God did something unexpected. He did the opposite. He showed them mercy when they decided to turn from their evil ways.



Read | Jonah 4:1-4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Think of a time when you have truly been angry with God. How did you process that anger? What was the outcome? Did the anger bring you closer to or further away from God?

Have there been situations in your life when you disagreed with what you think should have happened? Think about these instances. What did you learn from them?

When you read this passage, what are your feelings towards Jonah?

Day 2

September 15th



Pray | That you would embrace God's nature; not just accept it

I KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO DO IT. That's why I ran the other way in the first place when you first asked me. This is your nature. And I don't like it (said Jonah).

In verse 2, Jonah decides to do a very dangerous thing. He decides to quote scripture to God, using it to justify his original disobedience. *"For I knew that you were a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster."* This is the same thing God tells Moses in Exodus 34:6 and the reason why he forgives the Israelites and decides to renew his covenant with them. Because, despite our wishes that sometimes God would bring down hell fire and deliver OUR VIEW of appropriate justice on people who repent, forgiveness is HIS nature.



Read | Jonah 4:1-4, Exodus 34:6



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

When in your life have you ever tried using scripture to argue with God and prove your point? How did that turn out for you?

This week reach out to someone with whom you have been having conflict—maybe someone who has caused you great anger. Do your part in trying to reconcile with them.

Day 3

September 16th



Pray | Thank the Lord that he doesn't leave us to wallow in our self-pity forever

JUST KILL ME NOW (moaned Jonah).

In verse 3, Jonah is upset that God didn't deliver the kind of justice to his enemies that he thought they deserved. So now he wants to die. He feels he knows better than God, and, because it didn't happen the way he thought it should, he doesn't want to go on living. Jonah is exhibiting a human trait that we have all exhibited in some form and at some point in our lives: self-pity.



Read | Jonah 4:1-4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Think of a time that you were feeling sorry for yourself. What were the circumstances that caused this? For you, what situations in life are triggers for going down the path of self-pity?

Do you know someone right now who is in a dark and heavy place? If so, reach out to them. Tell them that you are thinking of them. Tell them of God's love for them; tell them of your love for them. Be there to listen.

Day 4
September 17th



Pray | For God to reveal to us our arrogance in areas where we think we know better than HIM what needs to be done

ARROGANCE AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jonah knew better than God what the Ninevites needed. If only God would not be who he is and always will be (thought Jonah).

We find out in the first verses of chapter 4 that Jonah didn't have the purest of motivations for finally obeying God and going to Nineveh to carry out the Lord's instruction. Sure, he was glad God saved him from the stomach of the whale; but he knew better than God! He was going to be the instrument God would use to bring down hell fire on the Ninevites! *"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"* But, as we saw at the end of chapter 3, it didn't quite end up the way Jonah had envisioned.



Read | Jonah 4:1-4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Reflect on a time or situation where you thought you knew better than God what should be done. What was the outcome?

What are some life situations that cause our fallen natures to resort to arrogance and self-righteousness?

Are there times in your life where you wished God wouldn't be who he always is? In the end, were you thankful that he was who he always said he was?

Day 5

September 18th



Pray | That God would help you love your “enemies” and forgive them; just as he does and is willing to do

I KNOW YOU SHOWED ME GRACE AND FORGIVENESS for my disobedience, but at the core I am a good person. I deserved your mercy. The Ninevites are truly wicked and evil people. They did not deserve your forgiveness (sulked Jonah).

Here’s the thing: None of us deserve God’s mercy and forgiveness. All of us deserve to be punished and face the negative consequences associated with our actions. That includes us, our family, our friends, those we love and cherish, and YES that means EVEN OUR ENEMIES—those who we think are more “deservedly wicked”. But that’s the amazing and perplexing thing about God’s unbelievable love and grace. It is for everyone who chooses to receive it. We have ALL fallen short, and we ALL are able to be the recipients of the greatest gift of all.



Read | Jonah 4:1-4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Who in your life do you need to forgive? Pray right now to the Lord a prayer of forgiveness for that person. Now, forgiveness is not the same as forgetting, but we are called to forgive.

Who in your life do you need to ask for their forgiveness towards you? Do so today.

Who would you consider your “enemies”? God created them just like he created you. God loves them just as much as he loves you, and God died for them just as much as he died for you. Think and reflect on these powerful truths.

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