

# A Vine, A Worm and an East Wind (Jonah 4:5)

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## **I. Introduction**

**A.** Of all the lessons we learn from the book of Jonah one of the most demonstrable is the mercy and grace of God;

1. God had mercy on the poor frightened sailors caught in the storm.
2. He had mercy on a wicked city when they repented and turned to Him.
- 3 The most amazing evidence of His grace is found in His dealings with Jonah himself.

**B.** As I read the record of this fickle, selfish, temperamental servant of the Lord, I stand in awe of His longsuffering and patience with Jonah.

1. How tenderly and kindly God deals with him even when he flees from the pathway of duty.
2. But to really see the amazing grace of God we must consider this final chapter in the book of Jonah.
3. It is the picture of a disappointed, disgruntled, child of God arguing with and even criticizing God for the way He deals with

Sinful people.

## **II. Jonah's Attitude**

**A.** He was actually pleased to think that God was going to destroy Nineveh but when they repented and experienced God's grace he was really upset.

1. Jonah knew that God was merciful. We now find out in Jonah 4:2 why he had disobeyed God in the first place.
2. We now know why he fled to Tarshish, it gives us an insight into the real reason for his backsliding.
3. He knew that if he preached judgment to Nineveh and they repented, he knew God would save them.
4. It's all laid out for us in Jonah 4:1-4.

**B.** I'm surprised that God didn't answer his prayer and slay him on the spot. He deserved nothing less.

1. Again God's grace is evidenced instead of taking his life God patiently deals with him through the vine, worm and the wind.
2. God is going to teach him the value of a human being.
3. He must learn what Jesus would teach his disciples years later in Matt 16:26 - What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul.

### **III. Jonah's Expectation**

**A.** We find Jonah busy building a little booth for his own comfort while he awaited the doom of the city.

1. Jonah always seemed to be interested in his own comfort.
2. He could sleep in the midst of a storm, and loll at ease in a booth while waiting for people to be destroyed.

**B.** God saw the booth didn't provide the needed shelter so he caused a wild gourd to grow up and shade him.

1. Jonah was just delighted in God's wondrous provision for his need but his praises ended that night.
2. For God prepared a worm which ate at the very root of that plant causing it to wither away as soon as the sun beat upon it.
3. Then God sent a sultry east wind which smote Jonah upon his head (probably bald) this beat brought about a fainting spell.
4. Jonah lay there in the heat wishing he were dead.

**C.** What Does It all Mean?

1. What's the significance of this gourd, worm and wind.
2. Jonah is to be taught the preciousness of souls to God.
3. Jonah 4:10-11
4. Jonah, you are greatly interested in yourself and your comfort.
5. But what about those 120,000 precious souls in Nineveh who do not know their right hand from their left.
6. I love those people, I care for them, I want to give them a chance to repent.

### **IV. What About This Worm?**

**A.** The word translated worm is to -law and is the Hebrew word used in other places translated as "scarlet" and "crimson".

1. Isaiah 1:18 - Though your sins be red as crimson - this is the word to-law. Though they be red as the worm.

2. So the words crimson, scarlet and worm are all the same word.

**B.** This worm was a red worm from which a precious deep red dye was extracted.

1. It was used to color the draperies found in the tabernacle.

2. It was also used in the clothing worn by the high priest.

3. We know that the scarlet used in the construction of the tabernacle pointed forward to the blood of Jesus.

4. The scarlet cord used by Rahab the harlot to hide the Hebrew spies was colored by the dye extracted from this worm.

**C.** This word to-law also comes into the prophetic picture in Psalm 22, It is referring to Christ dying on the Cross (Ps 22:1) Then in Psalm 22:6-8 we have a very significant statement. I am a worm and no man.

1. It is again a reference to this red worm.

2. He indeed became a worm (His blood pouring forth truly made him crimson.)

3. Calvary was a scene where even the earth was dyed by that precious blood.

4. Blood poured from His head, His back, His hand, His feet and finally even from His riven side.

## **V. There Are Two Lessons To be Learned**

**A.** As the worm destroyed the gourd, so Calvary negates all the efforts of man to provide his own shelter.

1. Calvary is death to all man's efforts to provide for His own salvation.

2. As the red worm was God's answer to Jonah's efforts to provide his own shelter, so Calvary is God's answer to all man's efforts to save himself.

3. We must abandon any and all efforts to save ourselves.

**B.** How hard it is for mankind to learn the humbling lesson that salvation is by grace alone. (Rom 4:5)

1. Have you like Jonah been building a booth of your own works hoping to find in it a shelter from God's judgment?

2. Have you taken refuge under the convenient gourd of fleeting worldly comfort and satisfaction?
3. My friend God will always wither that tree it will dry up on you.
4. There is only one place to find eternal satisfaction and that is in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.