

Jonah

Chapter 1: Jonah's Perversity:	Jonah runs from God	God speaks to Jonah
Chapter 2: Jonah's Prayer:	Jonah runs to God	Jonah speaks to God
Chapter 3: Jonah's Preaching:	Jonah runs with God	Jonah speaks to Nineveh
Chapter 4: Jonah's Problem:	Jonah runs against God	Jonah and God speak

4:5-11 What lesson did the LORD have for Jonah?

How does Jonah compare to Israel?

How Shall He Not Have Pity?

We dare not leave the words with which the book closes as though they were an afterthought. The key to the book of Jonah is here. yes, more, the key to the heart of missions is here. This book is the greatest missionary book in the Old Testament, if not in the whole Bible. It is written to reveal the heart of a servant of God whose heart was not touched with the passion of God in missions. Does it strike home?

Are we more interested in our own comfort than the need of multitudes of lost souls in Israel dying in darkness without the knowledge of their Messiah and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ? Are we more content to remain with the "gourds," the comforts of home, than to see the message of Christ go out to the ends of the earth to both Jew and Gentile? We may not, as Jonah did, argue with God for His goodness and mercy and love to the benighted souls lost in sin, but if we do not make it possible for them to hear of His grace and power to save to the uttermost, the result is the same, as far as they are concerned.

How shall He not have pity? The main message of the book, its central and dominant theme, is that of the Bible itself. God's love is ever seeking to save those who are rightly doomed to eternal punishment. (See Gen 18:23-33.) Can God—will God—be stayed in His yearning because puny man may find it in his heart to object to the limitless mercy and love of God? The Bible gives the unmistakable answer: He will not be hindered by man's narrowness of heart, but He must from the very necessity of His blessed nature have pity.

How shall He not have pity? If God should not spare, where then would be the hope for any in the world? No generation of men, nor all generations combined, could find a way of escape from the wrath of God, had God not determined to have pity. If all the nations of the earth must find provision for eternal life in the mercy and grace of God in Christ, how else shall Israel be redeemed?

How shall He not have pity? How can God possibly fail to have mercy when He has stated so clearly that He delights to be entreated, that He intends to save Jew and Gentile in answer to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that He is rich in grace to all without difference?

How shall He not have pity? Because our eye may be evil in the matter, shall God cease to be good? (See Mt 20:15.) Because we have hedged men about with innumerable distinctions and have placed them in countless categories, shall God become a respecter of persons?

How shall He not have pity? In our Bible we have the outstanding examples of Jonah and Peter (Ac 10) who were loath to take the message of God's love to unsaved Gentiles. Dare we count the number who are loath and negligent to bear the message of saving grace in Christ to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? Thank God forever more, He does have pity! But do we?

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