

No Peace for the Angry

(Jonah 4)

Yearly Theme: *“Peace is...”*

Series Title: *“Peace Lost”*

May 16th, 2021

Something to think about:

an-ger

/ ˈæŋɡəɹ /

noun

1. a strong feeling of displeasure and belligerence aroused by a wrong; wrath; ire.¹

Have you ever been angry? What types of things make you angry? Is your anger justified? What do you do with your anger?

As we consider anger’s effects on the individual today, we come to a very famous, and notable, book of the Bible: *Jonah*. Instead of looking at the whole book, I want to focus on the very last chapter. Jonah, the rebellious prophet of God that he was, didn’t want to go to the Ninevite city of the Assyrians on behalf of God to speak God’s judgment over it, because he knew that if the people repented, God would not reign down judgment on them. After much convincing (after three days in the belly of a fish), Jonah went to Nineveh and proclaimed God’s coming judgment, and wouldn’t you know it, the people turned from their wickedness and evil, repented, and God forestalled His judgment against them. Now, this left Jonah very angry, which brings us to today’s message on anger and the peace of God...

Jonah 4:1-11 (NLT),

This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry.² So he complained to the LORD about it: “Didn’t I say before I left home that you would do this, LORD? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people.³ Just kill me now, LORD! I’d rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen.”

⁴ The LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry about this?”

⁵ Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see what would happen to the city.⁶ And the LORD God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there, and soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah’s head, shading him from the sun. This eased his discomfort, and Jonah was very grateful for the plant.

⁷ But God also arranged for a worm! The next morning at dawn the worm ate through the stem of the plant so that it withered away.⁸ And as the sun grew hot, God arranged for a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah. The sun beat down on his head until he grew faint and wished to die. “Death is certainly better than living like this!” he exclaimed.

⁹ Then God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?”

“Yes,” Jonah retorted, “even angry enough to die!”

¹⁰ Then the LORD said, “You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly.¹¹ But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn’t I feel sorry for such a great city?”

Jonah was enraged/burned up/beside himself because God didn’t follow through with His anger/judgment against the people of Nineveh, and as a result Jonah had no peace. And, this is the result of human anger...

Key Point: *“Human anger destroys peace from God.”*

So, how does this play out in this passage of Scripture? Let’s take a look:

- **Human anger clouds a person’s ability to love the way God loves.**

Jonah 4:1-3 (NLT), This change of plans greatly upset Jonah, and he became very angry.² So he complained to the LORD about it: “Didn’t I say before I left home that you would do this, LORD? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. You are eager to turn back from destroying people.³ Just kill me now, LORD! I’d rather be dead than alive if what I predicted will not happen.”⁴ The LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry about this?”

- **Human anger distorts reality and promotes selfishness and pride.**

Jonah 4:5-8 (NLT),⁵ Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see what would happen to the city.⁶ And the LORD God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there, and soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah’s head, shading him from the sun. This eased his discomfort, and Jonah was very grateful for the plant.

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- **Human anger exempts us from the peace of God.**

Jonah 4:9-11 (NLT),⁹ Then God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?” “Yes,” Jonah retorted, “even angry enough to die!”

¹⁰ Then the LORD said, “You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. It came quickly and died quickly.¹¹ But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn’t I feel sorry for such a great city?”

Something to take home:

Human anger is like a small spark that sets ablaze a torrent of devastating destruction in relationships, reputations, and reasoning. If not controlled, it consumes. If not released, it explodes. If not tempered, it hardens the heart.

Human anger is contagious too. It’s easy to sway people to your way of thinking by an impassioned plea stoked by rage. Anger isn’t what God created us for; He created us for peace. As believers in Christ, we are to be gentle, full of love (not only for our loved ones, but also for our enemies). We are to embrace difficulty and suffering not as masochists, but as those who follow the “Suffering Servant”: *Jesus Christ*. When we are wronged, we should take our case before the Father who is more than able to give us peace that passes understanding.

Key Point: *“Human anger destroys peace from God.”*