

A Merciful Plant & a Merciful Worm (Jonah 4:4-9)

- I. **Introduction**
 - A. My comfort was disturbed by a beetle
 - B. Recapping the drama
 - C. Reading the text and setting the course for the message

- II. **Exposition of text: A volley between God and Jonah**
 - A. God serves Jonah the question: *Is it right for you to be angry?* (v. 4)
 1. God often asks questions in the Bible (eg. Adam and Eve, Cain, Job, Saul, Peter, Romans 8)
 - B. Jonah's return: "**Prevention**" (Avoiding the question v. 5)
 - C. God's surprise backhand volley: "**Provision**" (v. 6)
 1. *God prepared a plant*; Hebrew = *appointed* or *counted out* (Ps 90:12, Ps 147:4, Jonah 1:17)
 2. Is God blessing bad behavior?
 3. God is overcoming evil with good (Rom 12:21)
 4. Psalm 25:21-22
 - D. Jonah's volley: "**Presumption**" (v. 6b)
 1. Jonah is pleased, but his pleasure based on presumption
 - E. God's forehand smash down the lane: "**Purging**" (v. 7-8)
 1. God's use of nonhuman elements to teach a lesson or accomplish His will
 - a. Balaam's donkey (Num 22:22-33)
 - b. Raven, lion, two bears (1Kng 17:4-6, 20:35-36, 2Kng 2:23-25)
 - c. a storm on Sea of Galilee (Mt 8:26-27, Mk 4:39-41)
 - d. a fish who swallowed a coin (Mt 17:25-27)
 - e. beasts, fowls, fish and ants (Job 12:7-12, Pr 6:6-8)
 - f. all creation (Ps 19:1-2)
 2. Jonah compared to Job (Job 1:20-22, 13:15)
 3. How do we react when God takes away something?
 - F. Jonah finally answers God's question (v. 9)
 1. Jonah's complaint seems to be based on something so trivial, but ...
 2. Be careful of unchecked passions

- III. **Applying the text**
 - A. You cannot avoid God's questions – they *will* be answered
 1. God is calling all men everywhere to repent – will you?
 - B. What plants in your life has God sent to comfort you?
 1. Take care that you not rest in the comfort of anything, but God
 2. What do you have that you have not received, freely?
 3. Marks of presumption: anger, depression, ungratefulness, discontentment
 - C. Don't despise God's ordained worms
 1. Your discomfort is nothing compared to our Lords on the tree
 - D. God's individual care for Jonah and for you!