

# God's Pervasive Love

**Key Verse:** *“Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?”*  
—Jonah 4:11

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Jonah 4:1-11*

in being used as an instrument to accomplish God's intended purpose, Jonah became despondent to the point of wishing to die, because mercy had been extended to the sinful inhabitants of Nineveh. In response, God questioned Jonah's heart attitude by inquiring of him whether he had any justifiable cause for his manifestation of anger.—vss. 3,4

Jonah then departed from the city and created a booth to shelter himself in order to observe what would happen in Nineveh. The Lord caused a gourd to grow above Jonah's head, thus providing him shade from the atmosphere surrounding him. This arrangement provided comfort for Jonah. However, subsequently the

**AS THIS NARRATIVE** draws to a close, Jonah's displeasure at Nineveh's repentance is expressed to God. (Jon. 4:1) “He prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.”—vs. 2

Rather than rejoicing at the ultimate success of his mission

gourd was attacked by a worm, and by the next day the plant had completely withered. After the sun arose, Jonah was subjected to a strong east wind and the hot sun shone upon his head. Once again, Jonah expressed the wish that he could die.—vss. 5-8

God attempted to reason with Jonah, and asked him, “Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night.”—vss. 9,10

In our Key Verse, God asserts that he has great interest in the recovery of repentant sinners, such as had occurred with the inhabitants of Nineveh. Jonah’s priorities were misplaced, however, because he was more concerned about the destruction of a sheltering plant than seeing the people of the city of Nineveh turn from their evil ways.

As Christians today, we observe great wickedness in society on a global scale. How privileged we are to understand that God has provided his Son, Christ Jesus, who gave his life as a sacrifice that all may learn of the Heavenly Father’s mercy towards sinners. Believers who follow in the footsteps of the Master will be given the opportunity of assisting him in restoring all the willing members of the human family back to the perfection that was lost in Eden. During God’s kingdom of righteousness, as divine beings, Christ and his church will offer perfect life on earth to those who have repented from their sinful ways, and who obey from their heart the righteous precepts which will be taught to all people.

Of that time, the Bible states: “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” (Rev. 22:17) How wonderful is God’s plan of salvation. ■