



## Episode Five

### Plant Lessons

Jonah 4:5-11

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#### Hoping for the Worst

God has relented of His planned disaster: 3:10-4:4

Jonah waits to see what will happen: 4:5

Jonah is hoping against hope that there will be a misstep

Hoping for the worst versus praying for our enemies: Matthew 5:44

#### In the School of YHWH

God appointed a plant, a worm, a wind: vs. 6, 7, 8

The Castor Oil Plant (*ricinus communis*)

Fast-growing, large-leafed, fragile plant in the Mediterranean

Interesting fact: castor oil used for lamps (a plant in service of seeing)

"To save him from his evil": v. 6

#### The Obvious Lesson

God's love for Nineveh is justified

Kal-va-chomer: an **Argumentum a fortiori**

Arguing from the lesser to the greater

A speed limit example

*If you can love this fragile plant (which you had no investment in making and is very temporary), surely I can love a great city (which I did create and which are eternal creatures, including many children)*

Jonah's own behavior justifies God's behavior, leaving Jonah with nothing to say

#### The Subtle Lesson

The plant experiment is also designed to expose Jonah's kind of love with God's kind

Jonah loves the plant (*exceedingly glad*) for the shade that it gives him

Contrast: (a self-sufficient) God loves the people of Nineveh entirely for their sake

What's more: God's love costs Himself

The forgiveness of Nineveh will find its completeness in the Jesus' death for the world

See this love described in Romans 5:6-11

See the Kal-va-chomer in Romans 5:10 (if loved while enemies, how much more now!)

The people of God are to sacrificially love others

Jesus: Luke 6:32-36; 14:12-14

The self-test: when the scale of return versus cost tips toward cost, what then?