

## **Praying Through Jonah 4:1-11**

### **International Bible Lesson**

**L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.**

O God, we praise You for being a forgiving God and for the fact that You have forgiven those who have believed in You and have repented of their sins even though they have known nothing or very little of right and wrong. As we pray and seek to have and show forth the Spirit of Jesus Christ to others, may we be gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, patient, abounding in love, and forgiving of others as You have forgiven us.

Lord, forgive us for having acted from time to time as Jonah acted. We have sometimes become angry too quickly, and sometimes we have spoken rashly and made unreasonable choices. O God, forgive us if we have been so angry at You or others that we have wanted to die like Jonah wanted to die. We know from the lessons of Jesus, and the question You asked Jonah, that it is not right to be angry if it leads us to sin, for there can be an anger against evil that does not lead us to sin but to prayer. You have commanded us in Your Word: “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry” (Ephesians 4:26). Lord, if we sin against You, teach us to pray as King David did: “LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath” (Psalms 38:1). We pray that if we deserve and need Your discipline that it will lead us to repent as the Ninevites repented in deep sorrow with hope of salvation.

If we are hurt by another, help us avoid wanting to gloat over them and watch Your discipline of them, and if You discipline them, we pray that Your efforts will lead to their redemption and not to their destruction. Help us not to be happy over only those things that make us happy. Instead, help us to be happy about Your creation and its beauty that reveals more about You and Your concern for us and all people everywhere. Help us teach others about You and Your Word, Jesus. Help us understand the Bible better so we can teach truths from Your Word and others will come to know right from wrong and do the right as they trust in Jesus, the Bible, and the leading of the Holy Spirit that will teach every believer how to live like Jesus. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

**Please Note:** I first learned about “Praying Through the Bible” from Edith Schaeffer, the wife of Francis Schaeffer. You might like to close your class with the above prayer as a way of beginning to teach your class how they too can pray through the Bible. First, you might like to teach your class how to pray through the *International Bible Lessons* each week. [Perhaps some of them would learn how to pray through portions of the Bible during their daily Bible reading and quiet time.] Second, a week in advance, perhaps some of your students would like to write their own “Prayer Through the Bible” using the *International Bible Lesson* scripture text and read their prayer at the close of class. Third, eventually, your students will be able to pray through the Bible without needing to write their prayer in advance before they pray at the end of class. If you would like to learn more about prayer from Edith Schaeffer, read [How God Teaches Us to Pray](#): Lessons from the Lives of Francis and Edith Schaeffer, Kindle Edition, by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.