

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CENTER

1136 Baseline Road
Grand Island, New York www.bfcgi.org 716-773-3748

THE LORD'S DAY

February 19, 2017 8:30 & 10:15AM

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Organ Prelude Carol Dammann
Piano Wendy Baldwin

MEDITATION

“God Prepares a Lesson for Jonah” Jonah 4:5-8 - opposite page

Announcements	Ron Mock
Doxology	
Prayer and Scripture Reading	Psalm 119:1-16 led by Chris Stenzel
Opening Hymn	
Pastoral Prayer	
Hymns of Praise	
Message	Dr. Brian Albrecht
Hymn 581	“Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus” Benediction

THE MINISTRY OF MISSION

For the glory of God, Bible Fellowship Center is committed to spreading the Good News of salvation, **equipping the believers**, that they might become more Christ-like, worship God and enjoy Him forever.

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Youth Group Monday at 6:30pm

Tuesday Precept at 6:30pm on James – Wendy Baldwin teaching

No Tuesday Bible study: begins Feb 28th on Titus - Pastor Cal teaching

Wednesday Men's Bible study – Jim O'Rourke teaching

Thursday Precept at 9:15 on Romans – Margaret Was teaching

Ladies fellowship Thursday at 10am – Elsa Peters

Adult Bible study Friday at 7pm - John Woodell teaching

The offering box is located in the back of the sanctuary

Sunday messages are available online, CD or e-mail. See Bill Schultz

Anyone interested in joining the choir please see Dawn Fraser

⁵So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city. ⁶And the LORD God prepared a plant^{tu} and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant. ⁷But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it *so* damaged the plant that it withered. ⁸And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, “*It is better for me to die than to live.*”

It looks like Jonah thought that some judgment would fall upon Nineveh. I am sure that he counted the forty days very quickly, and with the binoculars of his day he watched to see how many tons of TNT God would drop on Nineveh. Perhaps he envisioned something like the mushroom cloud that must have been over Sodom and Gomorrah when those cities erupted in a massive explosion. Instead of tending to Nineveh, God was more interested in bringing judgment upon his prophet. God “prepared” (same word as we have in Jonah 1:17 regarding the fish) for the prophet a shade plant, that brought him much joy. Jonah saw the shade plant as a mercy from God upon a faithful plant. It was God's mercy, just as it was God's mercy to deliver him from the belly of the great fish. God also “prepared” within that shade plant a worm. Perhaps no other book displays God's sovereign power of His creation than what we find in the book of Jonah. The Creator God does not leave any aspect of His creation to rule itself, but rather is involved daily in the needs of the creation. The result is that the plant that brought shade had now withered, and Jonah is upset at the loss.

God finally “prepared” a vehement east wind that blew on Jonah and made him grow faint. An east wind comes from the desert with a fierceness that saps all the moisture from plants and brings every living creature to a point of death. In the Middle East, this is called a sirocco wind (see Isaiah 40:7-8). Those living in Southern California are familiar with the “devil winds” named Santa Anas that fan flames and even are credited with eliciting strange behavior among the people of Southern California. I'm here now with my son John, in California as your reading this. These winds come down from Utah and Nevada deserts normally in September-November area, which is the fire season. I would see these fires daily on my way to school each day when I lived out here.

Jonah's reaction to God's three “preparations” for him—he again requests to die as in verse 3. Before we judge Jonah, have we ever had that reaction to the circumstances that God places before us?