



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC	God of this City	SPEAKER	DSP Edric Sng
THEME	A Disciple-Making Church	DATE	8 and 9 Aug 2026

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah 29:7 reads, “Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace.” God instructs us to pray for the cities we live in, for the degree to which we experience peace correlates with the peace in our nation. The book of Jonah illustrates God's mercy, repentance, revival, and the significance of divine grace. Jonah's story highlights reluctance to preach to Nineveh, a great city, and God's heart for His creation.

GOD’S LOVE FOR HIS CHILDREN

1. Reluctance and Repentance

God commanded Jonah to go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness had come up before God. But Jonah ran from the Lord and headed for Tarshish in the opposite direction. He was reluctant to go to Nineveh because of the great evil and violence of the Ninevites. Nahum 3:1 describes Nineveh as a city of blood, full of lies while Zephaniah 2:15 records Nineveh as a proud city. Jonah also knew that if Nineveh repented, God would forgive them. Jonah trusted his own judgment of the Ninevites and believed that they did not deserve God’s mercy. He did not want to bring God’s word of judgment and offer of repentance to Nineveh.

Jonah’s disobedience caused him to run from God, but God used the great fish to bring him from reluctance to repentance, reminding him that salvation comes from the Lord.

2. Revival and Response

This time, Jonah obeyed God, and Nineveh repented, experiencing God’s mercy and forgiveness. His obedience resulted in possibly, the single largest evangelistic mass repentance of a Gentile nation recorded in the Bible. Yet Jonah was angry that God spared them, and he struggled to accept God’s compassion for those he believed undeserving. Jonah was in fact so angry that he asked God to take his life, for he felt it was better for him to die than to live.

God questioned Jonah if it was right for him to be angry and used an object lesson of the plant and the worm to reveal the condition of his heart.

3. Some interpretations of God’s lessons through the plant and the worm

In Jonah 4:5-11 God caused a leafy plant to grow and provide shade for Jonah. Jonah was delighted by the plant because it brought him comfort. But the next morning, God provided a worm to attack the plant, causing it to wither. Then God sent a scorching east wind, and Jonah became faint. Once again, Jonah declared that it was better for him to die than to live.

- a) The plant represents the grace and mercy of God. Jonah did nothing to earn it, yet he enjoyed its shade and comfort. In the same way, our success can only come from God and as for our salvation, we have done nothing to earn it – it is a gift of God's grace and mercy. Our appropriate response to God's grace and mercy is our surrender and to offer our lives as a living sacrifice to God. Romans 12:1.

The worm reminds us that Salvation is from God alone and we are not to take God's grace and mercy for granted. If we are thankful that we have been saved, then that same gratitude and urgency of saving souls need to apply to the people around us; need to be lived out in our lives and to be shared with others – Matthew 5:16

- b) The plant represents the people of Israel; a people saved by God. Israel can only thrive by the grace of God. Likewise, believers today are saved entirely by grace, and as we have been grafted in as spiritual Jews (Romans 2:28-29) we are called to live in dependence upon God.

The worm is a reminder that Israel only survives because of God and this reminder applies to us too.

- c) The plant represents the treasures of our hearts - what truly matters to man. What makes Jonah glad? Not the salvation of souls but his personal comfort. What makes Jonah so angry that he wished he was dead? Not the wickedness of Nineveh or the thought that souls may perish, but the loss of his shade and comfort. Jonah valued the comfort God provided more than God Himself. This reflects a reality about us – the treasures of man are temporary and self-centered. We value our comfort over our commission; personal needs over eternal concerns of others around us.

The worm is a test of true faith. Are we truly in it for God? Or is God just our means to an end for our self-benefit?

- d) The plant represents the brevity of human life. It grows and dies within a day. If Jonah mourned the brief life of one plant, how much more should God mourn the life of a hundred and twenty thousand people?

The worm is a reminder that life is finite; therefore, the salvation of souls is an urgent matter.

CONCLUSION

The book of Jonah ends with a rhetorical question posed by God. While it is not recorded how Jonah responded, the crux of the issue is how we should respond to God's question. Our response should be one of Compassion and Commission. We should grieve for those who are lost and do not yet know Jesus, and we should take actionable steps and point them to God. Let us wear the sandals of the gospel and peace and proclaim Christ to the people in Singapore.

QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever found yourself reluctant to show grace or share the gospel with someone that you felt was underserving? What made it difficult?

2. Jonah valued his personal comfort, while God valued the souls of Nineveh. What are some “plants” in our own lives that have distracted us from God’s call? What is one step you can take this week to put God’s mission above your own comfort?

3. Knowing that hundreds of thousands remain lost and have yet to know Jesus in our city Singapore, what is God calling you to do? Who or where is God inviting you to notice, care about and reach out to?