

## Jonah's Displeasure (v1)

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4:1 **But**

*ra`a`, 83x, to be bad, be evil  
- to be displeasing*

it **greatly displeased** **Jonah,**

*Yonah, 19x, dove; a native of Gath-hepher who prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II*

*Gadol, 529x, great; large in magnitude & extent, in number*  
and

As God's anger and displeasure subsided,  
Jonah's anger and displeasure grew!

**he became angry.**

*Charah, 90x, to be hot, furious, burn, become angry, be kindled*

4:2 **And**

*Palal, 84x, to intervene, pray, to intercede*

**he prayed to the LORD**

*Yehovah, 6519x, the existing One; self existent or eternal*

and

## Jonah's Angry Prayer (v2-3)

Jonah's complaint about God! He didn't want God to show compassion on Nineveh! He wanted Nineveh destroyed!

said,

*'anna,' 13x, ah now! I/we beseech you, oh now!, pray now! (participle of entreaty usually followed by the imperative verb)*

**"Please LORD,**

*Dabar, 1143x, to speak, declare, command, warn*

*'adamah, 225x, ground, land*

was not this what **I said** while **I** was still in **my** own **country**?

# Jonah's Angry Prayer (v2-3)

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Therefore,

*Qadam*, 26x, to meet, come or be in front, confront, go before - be beforehand, anticipate, forestall

in order to forestall this

I fled to Tarshish,

*Barach*, 65x, to go through, flee, run away, chase, hurry away

for

*Tarshiysh*, 28x, yellow jasper; site unknown but perhaps in Cyprus or Spain, a city of the Phoenicians in a distant part of the Mediterranean Sea to which the prophet Jonah was trying to flee, a city somewhere near & accessible to the Red Sea to which ships constructed at Ezion-geber on the Elanitic Gulf on the Red Sea were to sail

*yada`*, 947x, to know

I knew that Thou art a gracious

*Channuwn*, adj, 13x, gracious

and *Rachuwm*, adj, 13x, compassionate - always of God with one possible exception

compassionate God, *'elohiym*, 2606x, the (true) God, God

*'arek*, adj, 15x, long (pinions), patient, slow to anger

slow to anger

*'aph*, 276x, nostril, nose, face; anger

and

*Rab*, 458x, adj, much, many, great, abounding in, abundant

*Chesed*, 248x, goodness, kindness, faithfulness

abundant in lovingkindness,

and

*Nacham*, 108x, to be sorry, console oneself, repent, regret, comfort, be comforted - to be sorry, be moved to pity, have compassion

one who relents concerning calamity.

*ra*: bad, disagreeable, malignant; evil (giving pain, unhappiness & misery), wicked (ethically) / calamity, misfortune, distress

# Jonah's Angry Prayer (v2-3)

4:3 "Therefore now, O LORD,

*Laqach*, 965x, to take, lay hold of, seize, snatch, take away  
*Nephesh*, 751x, soul, self, life, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, passion

please take my life from me,

*na'*, particle, 9x, I (we) pray, now, please - used in entreaty or exhortation

*Maveth*, 160x, death, dying, state of death, place of death

for

*Chayay*, 23x, to live, have life, remain alive, sustain life, live prosperously, live for ever, be quickened, be alive, be restored to life or health



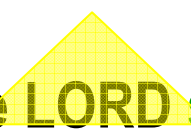
is better to me than life."

*Tob*, 559x, adj, good, pleasant, agreeable better (comparative)

# The Lord's Question (v4)

4:4 And

*'amar*, 5308x, to say, speak, utter



the LORD said,

*Yatab*, 107x, to be good, be pleasing, be well, be glad

*Charah*, 90x, to be hot, furious, burn, become angry, be kindled

"Do you have good reason to be angry?"

# What Jonah Did (v5)

4:5 Then



*Yatsa'*, 1069x, to go out, come out, exit, go forth



went out from the city

*'iyar* or (plural) *'ar* or *'ayar*, 1089x, excitement, anguish (of terror); city, town (a place of waking, guarded)

and

*Yashab*, 1088x, to dwell, remain, sit, abide

sat east of it.

## What Jonah Did (v5)

There

*`asah*, 2633x, to do, fashion, accomplish, make

**he made a shelter for himself**

Sukkah, 31x, thicket, covert, booth (rude or temporary shelter)

and

*Yashab*, 1088x, to dwell, remain, sit, abide

*Tsel*, 49x, shade (as protection), shadow (symbolic of transitoriness of life)

**sat under it in the shade**

*`iyar* or (plural) *`ar* or *`ayar*, 1089x, city, town (a place of waking, guarded)

*Hayah*, 74x, to be, come to pass, exist, to come into being,

**until he could see what would happen in the city.**

*ra'ah*, 1313x, to see, look at, inspect, perceive, consider

4:6 So

*Yehovah*, 6519x, the existing One; self-existent or eternal

*Manah*, 28x, to count, assign, appoint, prepare

**the LORD God appointed a plant**

*Qiyqayon*, 5x, a plant perhaps a gourd, castor-oil plant, bottle-gourd

*'elohiyim*, 2606x, the (true) God, God

and

*Tsel*, 49x, shade (as protection), shadow (symbolic of transitoriness of life)

## The Plant (v6)

**it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head**

*'alah*, 889x, to go up, ascend, climb

*Natsal*, 213x, to snatch away, deliver, rescue, save

**to deliver him from his discomfort.**

And

*Gadol*, 529x, great; large in magnitude & extent, in number

*Samach*, 152x, to rejoice, be glad

**Jonah was extremely happy about the plant.**

*ra*: bad, disagreeable, malignant; evil (giving pain, unhappiness & misery), wicked (ethically) / calamity, misfortune, distress

## What the LORD Did (v6-7)

4:7 **But**

'*elohiym*, 2606x, the (true) God, God

*Tola'*, 6x, "worm"

'*alah*, 889x, to go up, to come

God appointed a worm when dawn came the next day,

*Manah*, 28x, to count, assign, appoint, prepare

*Shachar*, 24x, dawn

and

The Worm (v7)

it attacked the plant

*Qiyqayon*, 5x, a plant perhaps a gourd, castor-oil plant, bottle-gourd

*Nakah*, 500x, to strike, smite, hit, beat, slay, kill - attack and destroy, ravage, to be blighted (of plants)

and

it withered.

*Yabesh*, 78x, to make dry, wither, be dry, become dry, be dried up, be withered

4:8 **And**

Jonah's Desire to Die (v8)

it came about

*Shemesh*, 134x, sun, sunrise

'*alah*, 889x, to go up, to come

when the sun came up

*Manah*, 28x, to count, assign, appoint, prepare

*Chariyshiy*, adj, 1x, harsh, hot, sultry, silent (meaning uncertain)

*Ruach*, 378x, wind, breath, mind, spirit Spirit of God,

that God appointed a scorching east wind,

# Jonah's Desire to Die (v8)

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and

*Nakah, 500x, to strike, smite, hit, beat, slay, kill - attack and destroy, ravage, to be blighted (of plants)*

the sun beat down on Jonah's head

*Shemesh, 134x, sun, sunrise*

so that

*'alaph, 5x, to cover - enwrap oneself, faint*

he became faint

and

*sha'al, 173x, to ask, enquire, borrow, beg*

*Nephesh, 751x, soul, self, life, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, passion*

begged with all his soul to die,

*'amar, 5308x, to say, speak, utter*

*Muth, 835x, to die, kill, have one executed*

saying,

*Tob, 559x, adj, good, pleasant, agreeable better (comparative)*

“Death is better to me than life.”

# God's Question (v9a)

*Maveth, 160x, death, dying, state of death, place of death*

*Chayay, 23x, to live, have life, remain alive, sustain life, live prosperously, live for ever, be quickened, be alive, be restored to life or health*

4:9 Then



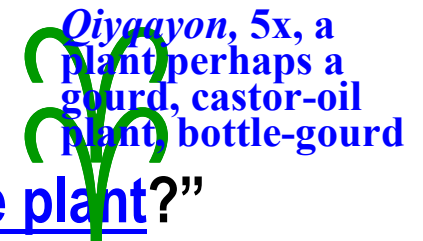
*'amar, 5308x, to say, speak, utter*

God said to Jonah,

*Yatab, 107x, to be good, be pleasing, be well, be glad*

*Charah, 90x, to be hot, furious, burn, become angry, be kindled*

“Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?”



# Jonah's Stubborn Answer (v9b)

And

'amar, 5308x, to say, speak, utter

he said,

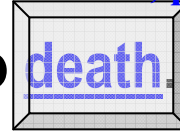
Yatab, 107x, to be good, be pleasing, be well, be glad

"I have good reason to be angry,

Maveth, 160x, death, dying, state of death, place of death

Charah, 90x, to be hot, furious, burn, become angry, be kindled

even to



4:10 Then



'amar, 5308x, to say, speak, utter

the LORD said,

Oiyqayon, 5x, a plant perhaps a gourd, castor-oil plant, bottle-gourd

"You had compassion on the plant

Chus, 24x, to pity, have compassion, spare, look upon with compassion

amal, 11x, to labour, toil

for which you did not work,

and

Gadal, 115x, to grow, become great

which you did not cause to grow,

which came up overnight

and

'abad, 184x, perish, vanish, be destroyed, die

perished overnight.

## The LORD's Response (v10-11)

4:11

“And

*Chus, 24x, to pity, have compassion, spare, look upon with compassion*

should I not have compassion on **Nineveh,**

*Niyneveh, 17x, abode of Ninus, capital of the ancient kingdom of Assyria; located on the east bank of the Tigris river, 550 miles (880 km) from its mouth and 250 miles (400 km) north of Babylon*

*Gadol, 529x, great; large in magnitude & extent, in number*

**the great city**

*`iyr or (plural) `ar or `ayar, 1089x, city, town (a place of waking, guarded)*

*'adam, 552x, man, mankind*

in **which** there are more than **120,000 persons**

*yada, 947x, to know*

**who do not know the difference**

between **their right**

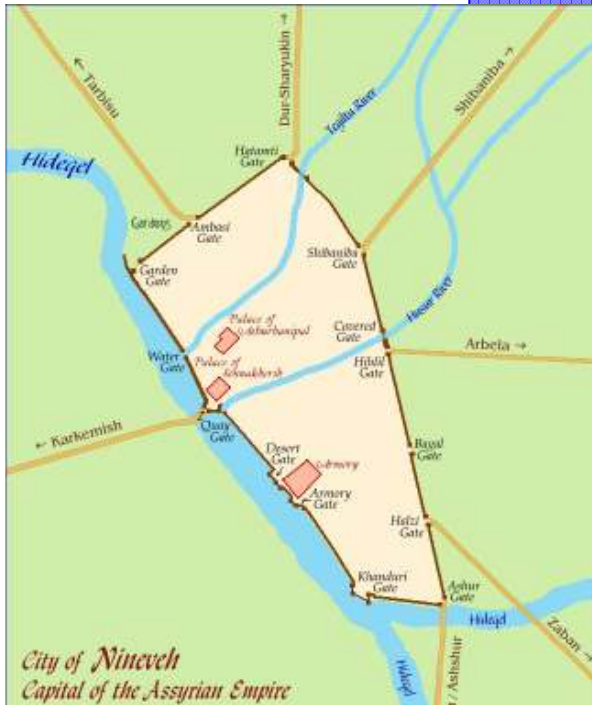
and

left hand,

as well as many animals?”

**The LORD's Response (v10-11)**

**The Lesson for Jonah (v10-11)**



It contained in circuit about 48 miles, and had 1500 towers

# Jonah and the LORD / Learning about the LORD

## The Resentment / God's Pity Demonstrated / The Pouting Prophet

Verses 1-4			Verses 5-9				Verses 10-11		
<b>The Prophet Pouts</b>			<b>How God Deals with a Pouting Prophet</b>						
Jonah's Displeasure (v1)	Jonah's Angry Prayer (v2-3)	The LORD's Question (v4)	What Jonah Did (v5)	What the LORD Did (v6-7)		Jonah's Desire to Die (v8)	The LORD's Question (v9a)	Jonah's Stubborn Answer (v9b)	The LORD's Response (v10-11)
				The Plant (v6)	The Worm (v7)				
<b>Jonah's Quarrel with God</b>			<b>God's Patience with Jonah</b>						

**Principles:** (1) God is exactly who He reveals Himself to be: the gracious & compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and One who relents concerning calamity (Jonah 4:2) (2) God is in the business of mastering the hearts of His people. He is tremendously patient with His own children and leans over backwards in His dealings with us. But this does not mean that you can take advantage of this and do what you want, Ultimately God is still God and He will do exactly as He wills (because that's best for all). (3) We must never overstep the bounds that God lays down and sin presumptuously against the Lord (see Psalm 19:7-14)

## God Mastering Jonah's Heart

God issues a command that tests Jonah's heart. It caused his own prejudices and presumptuous thoughts to surface – seen in his deciding that he knew better than God how to govern His world and running away instead of bowing the knee (even when he doesn't understand) and obeying God regardless of how he feels

Consequences: he nearly drowned and ended up in a fish's belly while the sailors had a harrowing experience and lost all their cargo. When Jonah cried out for help, God sent a fish which swallowed him up (1:17). Once he revived, and found that he was still alive and realized that God was not through with him yet, he thought through his harrowing experience and repented and pledged himself again to obey God and do whatever God willed.

God commanded the fish and it spit Jonah out onto dry land.

Jonah was now a "changed" man in every sense of the word! He would have gone to Jerusalem to fulfill his vow and offer sacrifices of thanksgiving to God. He would have proclaimed God's power and greatness to everyone who asked. He must also have gone back to the school of prophets to inform them of his absence and what God had told him to do.

God issued the second call to Jonah with a slightly different commission (1:1-2; cf. 3:1-2)

Having re-provisioned, Jonah made his way to Nineveh. If one travels 20 miles a day & Nineveh being about 600 miles away, it would take Jonah more than a month, resting every Sabbath. He would have ample opportunities to speak about God's power and grace to everyone he met. News would go ahead of Jonah to Nineveh and to other places.

Once he arrived in Nineveh and had rested, he walked one day's journey (20 miles) around Nineveh, and began proclaiming the word God gave him, "Yet 40 days and Nineveh will be overthrown."

The men in Nineveh asked him many questions which he must have answered to the best of his ability.

To his amazement, the Ninevites believed him and began to repent. He must have been housed by one of them and as more and more people came to him (he seemed not to have needed to travel any more), he would have told them his own experiences with God and also the way of escaping this judgment.

As the 40th day neared, even the king repented and when the proclamation for all in Nineveh to repent went forth, Jonah began to realize that the word the Lord gave him included a possibility of non-destruction!

The word "overthrown", haphak, basically means a change, either for the better or for the worse, but in 40 days, the fate of Nineveh will be decided.

This caused something to surface in Jonah's heart – his narrow minded prejudice and his presumption!

Jonah became angry with God! (4:1) He prayed an angry prayer (4:2-3)

When God asked him whether he had good reason to be angry (4:4), he probably thought that God may yet send judgment on Nineveh so he went out of the city and sat down to see what would happen (4:5). This must have been the 40th day.

He made a shade for himself and sat under the shade in the hot sun to see what would happen in the city. (4:5) He was very uncomfortable because of his sensitive skin. The people are still repenting, fasting and praying in the city.

The 41st day came (Jewish days begin about 6 pm) and God appointed a plant which grew up very quickly (overnight, 4:10) to relieve Jonah's discomfort.

When Jonah woke up and found himself under the shade of the plant, he was extremely happy about the plant (4:6). He was still displeased that God did not judge Nineveh though. He just didn't want to deal with it right now. He narrowed his focus on just his physical circumstances.

But when dawn came the next day (the 42nd day), God appointed a worm to destroy the plant (4:7). Then God appointed a scorching east wind and the sun beat down on Jonah's head that he wanted to die just from his discomfort (4:8).

"Life was terrible! The Ninevites are not destroyed! He would have to go back to Israel and tell his people that God relented instead of destroying them because they repented! What was he going to do? What would they say? And to top it all, this horrible land, this horrible people, this horrible sun, and this horrible wind – I just want to die! Lord, let me die! Life is not worth living any more!"

God asked, "Do you have good reason to be angry about the plant?" and Jonah's answer was "I have good reason to be angry, even to death" (4:9).

Jonah was seething with anger, especially at God. He had become very unreasonable.

What did God do?

The Lord said, "You had compassion on the plant for which you did not work, and which you did not cause to grow, which came up overnight and perished overnight. And should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?" (4:10-11)

God gently reminded Jonah, "You reserve the right to show compassion on a plant which you did not work for or grow – a plant which is a non-living thing, whose 'death' you were concerned over, but you forbid Me to show compassion for Nineveh which has more than 120,000 innocent children as well as many animals!"

The account ends here – with an angry Jonah and a compassionate God reasoning with an unreasonable prophet.

Did Jonah repent? How would you know?

Jonah packed up and left Nineveh. Whether he said "Goodbye" to his hosts or not, no one knows. Somewhere along the long journey home, the Spirit of the compassionate God worked on his stubborn, hard heart and by the time he arrived home and people asked him, "How did things go?" or "What happened to you?"

Jonah began his story, "The word of the LORD came to... (1:1-4:11).

## Lessons for Us Today

When we come to faith in Christ and are born again, there are many unpleasant and ungodly things still left in our hearts, "enemies still in the land of your life" that still require confronting and digging out.

It begins with identifying what that thing is. Once identified, we pray to God to remove it from us. Then we do our part and deal with this issue until it's overcome and your heart is a little more cleansed. Then the process starts all over again with another issue. GOD will bring it up, you don't need to search for it.

As God was so gentle and patient with Jonah, so He will be with us as well. He allows us so much leeway that we are in danger of overstepping the bounds and forgetting that THIS is ALMIGHTY GOD we're dealing with and that He answers to NONE for His actions!

**Q:** What would God do if I decide to disobey His clear will and run away?

**A:** He would still go after us and bring circumstances into our lives that would force us to deal with the issue.

**Q:** But what if we persist in continual disobedience?

**A:** Jeremiah 6:22-30 has the answer.

The Prophecy against Israel (v22-23)

The Response of the Prophet on Behalf of the People (v24-26)

The Lord's Word to the Prophet (v27-30)

**Q:** How would God respond (since He knows all things) to my insincere capitulations? Note that Jonah cried out for help when drowning and God saved him, but that it took three long days in the fish's belly before he agreed to his vows to the Lord. It seems to imply that he probably promised to obey God while drowning.

**A:** God is patient and kind and He works with us on the basis of where we are at that moment. How many times have we promised to obey God and then break it after a few days, simply ignore it or forgot about it once a crisis is over?

God still deals with us where we are and He works continually to bring us to the point of obedience from the heart! We truly serve a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness and one who relents of calamity (4:2)!

**Q:** Since God never changes and His ways are always the same, how would God deal with you when you refuse to obey His clear will? What would God do when you partially obey Him, i.e., do what He says but your heart is not in it? What would God do when you are angry with Him for saving your enemy or blessing your opponents?

**A:** The book of Jonah has the answer.

## The Jonah Spirit

What is the "Jonah Spirit" all about? Scripture is a mirror into which we can see our own hearts. We are told to judge ourselves with the same measure with which we judge others (see Matthew 7:1-5). So before we judge Jonah, let us first judge ourselves.

The Jonah Spirit = Jonah's attitude throughout this book

### How contrary is the Jonah spirit:

- When God wanted Jonah to preach a message of judgment to Nineveh, Jonah ran away
- When God raised up a storm to rock Jonah's ship, Jonah was sleeping
- When men cry desperately to their own gods for help, Jonah was sleeping
- When Jonah was found out to be the cause of all their problems, the men tried to save him, but Jonah didn't care one way or other
- When thrown into the sea and near death, he cried out to God for help and was saved, yet when the Ninevites cried out to God for forgiveness and were forgiven, Jonah got angry
- Jonah said he would pay his vows to the Lord and he preached to Nineveh, yet when the result was mercy rather than destruction, Jonah was displeased and prayed to die
- The Ninevites were praying for deliverance, Jonah was praying for judgment
- As God's anger and displeasure at Nineveh subsided, Jonah's anger and displeasure increased
- This last incident with the plant illustrates the Jonah spirit more than all the others.
- Jonah showed more emotion over the death of a plant than the deaths of an entire city of Nineveh with more than 120,000 children and many animals!
- What is the lesson that God was trying to teach Jonah? Note that God went to incredible lengths to communicate this to Jonah and thus it must be very important and must be for our instruction as well (see 1 Corinthians 10:6,11; Romans 15:4)!
- God is more gracious, compassionate and merciful than any human being could ever be! Don't judge God by ourselves! Don't judge His actions or question His decisions! Just obey because HE IS GOD!
- Jonah was not alone in his desire to see his enemies destroyed. Our Lord Jesus also had to rebuke two of His disciples as well (see Luke 9:51-56)

For more information, see the comments of

- 1) Robert C Stone at [w.eagleflight.org/characters/jonah4.html](http://w.eagleflight.org/characters/jonah4.html)
- 2) Robert E Young, <http://www.idolphin.org/jonah/jonah4.html>