



Introduction

By the end of chapter three the citizens of Nineveh had heard the Word of the Savior God, had been brought to rely on His mercy and were turning away from their evil and violence. Undoubtedly they were overjoyed to know the peace that surpasses all human understanding. Undoubtedly the LORD of life was delighted to have these souls called out of darkness into His marvelous light. Apparently more days remained on the forty day countdown *clock*. So where, physically, psychologically, and spiritually is the prophet Jonah at this time?

Contemplate the visual illustration above.

How does the illustrator answer the question “where is the prophet Jonah at this time?”

List below several of the features you see conveyed / highlighted by the illustrator.

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4:1**“But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.”**Literally: “**It** was evil to Jonah, a great evil, and he became hot (i.e. *it infuriated him*).”*That God did not bring upon Nineveh the destruction he had threatened.*

The words intend to relay the intensity stirring inside Jonah!

This goes way beyond being bothered. This is deeply troubling rage at ...

So off base, so out of step is Jonah that ... *(finish the thought)***4:2**

He prayed to **the LORD**, “**O LORD**, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

Provide your reaction to the following phrases ... *(one more is found on the next page)*He (Jonah) prayed to **the LORD** —

This is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish —

I knew ... you are gracious —

I knew ... you are slow to anger —

So off base, so out of step is Jonah that ... *(finish the thought)*

4:3

“Now, O LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”



Rather than thank the LORD for sparing the citizens of Nineveh, Jonah concludes this bitter prayer of reproach with his death wish ultimatum!

WHY?

So off base, so out of step is Jonah that ... *(finish the thought)*

cf. “That’s Not Fair!” Task on the AFTERHOURTASK sheet

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16)

The Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-31)

4:4

But the LORD replied, “Have you any right to be angry?”



In the margin of my Bible I have penned:

“This so could have gone a different direction” ... why do you suppose someone might write those words next to Jonah 4:4?

4:4 *continued ...*

Note:

This “Have you any right to be angry?” is a penetrating question we would do well to ask ourselves when the burn of anger kindles inside!

Jonah doesn't record a verbal reply to this question.

4:5

Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city.



What does this verse tell you about Jonah?

Caution: “isolation can make us even more inwardly turned”

4:6

Then **the LORD God provided a vine and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the vine.**



What does this verse tell you about your LORD?

What does it tell you about Jonah?

What application are you able to make to your life?

4:7-8

But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the vine so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live."



The LORD God allows Jonah to experience exposure to a cutting blast.

God provided / prepared / appointed ... -

a worm -

a scorching east wind -

Again, Jonah wants to die (death wish II) — *apparently talking to himself*

4:9

But God said to Jonah, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?" "I do," he said. "I am angry enough to die."



Anger ... Anger ... Anger - anger is still *driving the bus* for Jonah.

What does Jonah's anger reveal about him at this time?

- his lack of understanding
- his lack of self-control
- his lack of trust
- his lack of balance
- his self-interest
- his self-pity
- other:*

4:10

But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight.



How does the LORD advance the object lesson for Jonah?

4:11

But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?”



“more than 120,000 who cannot tell their right hand from their left”

- Some interpret this as a standard expression for a multitude or an immeasurably large quantity.
- Many interpret this as referring to the youths who had not reached the age of discretion (cf. Deuteronomy 1:39).

NOTE:

This book ends right where it “ought” ... talking of divine compassion!

The abrupt ending does not offer up Jonah’s answer to the question but it leaves no doubt as to how the LORD wanted Jonah (and us) to answer it.

One commentator writes:

“It is a question meant to disturb the complaisant people of complaisant churches who would claim God’s unlimited mercy to themselves but would limit it to others.”

Reaction?

AFTER-HOUR TASK

**Optional
extra task**

After the webcast concludes you are invited to “continue the discussion” by completing the following tasks.

ANGER ... ANGER ... ANGER

Proverbs 29:11

“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.”

Find some other Scriptural verses about anger then have a brief discussion in view of the truths relayed by Scripture.

THAT’S NOT FAIR!

Finish what we started ... look at these parables then discuss & draw comparisons to Jonah and us.

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16)

The Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-31)

TOP FIVE TAKE-AWAYS

Each participant is to list their top five takeaways from Jonah 4 (or the entire book if you decide to “allow” for a broader approach to this exercise) ... then compare and discuss your lists.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)