

Jonah 4 Sample Observations

Based on the English Standard Version

Jonah 4:1-4. Title: Jonah was greatly displeased and angry at God for sparing Nineveh. He requested he might die. God wonders aloud if Jonah has the right attitude. Jonah does not respond.

4:1. WHO? Jonah

WHAT? But it displeased Jonah exceedingly,

WHAT WAS HIS REACTION? And he was very angry

4:2. WHO? Jonah and Yahweh

WHAT? And he prayed to the LORD and said,

WHAT DID HE SAY? “O LORD, is not this what I said when I was Where?

In my country?

That is why I made haste to flee TO WHERE? To Tarshish

WHY? For I knew that You are

a gracious God

and merciful

slow to anger

and abounding in steadfast love,

and relenting from disaster.

SO WHAT? This is quite a catalog of God’s moral qualities. Do we have this good an understanding of God? Jonah understood God well, but not well enough to share God’s character traits! How well do we share His character traits?

4:3. WHAT WAS JONAH’S REQUEST?

“Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me,

WHY? For it is better for me to die than to live.”

4:4. HOW DID YAHWEH RESPOND?

And the LORD said,

“Do you do well to be angry?”

SO WHAT? It is not hard to notice that Jonah was so upset with God that he didn’t even answer Him! Do we get that way? Do we get so disgusted with God that we refuse to talk to Him?

Jonah 4:5-8. Title: Jonah sat at the east of the city to see what would become of Nineveh. God appointed a plant, a worm, and a scorching east wind to comfort, then dismay Jonah, who again requested to die.

4:5. WHO? Jonah

WHAT DID HE DO? He went WHERE?

Out of the city

and sat to the east of the city

WHAT ELSE DID HE DO?

He made a booth for himself there.

He sat under it in the shade

WHY? Until he should see what would become of the city

4:6. WHAT DID THE LORD (YAHWEH) DO?

Now the LORD God appointed ¹ a plant and made it come up over Jonah,

¹ Jonah 4:6 - appointed: The [Piel](#) Sequential [Imperfect](#) 3rd Masculine Singular of the verb maná ([4487](#)), “to appoint, ordain” ([OBU](#)). This form of this verb appears 4X in Jonah: Jonah 1:17 (great fish); 4:6 (plant); 4:7 (worm); 4:8 (scorching east wind).

WHY? That it might be a shade over his head

FOR WHAT PURPOSE? To save him from his discomfort

WHAT WAS JONAH'S REACTION? So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant.

4:7. WHEN? But when dawn came up the next day

WHO / WHAT? God appointed ² a worm that attacked the plant

WHAT HAPPENED? So that it withered.

4:8 WHEN? When the sun rose

WHO / WHAT? God appointed ³ a scorching east wind

WHAT HAPPENED? And the sun beat down on the head of Jonah

WITH WHAT RESULT? So that he was faint

WHAT DID JONAH SAY?

And he asked that he might die

and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

WHY? Why did God appoint a nice plant to comfort Jonah, then send a worm and a scorching east wind to make life miserable for him?

Jonah 4:9-11. Title: God asked Jonah to justify his anger at the dead plant, then asked Jonah why He, God, should not have compassion on the children and cattle of Nineveh!

4:9. WHO? But God said to Jonah

WHAT DID HE ASK? "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?"

² Jonah 4:7 - appointed: The [Piel](#) Sequential [Imperfect](#) 3rd Masculine Singular of the verb [maná \(4487\)](#), "to appoint, ordain" ([OBU](#)). This form of this verb appears 4X in Jonah: Jonah 1:17 (great fish); 4:6 (plant); 4:7 (worm); 4:8 (scorching east wind).

³ Jonah 4:8 - appointed: The [Piel](#) Sequential [Imperfect](#) 3rd Masculine Singular of the verb [maná \(4487\)](#), "to appoint, ordain" ([OBU](#)). This form of this verb appears 4X in Jonah: Jonah 1:17 (great fish); 4:6 (plant); 4:7 (worm); 4:8 (scorching east wind).

HOW DID JONAH RESPOND? And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die!"

4:10. WHAT DID YAHWEH ANSWER BACK? And the LORD said,

"You pity the plant,
for which you did not labor,
nor did you make it grow,
which came into being in a night
and perished in a night."

4:11. "And should I not pity Nineveh,

that great city,
in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from
their left,⁴
and also much cattle?"⁵

SO WHAT? It is easy for us to get emotionally upset about the loss of small, accidental comforts in our lives, but very difficult for us to share God's compassion for the perishing people around us!

FINAL QUESTION #1: This book ends with God asking Jonah some very probing, even embarrassing questions. Jonah never answered. Did he ever get the message?

FINAL QUESTION #2: What is the BIG IDEA of the book of Jonah?

FINAL QUESTION #3: Are you living out the BIG IDEA in your own life?

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⁴ Jonah 4:11 - who are these 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left?

⁵ Jonah 4:11 - what is the point of discussing cattle?