

# JONAH 4:1-4 I TOLD YOU SO

## FOR FURTHER STUDY

In the first three chapters we have seen some intense action. Until this passage, we have not been made fully aware of some of the thoughts and reasoning in Jonah's heart and mind. Now the gloves come off.

**4:1**—This verse is difficult to translate without seeming unnecessarily redundant. In the original it is sharp, fiery and emphatic. Translated in a literal way, the verse may read “*But it was displeasing to Jonah with great anger, and it burned to him.*” Baldwin translates the verse this way: “*But Jonah was deeply offended and furious.*” See **Genesis 4:3-8** for a parallel.

**4:2**—This verse may be the most important in the entire book. Here we see, in full, Jonah's reason for fleeing the LORD, and we get it from his own mouth. This verse is ominous in affect and terrible in its consequences.

Notice the following contrast between hope and knowledge:

**Jonah 1:6**—Sailors—*Perhaps your god will be concerned about us...*

**Jonah 3:9**—King of Nineveh—*Who knows? God may turn and relent...*

**Jonah 4:2**—Jonah—*For I knew that You are gracious and compassionate...*

It is important to see Jonah's honesty in this verse. He no longer hides from the truth of his actions. However, he turns God's character, celebrated as a marriage of **Exodus 34:6** and **Joel 2:13**, into an accusation, an indictment! He blames God's character for his disobedience.

**4:3**—Here Jonah resembles both Elijah and Job on their worst days. *Someone needs to go, he says. Them or me!* See **1 Kings 19:4**; **Job 6:8-9**; **7:15-16**.

**4:4**—God responds to Jonah with a powerfully subtle question. Think for a second about all of the other ways the Almighty could have responded. Notice that Jonah does not answer. We are left envisioning a sulking, pouty prophet, with arms folded, convinced that He is right and God is wrong.

Here the contrasts reach a highpoint:

**Jonah 1:13-16**—*Sailors* respond honestly to God, feared greatly, made vows

**Jonah 2:2-9**—*Jonah* acknowledges God but fails to confess or repent

**Jonah 3:5-9**—*Nineveh and her king* believe and exhibit sincere repentance

**Jonah 4:1-8**—*Jonah* again acknowledges God but continues in pouty self-justification and defiance. The remainder of the chapter does not get better.



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# APPLICATION

I hope you are getting as much out of our study of Jonah as I am. I am the same time encouraged and convicted, comforted and warned.

The truth is that we are all a *Jonah* in some way, every single one of us. We all have fled God's calling and presence and sought our own devices. However large or small the scale of our actions, we resemble Jonah more than we want to admit.

This passage reveals a very difficult conversation, one that is almost embarrassing to be in on. It does not cast Jonah in a positive light. As always, we must work to sharpen this text into personal application and life change.

When have you been angry with God?

Are you angry with Him now? It doesn't scare him, you know.

Do you voice your fears, doubts, concerns and frustrations directly to God?

Do you cry out in "brutal" honesty like many of the Psalms do?

*"LORD, will you forget me forever?" "Why have you forsaken me?"*

*"Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?"*

Or are you passive aggressive with God?

How would you describe your fellowship and communication with God?

Fearful? Comfortable? Honest? Cordial? Stuffy? Nervous? Rare?

What are you "hiding" from God?

What part of your heart, mind or life is "off limits" to God?

What about your life do you think would "shock and surprise" God?

## Continuing Special Application:

**Are you willing** to be used by God in the life of just ONE person?

Think of ONE friend or acquaintance or neighbor **that does not know Jesus**. Ask God to bring the name of just ONE person to your mind.

Send us only their FIRST name, or even write it down this morning, so that we can join you in prayer for these people that God so loves.

