

# Jonah 4:2, 3 Notes

## JONAH 4: 2, 3

### AN AWKARD PRAYER

- Jonah was afraid of being stigmatized.
- This fear was unnecessary since God had given the command, and God was totally in charge.
- It has been said that melancholy men are apt to make themselves uneasy by fancying evils to themselves that are not, nor are ever likely to be. Most of our frets, as well as our frights, are owing to the power of imagination.

Jonah's quarrel with God is now found in these two verses, [Jonah 4: 2, 3](#). Note: When his heart was distraught, his lips spoke un-advisedly. *"He prayed unto the Lord..."* not like the prayer prayed from the fish's belly – this is an expression of discontent. Affliction teaches us to pray submissively, not haughtily. Mental corruption got ahead of heart grace. He now complains about God being merciful to others.

1. First He begins to justify himself in fleeing from the presence of the Lord. *"Lord, was not this MY saying when I was in MY own country".* ([Jonah 4: 2](#)) *"I TOLD YOU SO!"* I could foresee that if I went to preach to Nineveh that they would repent and you would forgive! **"ACTUALLY JONAH WAS DREADING THE SUCCESS OF HIS MINISTRY."** He described God here as a "gracious God, and a Merciful God, slow to anger, and abounding in Love." which is all true! But he says this as if to say that there is something wrong with that kind of a God. That's strange thinking. That's absurd. Something is wrong when a person quarrels and has a spirit of contention and contradiction with the goodness of God. **BAD THINKING = BAD CONCLUSIONS.**
2. Secondly, his self-pity gets the best of him ([Jonah 4: 3](#)). *"Therefore, now, O Lord, take my life from me, I beseech thee, for it is better for me to die than to live."* Is this it: *"If Nineveh must live, let me die, rather than see thy word and mine disproved, rather than see the glory of Israel transferred to the Gentiles."* Remember: When Jonah came out of the fish's stomach, he thought life was a valuable commodity – considering that "he was brought up from corruption" ([Jonah 2: 6](#)). Now in self-pity he whines to die!

## Jonah 4:2, 3 Notes (Continued)

Paul said: “*For me to live CHRIST, die GAIN*” ([Phil.1: 21](#)). Jonah said, “*O Lord, take my life*”. Wow – what folly! It could be said that Jonah is at a point of great usefulness since Nineveh is responding in a positive way. What about the whole kingdom of Assyria? Jonah needs to be ready to really live – which is always the way to be really ready to die. In ancient days tailors, weavers and spinners used different types of dye for clothing. A tailor could say:

*“I LIVE TO DYE; I DIE TO LIVE  
THE MORE I LIVE, THE MORE I DYE,  
THE MORE I DYE, THE MORE I LIVE.”*