

# Jonah

**1** Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, **2** "Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry out against it; for their evil has come up before me." **3** But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord. **4** But the Lord threw a great wind into the sea, and such a great storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. **5** Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his gods. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. **6** The captain came and said to him, "What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your gods! Perhaps the gods will spare us a thought so that we do not perish." **7** The sailors said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. **8** Then they said to him, "Tell us why this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" **9** "I am a Hebrew," he replied. "I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." **10** Then the men feared a great fear, and said to him, "What is this that you have done!" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them so. **11** Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quieten down for us?" For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. **12** He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quieten down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you." **13** Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more

and more stormy against them. 14 Then they cried out to the Lord, "Please, O Lord, we pray, do not let us perish on account of this man's life. Do not make us guilty of innocent blood; for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you."

15 So they picked Jonah up and **threw him into the sea**; and the sea ceased from its raging. 16 Then the men feared the Lord even more, and they offered a

sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

*sailors repent, foreshadowing Nineveh*

17 But the Lord **appointed** a **great fish** to

swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.

*rhetical use of three, like Jonah's three-fold descent*

**2** Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying,

"I called to the Lord out of my distress,  
and he answered  
me;

out of the belly of Sheol I cried,  
and you heard my voice.

3 You cast me  
into the deep,  
into the heart of the seas,  
and the flood surrounded me;  
all

your waves and your billows  
passed over me.

4 Then I said, "I am driven  
away

from your sight;  
how shall I look again  
upon your holy temple?"

5 The  
waters closed in over me;  
the deep surrounded me;  
weeds were wrapped around  
my head

6 at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land  
whose bars

closed upon me for ever;  
yet you brought up my life from the Pit,  
O Lord my  
God.

7 As my life was ebbing away,  
I remembered the Lord;  
and my prayer came

to you,  
into your holy temple. 8 Those who worship vain idols  
forsake their  
true loyalty.  
9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving  
will sacrifice to  
you;  
what I have vowed I will pay.  
Deliverance belongs to the Lord!"

10 Then the Lord spoke to the fish, and it **vomited** Jonah out **to the dry land**.

second part of book parallels first part: call of Jonah, Jonah's response, disaster (real or proclaimed), prayer & repentance of non-Israelites, encounter between God and Jonah

**3** The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, 2 "Arise, **go** to

Nineveh, **the great city**, and proclaim **to it** the message that I tell you." 3 So  
**concern**

Jonah **arose** and **went** to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now  
**same verb (agreement with God's command)**

Nineveh was a **great city** to God, a three days' **walk** across. 4 Jonah began  
**another rhetorical use of three**

to go into the city, going a day's **walk**. And he cried out, "Forty days more,

and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God;

**entire recorded message is five words in Hebrew: עוד ארבעים יום וינינה נהפכת**  
they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, **from great to small**, put on sackcloth. 6

When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he **arose** from his throne, removed  
**unlike Jonah, king rises immediately**  
his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 Then he had a

proclamation made in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: No

human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not

feed, nor shall they drink water. 8 Human beings and animals shall be covered  
**totality of repentance**

with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall **turn** from their

**evil** ways and from the violence that is in their hands. 9 Who knows? God may

**turn** and **change his mind**; he may **turn** from his fierce **wrath**, so that we do

not perish." 10 When God saw what they did, how they **turned** from their **evil**

ways, God **changed his mind** about the **evil** that he had said he would bring

upon them; and he did not do it.

**4** But it was **evil** to Jonah, a very **great evil**, and

he became **angry**. 2 He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I **while God felt compassion, Jonah felt anger** said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious **God** and merciful, slow to **wrath**, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from **evil**. **i.e., punishing**

3 And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is **better** for me to die than to live." 4 And the Lord said, "Is it **good** for you to be **angry**?" 5 Then **God asks, but Jonah doesn't answer when it concerns Nineveh** Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. 6 The Lord **God appointed** a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to shade him from his **evil**; so Jonah was happy about the bush, a **great happiness**. **= suffering**

7 But when dawn came up the next day, **God appointed** a worm that **attacked** the bush, so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, **God appointed** a sultry east wind, and the sun **attacked** the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is **better** for me to die than to live." **Jonah longs for the fate he imagined for Nineveh**

9 But **God** said to Jonah, "Is it **good** for you to be **angry** about the bush?" And he said, "It is **good**, **angry** enough to die." 10 Then the **God asks, and Jonah answers when it is about his own wellbeing** Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night.

11 And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that **great city**, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?" **Jonah's compassion extends only to the plant, which benefits him, whereas God's compassion encompasses the inhabitants of Nineveh, including the animals—argument from the lesser to the greater**

other repeated words: fear, concern, cry, destroy, live, die