

**This book is the account of
Jonah disobeying God, being in a
big fish's belly three days, and
finally going to warn Nineveh
about God judging them. We call
this book
JONAH**

*Jonah refused to warn the people of Nineveh as
Yahweh told him to do*

¹ *One day Yahweh said to the prophet Jonah,
the son of Amittai,*

² *"I have seen how wicked the people of [MTY]
the great city of Nineveh are. Therefore go
there and warn the people that I am planning to
destroy their city because of their sins."*

³ *But instead of going to Nineveh, Jonah went
in the direction opposite to where Yahweh told
him to go. He went down to Joppa city. There
he bought a ticket to travel on a ship that was
going to Tarshish city, in order to avoid doing
what Yahweh told him to do. He got on the ship,
and then went down to a lower deck, lay down,
and went to sleep.*

⁴ *Then Yahweh caused a very strong wind to
blow, and there was such a violent storm that
the sailors thought the ship would break apart.*

⁵ *The sailors were very frightened. Because of
that, they each started to pray to their own gods*

to save them. Then they threw the cargo into the sea to make the ship lighter *in order that it would not sink easily.*

⁶ Then the captain went *down* to where Jonah was sleeping soundly. *He awoke him* and said to him, “◀How can you sleep *during a storm like this?*/You should not be sleeping *during a storm like this*▶ [RHQ]! Get up and pray to your god! Perhaps he will pity us and save us, in order that we will not drown!” *But Jonah refused to do that.*

⁷ Then the sailors said to each other, “We need to ◀cast lots/shake from a container small objects that we have all marked▶, to determine who has caused *all* this trouble!” So they did that, and *the object with Jonah’s mark fell out of the container.*

⁸ So *various ones* of them asked him, “Are you the one who has caused us all this trouble?” “What work do you do?” “Where are you *coming* from?” “What country and what people-group do you belong to?”

⁹ Jonah replied, “I am a Hebrew. I worship Yahweh God, who *lives in* heaven. He is the one who made the sea and the land. I am trying to escape from *doing what Yahweh told me to do.*”

¹⁰ After the sailors heard that, they were terrified. So they asked him, “Do you realize what *trouble* you have caused?”

¹¹ The *storm kept getting worse* and the waves kept getting bigger. So *one of* the sailors asked Jonah, “What should we do in order to make the sea become calm?”

¹² He replied, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. *If you do that,* it will become calm. I

know that this terrible storm is the result of my *not doing what Yahweh told me to do.*"

¹³ But the sailors did *not want to do that. Instead*, they tried hard to row the ship back to the land. But they could not *do that*, because the storm continued to get worse.

¹⁴ Therefore they prayed to Yahweh, and *one of them* prayed, "O Yahweh, please do not let us drown because of our causing this man to die. O Yahweh, you have done what you wanted to do. *We do not know if this man has sinned. If he has not sinned, do not consider that we are guilty of sinning when we cause him to die!*"

¹⁵ Then they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea. Then the sea became calm.

¹⁶ *When that happened*, the sailors became greatly awed at Yahweh's power. So they offered a sacrifice to Yahweh, and they strongly promised *him that they would do things that would please him.*

¹⁷ *While they were doing that*, Yahweh sent a huge fish that swallowed Jonah. Then Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

2

Jonah prayed again after God said that he would save Jonah

¹ *While he was inside the huge fish, Jonah prayed to Yahweh God, whom he worshiped. After Yahweh told him that he would answer his prayer;*

² Jonah said,

“Yahweh, when I was greatly distressed *here*, I prayed to you, and you heard what I *prayed*. When I was *about to descend way down into* the place where dead people go, you heard me when I called out *for you to help/save me*.

³ You threw me *down* into the deep *water*, into the bottom [DOU] of the sea. The currents of the sea swirled around me, and the huge waves crashed above me.

⁴ Then I thought, ‘You have banished me, and I will never be able to enter your presence again. I will never see your holy temple *in Jerusalem* again!’

⁵ The water surrounded me, and threatened to drown me. Seaweed was wrapped around my head.

⁶ I sank down to where the mountains start rising [MET] *from the bottom of the sea*. I thought that forever *it would be as though* my body would be in a prison [MTY] *inside the earth* below me.

But you, Yahweh God, whom I *worship*, rescued me from going down to the place of the dead.

⁷ When I was almost dead [EUP], Yahweh, I ◀thought about/prayed to▶ you. You *heard* my prayer, up *there where you are, in your holy temple*.

⁸ All those who worship worthless idols are rejecting *you*, the one who *could* act kindly toward them.

⁹ But I will sing to thank *you*, and I will offer a sacrifice to you. I will *surely* do what I have solemnly promised *to do*. Yahweh, you are the

one who is *able to save us.*”

¹⁰ Then Yahweh commanded the huge fish to vomit out Jonah, *and the fish did that, and Jonah was able to get to the land.*

3

The people of Nineveh repented after Jonah warned them

¹ Then Yahweh said to Jonah again,

² “Go to that great city of Nineveh, and tell them the message that I gave you *previously.*”

³ So *this time* Jonah obeyed Yahweh, and he went to Nineveh. That city was so big that a person *had to walk* for three days to completely *go through* it.

⁴ On the first day *after* Jonah arrived, he *began walking* through the city. He was proclaiming (OR, At the end of that day he started proclaiming) to the people, “Forty days from now, Nineveh will be destroyed {*God will destroy Nineveh*}!”

⁵ The people of Nineveh believed God’s *message*. They *all* decided that everyone should begin ◀fasting/abstaining from food▶. So *everyone*, including important people and unimportant people, *did that*. They *also* put on coarse cloth, *to show that they were sorry for having sinned.*

⁶ The King of Nineveh heard *what the people were doing*. So he took off his royal robes, and *he also* put on coarse cloth. He left his palace, and sat down where there were *cold ashes*, *to show that he also was sorry for having sinned.*

⁷ Then he sent messengers to proclaim to *the people in Nineveh*: “My advisors and I have decreed that no one may eat or drink anything. Do not even allow your animals to eat or drink.

⁸ Instead, every person must put on coarse cloth. *Put coarse cloth on your animals, too.* Then everyone must pray fervently to God. And everyone must stop doing evil actions/things, and stop acting violently *toward others*.

⁹ Perhaps, *if everyone does that*, God may change his mind and be merciful *to us*, and stop being very angry with us, with the result that we will not die.”

¹⁰ When they *all did that*, God saw what they were doing, and he saw that they had stopped doing evil things. So *he pitied them*, and he did not get rid of them as he had threatened to do.

4

God said it was more right for him to spare the Ninevites than to spare the vine he sent to spare Jonah

¹ But Jonah was very distressed *that God had not destroyed Nineveh*. He became very angry. *The people of Nineveh were non-Jews, and Jonah did not think that God should act mercifully toward anyone who was not a Jew.*

² He prayed to Yahweh, “O Yahweh, what you have done is what I thought that you would do, before I left home [RHQ]. That is why I *decided* immediately to run away, and go to Tarshish city, because I knew that you, O God, act very kindly

and compassionately *toward all people*. You do not quickly become angry with people who do evil things. You love people very much, and you change your mind about punishing *people who sin*.

³ So now, O Yahweh, *since you will not destroy Nineveh city as you said you would*, allow me to die, because it would be better for me to die than to *continue to live*.”

⁴ Yahweh replied, “◀Why is it right for you to be angry *about my not destroying the city?*/It is not right for you to be angry *about my not destroying the city!*▶ [RHQ]”

⁵ Jonah *did not reply*. He went out of the city to the east *side of it*. He made a small shelter in order that he could sit under it and be protected from the sun. He sat under the shelter and waited to see what would happen to the city.

⁶ Then Yahweh God caused a vine to grow up *immediately* to shade Jonah’s head from the sun and make him *feel* more comfortable. Jonah was very happy about *having the vine over his head*.

⁷ But before dawn the next day, God sent a worm that chewed the vine, with the result that the vine withered.

⁸ Then, when the sun rose *high in the sky*, God sent a very hot wind from the east, and the sun shone very strongly on Jonah’s head, with the result that he felt faint. He wanted to die, and he said, “It would be better for me to die than to *continue to live!*”

⁹ But God asked Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about *what happened to the vine?*” Jonah

replied, “Yes, it is right! Now I am very angry and I want to die!”

¹⁰ But Yahweh said *to him*, “You have been concerned about my *causing* that vine *to wither*, even though you did not take care of it, and you did not make it grow. It just grew up during one night, and it completely withered *at the end of* the next night.

¹¹ But there are more than 120,000 people in Nineveh who *are very young, and because of that*, they cannot tell which is their right hand and which is their left hand, and there are also many cattle, *and none of these have done anything to displease me*. So ◀is it not right for me to be concerned about the people of that huge city, *and not want to destroy them?*/it is certainly right for me to be concerned about the people of that huge city *and not want to destroy them!*▶ [RHQ]”

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