

Jonah.
A translation.



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Jonah.

The Lord speaks to Jonah.

The Lord spoke to Jonah son of Amittay:

The Lord: Get up! Go to Ninevah. It is an important city. Warn them—I see how wicked they are.

Jonah did get up—to run toward Tarshish but away from the Lord.

Jonah gets on a ship.

He went down to Joppa. He found a ship there. The ship was sailing to Tarshish. Jonah paid the fare. He got onboard. He sailed with them toward Tarshish but away from the Lord.

Then the Lord threw a violent wind on the water. It created a such a terrible storm that the ship was about to break apart. The sailors were afraid. Each man started praying to his own god. They started throwing the cargo from the boat into the sea. They wanted to lighten the load.

Meanwhile, Jonah went down below the deck of the ship. He laid down. He went into a deep sleep.

The leader of the sailors approached him:

Captain: Why are you doing, sleepy-head? Get up! Pray to your god! Maybe the god will consider us. Maybe we will not drown.

Then the sailors discussed with each other,

Morgan: Come on. Let's roll some stones.

Siemen: Let's find out who is responsible for this mess we are in.

They rolled the stones. The stone pointed at Jonah. So they started asking Jonah questions:

Morgan: Tell us. Please.

Siemen: Who caused this mess we are in?

Rowan: What is your job?

Morgan: Where do you come from?

Siemen: What is your country?

Rowan: Who are your people?

Jonah: I am a Hebrew.

Jonah: I worship the Lord, the god of heaven.

Jonah: He made the sea. And he made the dry ground.

This terrified the sailors:

Sailors: What have you done?

The sailors already knew that he ran away from the Lord. He explained it to them earlier:

Rowan: What should we do with you to calm the sea?

The sea got rougher and rougher.

Jonah: Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the storm will calm down.

Jonah: I know that this terrible storm is my fault.

Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. They couldn't. The sea got even wilder than before. So they prayed to the Lord:

Morgan: O Lord, please don't kill us for taking this man's life.

Siemen: Don't make us responsible for killing an innocent man.

Rowan: Lord, you do as you please.

Then picked Jonah up. Then they threw him overboard. The raging sea calmed down. The sailors were terrified of the Lord. They sacrificed to the Lord. They made vows.

Jonah prays to the lord.

So the Lord chose a giant fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was inside the fish for three days and nights.

Jonah prayed to the Lord his God while he was inside the belly of the fish,

Jonah: I am in trouble, so I call to the Lord. He answers me.

Jonah: From the belly of the grave I call for help. You hear my voice. You threw me into the deep—into the heart of the seas. The river swirls around me. All your waves and breakers pass over me.

Jonah: I said, "I have been driven away from you!" However, I will look again toward your holy temple.

Jonah: The waters cover me. The deep surrounds me. Seaweed twists around my head. I sink to the base of the mountains. The earth bars me in forever.

Jonah: But you raise my life out of the pit, O Lord my God. I remembered the Lord when my life was almost gone. My prayer rose to your holy temple.

Jonah: Those who observe empty vanity forfeit any mercy. But I will sacrifice to you with a thanksgiving song. I will keep what I vowed. Salvation comes from the Lord!

Jonah goes to Ninevah.

The Lord told the fish to vomit Jonah on the dry ground:

Fish: Eeeeyeeekk!

Then the Lord spoke to Jonah a second time:

The Lord: Get up! Go to Ninevah. It is an important city. Warn them with the message I told you.

Jonah got up this time. Then he went to Nineveh. He did just like the Lord told him. Now Nineveh was an important city to God. It took three

days just to walk around the city. On the first day, Jonah started into the city:

Jonah: Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned! Forty more days and Nineveh will be destroyed! Forty more days and Nineveh will be no more!

But the Ninevites believed in God. They declared a fast. Everyone put on sackcloth, including the rich and the poor.

The king of Nineveh heard the news. He came off the throne. He took his robe off. He put on sackcloth. He sat down in the ashes. Then he made a rule in Ninevah:

The King: The king and his leaders declare a law! No man or animal, no cow or sheep, may taste anything. No one may eat or drink. Every man and animal must wear sackcloth. Everyone must seriously pray to God. They must change their evil ways and violence actions.

The King: Who knows? God might change his mind. He might show compassion. He might calm his fierce anger. Maybe he will not destroy us.

God saw what they did. They changed their evil ways. God was sorry about the horrible things that he said he was going to do to them. So, he did not do them.

Jonah prays to the lord.

To Jonah, this was really unfair. He was upset about it. So, he prayed to the Lord:

Jonah: Please listen to me, Lord. Isn't this what I said would happen when I was back home? That is why I was so quick to run to Tarshish. I knew that you are merciful and compassionate. You are slow to become angry. You are loving. You resist harm. Lord, please just take my life away. I prefer to be dead than to be alive.

The Lord: Jonah. Do you have the right to be so angry?

Jonah goes outside the city.

So, Jonah went outside the city. He sat down in a place on the eastern side. He made himself a shelter. He sat down underneath it in the shade. He waited there to find out what would happen to the city.

Then the Lord God sent a vine. He made it grow up to shade Jonah's head. It eased his discomfort. Jonah was really happy about the vine.

But early the next day, God sent a worm. The worm attacked the vine. Then the vine withered. When the sun came up, God sent a scorching east wind. The sun beat on Jonah's head so hard that it made him dizzy.

Jonah wanted to die:

Jonah: I would rather die than live.

The Lord: Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?

Jonah: I have a right. I am so angry that I wish I was dead!

The Lord: You worry about the vine. However, you did not take care of it. You did not make it grow. It grew up overnight—then it died overnight.

The Lord: But should I not have pity on Ninevah? It is an important city. It has more than a hundred and twenty thousand citizens. The people don't know the difference between their right hand and their left hand.

The Lord: They also have a lot of cows.