

# JONAH

## Conversational Version

### Jonah's Flight from the LORD

**1:1**The LORD told Jonah son of Amittai, **2**“*Go to Nineveh, that big city, and shout against it; I've seen how sinful they are.*” **3**But Jonah ran away. **3**He went down to Joppa, found a ship to Tarshish, paid the fare, and boarded.

**4**The LORD hurled a gale on the sea, and it was about to break up the ship. **5**The sailors were scared, and every man cried out to his god. They threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. Jonah had gone below and fallen sound asleep. **6**The captain came and said, “*How come you're sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Maybe he'll be concerned about us enough to keep us from dying.*” **7**They said to one another, “*Let's cast lots to find out who caused this catastrophe to hit us.*” They cast lots, and it fell on Jonah. **8**“*Tell us, now! Why has this catastrophe fallen on us? What's your job? What's your country? Who are your people?*”

**Jon 1:1-8**

**9**“*I'm a Hebrew; I fear the LORD God of heaven that made the land and sea.*”

**10**They were really afraid, “*How could you do that?*” (They knew he was running from the LORD; he'd told them.) **11**“*What should we do to you to stop the sea from raging?*” It kept getting worse.

**12**“*Throw me into the sea. I know it's my fault this severe storm has come on you.*”

**13**But they rowed hard, trying to get back to shore, but they couldn't. The sea was getting even rougher. **14**So they called on the LORD, “*We earnestly pray, LORD, not to let us die over this man's sin. Don't hold us guilty for throwing him to his death. You're doing what you wanted.*” **15**They picked Jonah up and threw him overboard, and the sea stopped raging. **16**They feared the LORD greatly and offered sacrifice to him and made vows.

**Jon 1:9-16**

### Jonah's Prayer

**17**The LORD had a big fish swallow Jonah, and he was in its stomach three days and nights.

**2:1**Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's stomach,

**2**“*I called to you in my distress,*

*and you answered me;*

*I cried out for help from the belly of Sheol,*

*and you heard me.*

**3***You threw me into the deep,*

*into the heart of the sea;*

*the current swirled over me;*

*your waves and breakers overwhelmed me.*

**4***So I said, 'I've been driven away from you,*

*but I'll still look toward your holy Temple.' Jon 1:17-2:4*

<sup>5</sup>*Water closed in over me;  
the great deep surrounded me;  
seaweed wrapped around my head.*  
<sup>6</sup>*I sank down to the base of the mountains;  
the earth imprisoned me forever,  
but you brought me up from the Pit,  
LORD my God.*  
<sup>7</sup>*As my life was fading away,  
I remembered you  
and prayed to you in your holy Temple.*  
<sup>8</sup>*Those who pay respects to pointless idols  
forfeit your faithfulness,  
<sup>9</sup>but I'll sacrifice to you with thanksgiving.  
I'll do what I've vowed;  
salvation comes from you. ''*

**10**Then the LORD had the fish cough Jonah up onto the shore.

**Jon 2:5-10**

### **Jonah Preaches at Nineveh**

<sup>3:1</sup>The LORD told Jonah again, <sup>2</sup>*"Go to Nineveh, the big city, and deliver what I tell you."* <sup>3</sup>So he went. It was a big city, a three-days' walk-through. <sup>4</sup>He went through it one day's walk and shouted, *"God is going to overthrow Nineveh in 40 days."* <sup>5</sup>The people believed him. They called for a fast and put on burlap from least to greatest.

<sup>6</sup>When the message reached the king of Nineveh, he got off his throne, laid his robe aside, covered himself with burlap, and sat on ashes. <sup>7</sup>He issued a proclamation:

*"In Nineveh by decree of the king and his nobles: Don't anybody—animal, herd, or flock—eat anything or drink water. <sup>8</sup>People and animals have to wear burlap. Call on God earnestly so everyone will turn from sinfulness and violence. <sup>9</sup>Who knows, maybe God will relent from his fierce anger and not destroy us."*

**10**When God saw they'd repented, he relented from doing what he'd threatened. **Jon 3:1-10**

### **Jonah's Anger over the LORD's Mercy**

<sup>4:1</sup>That really made Jonah mad. <sup>2</sup>He told the LORD,

*"That's exactly what I said back home and why I tried to run away to Tarshish. I knew you're a gracious, merciful God, slow to get angry and full of enduring love, and relent from bringing catastrophe. <sup>3</sup>So take my life; I'd be better off dead."*

<sup>4</sup>The LORD asked, “*What right do you have to be mad?*”

**Jon 4:1-4**

<sup>5</sup>Jonah left the city and sat down east of it. He made a lean-to and sat in its shade to see what would happen to the city. <sup>6</sup>The LORD God had a plant grow up to shade him and give him relief. He was glad to see it. <sup>7</sup>But at dawn the next day, God had a worm attack the plant, and it withered. <sup>8</sup>When the sun came up, God had a scorching east wind blow and the sun beat down on Jonah’s head till he became faint and begged to die, “*I’d be better off dead.*”

**Jon 4:5-8**

<sup>9</sup>Then God asked, “*What right do you have to be mad about a plant?!*”

“*I’ve got reason to be mad enough to die.*”

<sup>10</sup>“*You’re concerned about a plant you didn’t plant or make grow, that came up overnight and died overnight.*” <sup>11</sup>“*Shouldn’t I be concerned about Nineveh, a big city with more than 120,000 people that don’t know left from right—as well as lots of animals?*”

**Jon 4:9-11**

Version by Virgil Warren: [christir.org](http://christir.org)