**This book is the account about Jonah, when he disobeyed God, was three days in a big fish's belly, and finally went to warn the wicked people in Nineveh city that God was going to destroy them. We call this book JONAH.**

**1**

**Jonah refuses to obey Yahweh**

*1 One day* Yahweh said to the *prophet* Jonah, Amittai’s son, 2 “I have seen how wicked are *the people who live in* the great city called Nineveh. Therefore, go there and warn the people that I am planning to destroy their city because they d sinned.”

3 But *Jonah* did not go *to Nineveh*. *Instead, he* went in the direction opposite to where Yahweh told him to go. He went (down) to Joppa *city*. There he paid the fare to travel on a ship that was going to Tarshish *city*. Jonah wanted to escape from Yahweh and avoid doing what Yahweh had told him to do. He got on the ship, *and then he went down to a lower deck inside the ship. He lay down, and went to sleep.*

4 Then Yahweh caused a very strong wind to blow. There was such a violent storm that *the sailors thought* the ship would break apart. 5 The sailors were very frightened. So, 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 deeply. He *awoke him and* said to him. “You should not be sleeping *during a storm like this one!* Get up and pray to your god! Perhaps he will pity us and save us, so that we will not drown!”

*But Jonah refused to do so.*

7 Then the sailors said to each other, “We must cast lots to determine who has caused all this trouble!” So they did that, and the lots showed that Jonah had caused the storm.

8 So *various ones among* them asked Jonah, “Are you the one who has caused all this trouble for us?” “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, who lives in heaven. He is the God who made the sea and the land. I am trying to escape from *doing what* Yahweh *told me to do*.”

10 After/When the sailors heard that, they were *more* 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 sailor among them asked Jonah, “What must we do *to you, so that your god* will make the sea become calm?”

12 Jonah replied to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea. *If you do that,* then the sea will become calm. I know that this terrible storm is caused by 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 land. But *they could not do so, because* the storm continued to get worse.

14 Therefore, the sailors prayed to Yahweh, “O Yahweh, please do not cause us to drown after we cause this man to die. O Yahweh, we beg you, do not consider us to be guilty when we cause this man to die. We know that you have sent this storm for your own good reasons.”

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/respected Yahweh’s power. So, they offered a sacrifice to Yahweh. They also vowed to 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’s belly for three days and three nights.

**2**

**Jonah thanks Yahweh for rescuing him**

1 While Jonah was inside the huge fish, he prayed to Yahweh God, *whom he worshiped*. *This is what Jonah reported later:*

2 Jonah said, “Yahweh, when I was greatly distressed there *in the fish belly*, 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, down to the sea’s bottom. The sea currents swirled around me, and the huge waves crashed above me. 4 Then I thought/said, ‘Although You have banished me, Yet I will go to see your holy temple 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 from the sea bottom. I thought that it would be as though my body would forever be in a prison inside the earth below me. But you, Yahweh God, whom I worship, you rescued me from going down to the place where the dead go. 7 When I was almost dead, Yahweh, I thought about you. You heard my prayer *to you*, 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 thank you, Yahweh. I will surely do what I have solemnly promised to do. Yahweh, you are the only one who is able to save us.”

**3**

**The people in Nineveh repented after Jonah warned them**

1 Then Yahweh said to Jonah a second time, saying, 2 “Go immediately to that great city called Nineveh, and tell the people who live there 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 *go* *everywhere in* it.

4 On the first day *after* Jonah *arrived*, he *began walking* through the city. He started proclaiming to the people, “Forty days from now, *God* will destroy Nineveh!”

5 The people in Nineveh believed God’s *message*. They *all* decided that everyone should stop eating food, and they must dress themselves with old/rough clothes, *to show that they were sorry for having sinned*.  So, *everyone*, including important people and unimportant people, *did so*.

6 Nineveh’s king heard the news about Jonah and *what the people were doing*. *So,* he took off his royal robes, and *he also* put on old/rough clothes. He left his palace, and sat down on *cold* ashes, *to humble himself and show that he also was sorry for having sinned*. 7 Then he sent messengers to proclaim to *everyone in* Nineveh:

7 “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 old/rough cloth. *Put old/rough 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 so*, then God may change his mind and be merciful *to* us.  Maybe God will 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 destroy them as he had threatened to do.

**4**

**Yahweh teaches Jonah that he has/shows mercy and compassion**

1 But when Yahweh did not punish Nineveh, this distressed/displeased Jonah very much! And he became very angry. *(The people in Nineveh were not Jews, and Jonah did not think that God should act mercifully toward people who were enemies to the Jews.)*

2 So, Jonah complained to Yahweh, saying: “O Yahweh, what you have done is what I thought that you would do, before I left home. That is why I *decided* immediately to run away, and go to Tarshish *city*. I did so because I knew that you, O God, act very kindly and compassionate *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 *sinful* *people* *when they repent*. 3 So, now, O Yahweh, *because you will not destroy Nineveh city as you said you would,* allow me to die. It is better for me to die than to *continue to* live.”

4 Yahweh replied, “Why are you angry *that I have not destroyed the city*?”

5 Jonah *did not reply*. He went out from the city to its east *side*. He made a small shelter so 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. 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/good for you to be angry *because the vine died*?”

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

10 But Yahweh said *to him*, “You feel sorry about my *causing* that vine *to wither*, even though you did not make it grow and you did not care for it. It just grew up during one night, and it completely withered during the next night. 11 But there are more than 120,000 people in Nineveh who do not know right from wrong *(and they are more valuable than that vine)*. There are also many animals/livestock/cows *in Nineveh*. So, it is right for me to show compassion to the people who live in that huge city *and not want to destroy them!*”