

# **Wycliffe Associates**

## **Bible Translation Reviewers' Guide**

### *Jonah*

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# 1:1-17

**Background:** Jonah was a prophet from Gath Hepher (2 Kings 14:25). He was a Jew. The people of Nineveh were enemies of the Jews.

## Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read.

- ☐ Yahweh told Jonah to go to Nineveh, but Jonah got on a ship and went to Tarshish instead. [1:1-3]
- ☐ Yahweh sent a big storm, and all the sailors were afraid. [1:4-5]
- ☐ Jonah said the cause of the storm was that he was running from the presence of Yahweh. [1:10]
- ☐ Jonah told the men to throw him into the sea in order to stop the storm. [1:11-12]
- ☐ The sailors threw Jonah overboard, and a large fish swallowed Jonah. [1:14-17]

## Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Who was Jonah, and who spoke to him? [1:1]  
Jonah was the son of Amittai, and Yahweh spoke to him.
2. What did Yahweh command Jonah to go and do? [1:2]  
Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and speak out against their wickedness.
3. What did Jonah do after he heard Yahweh's command? [1:3]  
Jonah ran away from the presence of Yahweh. He went to Joppa and got on a ship to go to Tarshish.
4. What did Yahweh do to the ship that Jonah was on? [1:4]  
Yahweh sent a great wind which became a mighty storm on the sea, and it appeared that the ship would be broken up.
5. What did the sailors do? [1:5]  
The sailors became very afraid, and each cried out to his own god. They threw the cargo into the sea.
6. Why do you think the sailors threw the cargo into the sea? [1:5]  
They did that to make the ship lighter so it would not sink.
7. What did the captain want Jonah to do? [1:6]  
He wanted Jonah to call on his god for help.
8. How did the sailors determine who was the cause of the evil, and what was the result? [1:7]  
The sailors cast lots to determine who was the cause, and the lot fell to Jonah.
9. What was Jonah's reply when the sailors questioned him? [1:8-9]  
Jonah told the sailors that he was a Hebrew and he feared Yahweh, who was the creator of all things.

**Jonah 1:1-17 continued**

10. What did Jonah say was the cause of the evil that was happening to them? [1:10]  
Jonah told the men that he was running from the presence of Yahweh.
11. Why do you think the men said, "What is this you have done?" [1:10]  
Perhaps they said this to show how shocked and fearful they were. Jonah was foolish to run away from Yahweh. Now they were in great danger.
12. What did Jonah tell the men to do in order to stop the storm? [1:12]  
Jonah told the men to throw him into the sea.
13. What did the men do to try to get back to land? [1:13]  
They rowed harder.
14. What two requests did the sailors make of Yahweh? [1:14]  
They asked Yahweh to not let them perish, and to not hold them guilty for Jonah's death.
15. What happened when the sailors threw Jonah into the sea? [1:15]  
The sea stopped raging. This meant that it became smooth and calm.
16. What did the men do when the sea became calm? [1:16]  
They feared Yahweh and offered a sacrifice to him and made vows to him.
17. What happened to Jonah when they threw him into the sea? [1:17]  
A great fish swallowed Jonah, and he was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights.
18. Why did the fish swallow Jonah? [1:17]  
Yahweh sent it to do that.

**Comment Section:**

## 2:1-10

**Background:** In 2:2 Jonah said that he spoke from the belly of Sheol. Sheol is the place where the souls of dead people stay.

### Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read.

- ☐ While Jonah was in the fish, he prayed to Yahweh. [2:1]
- ☐ Jonah prayed about what had been happening to him while he was in the water. [2:2-7]
- ☐ Jonah said that he would sacrifice to Yahweh and fulfill his vow. [2:9]
- ☐ Yahweh spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out onto the land. [2:10]

### Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What did Jonah do from the belly of the fish? [2:1]  
Jonah prayed to Yahweh, his God.
2. Where did Jonah say he cried out for help? [2:2]  
He said he cried out for help from the belly of Sheol.
3. Why do you think Jonah said he cried out from the belly of Sheol? [2:2]  
Jonah probably thought that he was dying or was about to die.
4. What happened to Jonah while he was in the sea? [2:3]  
The currents of water surrounded him, and the waves of water washed over him.
5. What did Jonah mean when he said, "yet I will again look toward your holy temple". [2:4]  
Perhaps Jonah meant that he would think of God's holy temple and pray to him. Or perhaps he hoped that God would rescue him and allow him to see the temple again.
6. Why do you think Jonah spoke of the bases of the mountains and the bars of the earth? [2:6]  
Perhaps he felt like he was sinking to the deepest parts of the sea, and perhaps he feared that he would never escape.
7. What did Yahweh do for Jonah? [2:6]  
Yahweh brought Jonah's life up from the pit. Yahweh rescued him.
8. What was happening to Jonah before Yahweh rescued him? [2:7]  
Jonah's soul was fainting within him. He was becoming very weak. He may have thought that he was dying.
9. What do those who pay attention to meaningless gods do? [2:8]  
They reject Yahweh's faithfulness to them.

**Jonah 2:1-10 continued**

10. What promise did Jonah make from the belly of the fish? [2:9]

Jonah promised to sacrifice to Yahweh with thanksgiving and to fulfill the vows he had made.

11. Who does salvation come from? [2:9]

Salvation comes from Yahweh.

12. What did Yahweh tell the fish to do? [2:10]

Yahweh told the fish to vomit out Jonah onto the dry land.

**Comment Section:**

# 3:1-10

## Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read.

- ☐ Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and proclaim Yahweh's message. [3:1-2]
- ☐ Jonah proclaimed that in forty days Nineveh would be overthrown. [3:4]
- ☐ The people obeyed God as they fasted and cried to God. [3:5]
- ☐ God changed his mind about the punishment and did not destroy the city. [3:10]

## Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What command did Yahweh give a second time to Jonah? [3:1-2]  
Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and proclaim Yahweh's message.
2. How did Jonah respond this time to Yahweh's command? [3:3]  
Jonah obeyed and went to Nineveh.
3. What message did Jonah proclaim in Nineveh? [3:4]  
Jonah proclaimed that in forty days Nineveh would be overthrown.
4. What did the people of Nineveh do? [3:5]  
They believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth. Proclaiming a fast means that they said that they would all stop eating.
5. Why do you think they stopped eating and they put on sackcloth? [3:5]  
They did this to show that they were very sorry and sad.
6. What did the king of Nineveh do when he heard of the news? [3:6]  
The king rose up from his throne, took off his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
7. What was the proclamation he sent out? [3:7]  
The king said that the people and animals in Nineveh must not eat or drink anything.
8. What else did the king tell the people of Nineveh to do? [3:8]  
He told them to cover themselves and their animals with sackcloth, to cry out loudly to God, and to turn away from their evil ways and violence.
9. What did the king hope for? [3:9]  
He hoped that God might relent and turn away from his fierce anger so that they would not die.

**Jonah 3:1-10 continued**

10. How did God respond to the Ninevites' repentance? [3:10]  
God changed his mind and did not punish them.

**Comment Section:**

# 4:1-11

## Part 1

Tell in your own words what you just read.

- ☐ Jonah was angry that God did not punish Nineveh. [4:1-2]
- ☐ Jonah begged God to let him die. [4:3]
- ☐ God provided a plant to give Jonah shade from the hot sun. [4:6]
- ☐ When the plant died, Jonah was angry about that. [4:7-9]
- ☐ God spoke to Jonah about Jonah's compassion for the plant and God's own compassion for Nineveh. [4:10-11]

## Part 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What displeased Jonah so that he became very angry? [4:1]  
It seemed terribly wrong to Jonah that Yahweh changed his mind and did not punish the Ninevites.
2. Why did Jonah say that he had tried to flee to Tarshish? [4:2]  
Jonah said he knew Yahweh was gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, abundant in loving kindness, and one who relents from sending disaster.
3. Why do you think knowing those things about God would make Jonah want to run away to Tarshish?  
Jonah did not want the people of Nineveh to hear God's message and to repent. He did not want God to have compassion on Nineveh. He wanted God to destroy Nineveh.
4. What did Jonah want Yahweh to do to him? [4:3]  
Jonah wanted Yahweh to take his life. He wanted to die.
5. What question did Yahweh ask Jonah? [4:4]  
Yahweh asked Jonah if it was good that he was angry.
6. Did Jonah answer Yahweh's question? [4:4]  
No, Jonah did not want to listen to Yahweh and forgive the people of Nineveh.
7. Why did Jonah go out of the city and sit down? [4:5]  
Jonah wanted to see what might happen to the city.
8. What do you think Jonah hoped would happen to the city?  
He hoped that it would be destroyed.
9. What did Yahweh do for Jonah while he sat outside the city? [4:6]  
Yahweh prepared a shade plant for Jonah to relieve him of distress.



**Jonah 4:1-11 continued**

10. What happened to the plant in the morning? [4:7]  
God appointed a worm to kill the plant, and the plant died.
11. What else did God appoint? [4:8]  
God appointed a hot east wind. This means that air blew from the east, it was very hot.
12. What happened to Jonah? [4:8]  
The hot sun beat down on Jonah's head. This means that the sunshine was very hot. Jonah became faint.
13. What question did God then ask Jonah? [4:9]  
God asked Jonah if it was good that he was angry about the plant.
14. How did Jonah respond to the question in [4:9]?  
He responded to God, "It is good that I am angry, even to death."
15. What did Yahweh say to Jonah about how he felt about the shade plant? [4:10]  
Yahweh said Jonah had compassion for the plant, even though he did not make it grow, and it grew and died in the night.
16. For what did Yahweh have compassion? [4:11]  
Yahweh had compassion for the people of Nineveh and the animals.
17. Why do you think Jonah was angry that Yahweh had mercy on the Ninevites? [4:11]  
Perhaps Jonah did not want Yahweh to have mercy on Israel's enemies. Perhaps Jonah did not want Yahweh to have mercy on anyone who was not from Israel.

**Comment Section:**