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Jonah Flees from the LORD
1: 1-16



The first chapter of **Yonah** introduces the larger theme of life and death. It addresses the life and death of **the** wicked **Ninevites**, against whom **Jonah** was sent to preach, and the life and death of **the** pagan **sailors**, whose **ship is threatened to break up** in **the storm**. At its center is the life and death of **Jonah**, who is thrown into a raging **sea** and is swallowed by **a whale**. **Yonah's** struggle for life before **ADONAI** will be partially resolved in **his** prayer of thanksgiving in **chapter two**, and later, in **his** conversation with **YHVH** in **chapter four**. The resolution of **the Ninevites'** struggle is resolved by **Jonah's** preaching, **their** repentance and **God's** compassion in **chapter three**.

Chapter one only resolves the life and death struggle of **the sailors**. **Their** terror in the midst of **the storm** has **them** frantically searching for a way to survive. **Yonah's** reluctant confession to **them** in the midst of **their** distress and **his** willingness to be tossed overboard into **the sea** eventually result in the calming of **the storm**. **His** words also inadvertently result in **the sailors'** conversion to worship **the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**. Even in reluctance and in the face of **his** certain death by drowning, **Jonah** fulfills **HaShem's** call on **his** life by **his** witness to faith. **Yonah** testifies that **ADONAI** is the source of life and **he** later proclaims that being separated from **His** presence is the same as death.[16] So the story of a **reluctant prophet** teaches us how no one is beyond the reach of **God's**

hand. Just as **Jonah's** attempt to escape the divine intervention of **ADONAI** proved unsuccessful, we, too, are incapable of eluding **His** grasp.

I am **Jonah**.
I want to serve **God** . . . as long as it's convenient.
I desire to do **His** will . . . until it's a tad uncomfortable.
I want to hear **His** Word . . . as long as its message is one I'm supposed to give to others.
I don't want to have my plans interrupted.
Oh yes. I am **Jonah**, and I suspect that in one way or another, you are too.[17]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **Your** love that was willing to be our sin sacrifice **(First Corinthians 5:21)**, even when it was not convenient for **You** and cost **You** incredible pain and suffering. Praise **You** that **You** never leave us alone **(Hebrews 13:5)** but have given **You Ruach ha-Kodesh** to live in us to help, comfort and to guide us. **I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper so He may be with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him. You know Him, because He abides with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17).** We love **You** and are willing to serve **You** wherever **You**ask. In the **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*