

From the Rabbi's Desk
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Insights into the Bible **[16]**

Jonah, the Man Who Wanted to Flee from God's Presence. The Book of Jonah



Jonah and the Whale" by Pieter Lastman, 1621

Background to Our Story

Prophecy and Prophets



The institution of prophecy is founded on the basic premise that God makes His will known to chosen individuals in successive generations. A prophet is a charismatic individual endowed with the divine gift of both receiving and imparting the message of revelation. As the spokesman for the deity, he does not choose his profession but is chosen, often against his own will to convey the work of God to his people regardless of whether they wish to hear it. (Ezekiel 3:11)

A prophet does not elect to prophecy, nor does he become a prophet by dint of a native or an acquired faculty on his part. Prophecy is not a science to be learned or mastered. There is no striving to be one with God, no *unio mystica*, no indwelling of God within the spirit of the prophet through rapture, trances, or even spiritual contemplation.

The prophet is selected by God and is irresistibly compelled to deliver his message and impart His will, even if he personally disagrees with it. He is consecrated to be set apart from his fellowmen and is destined to bear the responsibility and burden of being chosen.

Appointed messenger, he must translate his revelatory experience into the idiom of his people. The prophetic experience is one of confrontation. The prophet is both a recipient and a participant. The individuality of the prophet is never curtailed. No two prophets prophesied in the same style. Their unique literary styles, whether expressed in prayers, hymns, parables, indictments, sermons, dirges, letters, mocking and drinking songs or legal pronouncements, bear the mark of independent creativity. The divine message is refracted through the human prism. This is dramatically brought out by the striking image of the prophets' receiving, literally eating, God's word and then bringing it forth. (Jeremiah 15.16ff: Ezekiel 3.1ff). God speaks to the prophet and the prophet speaks out. The divine revelation is delivered by a human agent.

The pre-classical prophets are referred to by four different names, 'hozeh', 'ro'eh', both meaning "seer," 'ish ha'-Elohim' ("man of God") and 'navi' (prophet). The last is also the standard term for the classical prophet.

These early prophets played a prominent role in communal affairs and were often sought out and consulted for advice and asked to deliver oracles in the name of God. These early prophets were both clairvoyant and capable of predicting future events. For example, Ahijah predicted the overthrow of Jeoboam's house and the death of his son. The prophets did not merely predict the future, however. They often performed symbolic acts, which dramatized and concretized the spoken word. Though the dynamism of the spoken word is considered to have a creative effect in and of itself, it is given further confirmation by this act, which is efficacious and plays the role of the prime mover in creating and causing the coming into being of the event.

The pre-classical prophets should be viewed in the light of their successors, the classical prophets. (1) The classical prophets rejected the cult and ritual and called for ethical monotheism. (2) They rejected the nationalistic outlook of the popular prophets and replaced it with their concept of universalism. (3) The pre-classical prophets were originally mantic; their main function was predicting the future. The classical prophets, on the other hand, were interested in rebuking their people to save them. (4) Whereas the popular prophets functioned as part of guilds, the classical prophets always appear alone (e.g. Amos 7:14). (5) The popular prophets were often ecstatic, given to intoxication of the senses (I Sam. 19:20-24), and they employed musical accompaniment to induce or heighten their frenzy (II Kings 3:15). The classical prophets, however, for the most part pronounced their oracles soberly in clear control of their senses.

Jeremiah 1:1-7

¹ The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, ² to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. ³ It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying:

⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;
Before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

⁶ Then said I:

"Ah, Lord God!

Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth."

⁷ But the Lord said to me:

"Do not say, 'I am a youth,'

For you shall go to all to whom I send you,

And whatever I command you, you shall speak.

Cast of Characters - Who is Who in the story? (Part 1)

- God
- The mariners
- The king of Nineveh
- The people of Nineveh
- Jonah

א'

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יוֹנָה בֶן־אָמֶתַי לֵאמֹר: קוֹם לֵךְ אֶל־גִּינֹנָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה וּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ כִּי־עָלְתָה רַעַתָּם לִפְנֵי: וַיָּקָם יוֹנָה לְבָרֵחַ תַּרְשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּרֶד יָפוֹ וַיִּמְצָא אֹנִיָּה | בָּאָה תַרְשִׁישׁ וַיֵּתֶן שְׂכָרָהּ וַיֵּרֶד בָּהּ לָבוֹא עִמָּהֶם תַּרְשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה:

וַיְהִי הַטִּיל רוּחַ־גְּדוֹלָה אֶל־הַיָּם וַיְהִי סַעֲר־גְּדוֹל בַּיָּם וַהֲאֹנִיָּה חָשְׁבָה לְהִשָּׁבֵר: וַיִּירָאוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים וַיִּזְעַקוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אֱלֹהָיו וַיִּטְלוּ אֶת־הַפְּלִים אֲשֶׁר בָּאֹנִיָּה אֶל־הַיָּם לְהַקֵּל מֵעֲלֵיהֶם וַיּוֹנָה יָרַד אֶל־יַרְכְּתִי הַסְּפִינָה וַיִּשְׁקַב וַיִּרְדָּם: וַיִּקְרַב אֵלָיו רַב הַחֵבֶל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מַה־לָּךְ גִּרְדָּם קוֹם קְרָא אֶל־אֱלֹהֶיךָ אוּלַי יִתְעַשֶּׂת הָאֱלֹהִים לָנוּ וְלֹא נִאָּבֵד: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ לְכוּ וְנַפְּיֵלָה גּוֹרְלוֹת וְנַגְדָּעָה בְּשַׁלְמֵי הָרַעָה הַזֹּאת לָנוּ וְנִפְּלוּ גּוֹרְלוֹת וַיִּפֹּל הַגּוֹרֵל עַל־יוֹנָה:

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הַגִּידָה־נָא לָנוּ בְּאֲשֶׁר לְמִי־הָרַעָה הַזֹּאת לָנוּ מַה־מַּלְאָכְתָּךְ וּמֵאֵינָן תְּבוֹא מֶה אַרְצָהּ וְאִי־מִזֶּה עָם אֹתָהּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם עַבְרִי אֹנִי וְאֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲנִי יָרָא אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־הַיָּבֵשָׁה: וַיִּירָאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יִרְאָה גְּדוֹלָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ כִּי־נִדְּעוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים כִּי־מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה הוּא בָרַח כִּי הִגִּיד לָהֶם: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מַה־נַּעֲשֶׂה לָּךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּק הַיָּם מֵעֲלֵינוּ כִּי הָיָה הוֹלָךְ וְסַעַר: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׂאוּנִי וְהִטִּילְנִי אֶל־הַיָּם וַיִּשְׁתַּק הַיָּם מֵעֲלֵיהֶם כִּי יוֹדַע אֲנִי כִּי בְשַׁלְּי הַסַּעַר הַגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה עֲלֵיכֶם:

וַיִּנְחֲתוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים לְהַשִּׁיב אֶל־הַיָּבֵשָׁה וְלֹא יָכְלוּ כִּי הָיָה הוֹלָךְ וְסַעַר עֲלֵיהֶם: וַיִּקְרָאוּ אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אָנָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִאָּבֵדָה בְּנֶפֶשׁ הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וְאֶל־תֵּתֵן עָלֵינוּ דָּם נִקְיָא כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר חָפַצְתָּ עָשִׂיתָ: וַיִּשְׁאוּ אֶת־יוֹנָה וַיִּטְלֻהוּ אֶל־הַיָּם וַיַּעֲמֵד הַיָּם מִזְעָפוֹ: וַיִּירָאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יִרְאָה גְּדוֹלָה אֶת־יְהוָה וַיִּזְבְּחוּ־זֶבַח לַיהוָה וַיִּדְּרוּ נְדָרִים:

ב'

וַיִּמָּן יְהוָה דָּג גְּדוֹל לִבְלַע אֶת־יוֹנָה וַיְהִי יוֹנָה בְּמַעְי הַדָּג שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה לַיְלֹת: וַיִּתְּפֹלל יוֹנָה אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו מִמַּעַי הַדָּגָה:

וַיֹּאמֶר קְרָאתִי מִצָּרָה לִי אֶל־יְהוָה וַיַּעֲנֵנִי מִבְּטֶן שָׂאוֹל שְׁוַעֲתִי שָׁמַעְתָּ קוֹלִי: וַתִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִצוֹלָה בְּלִבָּב יָמִים וַנִּהְרֶה וַסִּבְבֵּנִי כָל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיהָ וַגִּלְיָה עָלֵי עֵבְרִי: וְאֲנִי אֶמְרָתִי נִגְרַשְׁתִּי מִנֶּגֶד עֵינֶיהָ אֶד אֹסִיף לְהַבִּיט אֶל־הַיִּכָּל קִדְשָׁךְ: אֶפְסוּנִי מִיָּם עַד־נֶפֶשׁ תִּהְיֶה וַסִּבְבֵּנִי סוּף חֲבוּשׁ לְרָאשֵׁי: לְקַצְבֵּי הָרִים יִרְדְּתִי הָאָרֶץ בְּרַחֲתֶיהָ בַּעֲדִי לְעוֹלָם וַתַּעַל מִשְׁחַת חַיִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי: בַּהֲתַעֲטָף עָלַי נֶפֶשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה זָכַרְתִּי וַתְּבוֹא אֵלָיָה תְּפִלָּתִי אֶל־הַיִּכָּל קִדְשָׁךְ: מִשְׁמָרִים הַבְּלִי־שׁוֹא חֲסִדָּם נַעֲזָבוּ: וְאֲנִי בְּקוֹל תוֹדָה אֲזַבְּחָה־לָּךְ אֲשֶׁר נִזְרַתִּי אֲשַׁלְמָה יְשׁוּעָתָה לַיהוָה:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לָדָג וַיִּקָּא אֶת־יוֹנָה אֶל־הַיָּבֵשָׁה:

ג'

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יוֹנָה שְ�נִיַּת לַאֲמֹר: קוֹם לֵךְ אֶל־גִּינֹנָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה וּקְרָא אֲלֵיהָ אֶת־הַקְּרִיאָה אֲשֶׁר אֹנִי דִּבֵּר אֵלָיךְ: וַיָּקָם יוֹנָה וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־גִּינֹנָה כְּדִבַּר יְהוָה וַיִּגְּנֹה הַיָּתָה עִיר־גְּדוֹלָה לְאֱלֹהִים מִהֲלָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים: וַיַּחַל יוֹנָה לָבוֹא בְּעִיר מִהֲלָךְ יוֹם אֶחָד וַיִּקְרָא וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וַיִּגְּנֹה נִהַפְּכָת:

וַיֹּאמְרֵנוּ אֲנָשֵׁי גִינֹנָה בְּאֱלֹהִים וַיִּקְרְאוּ־צוֹם וַיִּלְבָּשׁוּ שָׂקִים מִגְּדוֹלָם וְעַד־קִטְנֵהֶם: וַיִּגַּע הַדָּבָר אֶל־מֶלֶךְ גִּינֹנָה וַיִּקָּם מִכִּסְאוֹ וַיַּעֲבֵר אֶדְרֵתוֹ מֵעֲלָיו וַיִּכַּס שֶׁק וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל־הָאֶפֶס: וַיִּזְעַק וַיֹּאמֶר בְּגִינֹנָה מִטַּעַם הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּגְדְּלוּ לַאֲמֹר הָאֵדָם וְהַבְּהֵמָה הַבֶּקֶר וְהַצֹּאן אֶל־יִטְעָמוּ מֵאוֹמָה אֶל־יִרְעוּ וַיָּמִים אֶל־יָשָׁמוּ: וַיִּתְּכֶסּוּ שָׂקִים הָאָדָם וְהַבְּהֵמָה וַיִּקְרָאוּ אֶל־אֱלֹהִים בְּחִזְקָה וַיִּשְׁבּוּ אִישׁ מִדְּרָכּוֹ הָרַעָה וּמִן־הַחֲמָס אֲשֶׁר בְּכַפֵּיהֶם: מִי־יִדְּעַ נִשְׁוֹב וְנָחֵם הָאֱלֹהִים וְשָׁב מִתְרוֹן אָפוֹ וְלֹא נִאָּבֵד:

וַיִּרְא הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם כִּי־יָשְׁבוּ מִדְּרָכָם הָרַעָה וַיִּנְחָם הָאֱלֹהִים עַל־הָרַעָה אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת־לָהֶם וְלֹא עָשָׂה:

ד'

וַיָּרֶע אֶל־יוֹנָה רָעָה גְדוֹלָה וַיֵּחָר לוֹ: יִתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנָּה יְהוָה הֲלוֹא־אֲנִי דָבָר עַד־הַיּוֹתָי עַל־אֲדָמָתִי עַל־כֵּן קִדְּמָתִי לְבָרַח מִרְשָׁיִשָּׁה כִּי יִדְעָתִי כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְרַחוּם אַרְךָ אַפִּים וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנֶחֱם עַל־הָרָעָה: וַעֲתָה יְהוָה קַח־נָא אֶת־נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוִי כִּי טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הֵיטֵב תָּרָה לָךְ: וַיֵּצֵא יוֹנָה מִן־הַעִיר וַיֵּשֶׁב מִקְדָּם לַעִיר וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שָׂם סֶפֶה וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחְתָּיהָ בָּצֵל עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵרָאֶה מִה־יְהוָה בַּעִיר: וַיְמַן יְהוָה־אֱלֹהִים קִיקְיוֹן וַיַּעַל מַעַל לַיּוֹנָה לְהַנּוֹת צֶלַע־עִירָאֲשׁוֹ לְהַצִּיל לוֹ מִרְעָתוֹ וַיִּשְׁמַח יוֹנָה עַל־הַקִּיקְיוֹן שֶׁמָּתָה גְדוֹלָה: וַיְמַן הָאֱלֹהִים תּוֹלַעַת בַּעֲלֹת הַשָּׂחַר לְמַתְתָּהּ וַתֵּךְ אֶת־הַקִּיקְיוֹן וַיִּיבֹשׁ: וַיְהִי כְּזֶרֶחַ הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וַיְמַן אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ קָדִים תָּרִישִׁית וַתֵּךְ הַשָּׁמֶשׁ עַל־רֹאשׁ יוֹנָה וַיִּתְעַלֵּף וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ לְמוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יוֹנָה הֵיטֵב תָּרָה־לָּךְ עַל־הַקִּיקְיוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר הֵיטֵב תָּרָה־לִּי עַד־מוֹת: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אַתָּה חֹסֵת עַל־הַקִּיקְיוֹן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עֲמִלְתָּ בּוֹ וְלֹא גִדַּלְתָּ שְׂבוֹג־לִילָה הִנֵּה וּבֹר־לִילָה אָבָד: וְאַנִּי לֹא אָחִים עַל־גִּינוֹהַ הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר יֵשֶׁבָּהּ הַרְבֵּה מְשֻׁתִּים־עֹשֵׂהִי רַבּוֹ אֲדָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַע בֵּין־יָמִינוֹ לְשִׁמְאֻלוֹ וּבִהְמָה רֶבֶה:

Chapter 1

¹ Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ²“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.”

Bonus ? What is God’s purpose of His sending Jonah to Nineveh?

Bonus ? Why is God choosing Jonah?

³ But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

Bonus ? Why does Jonah flee from the presence of the Lord?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

Bonus ? Why is it important for the story to tell us that Jonah paid the fare?

Bonus ? Why does Jonah flee particularly to Tarshish?

⁴ But the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up.

⁵ Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load from upon them. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep.

Bonus ? Why does Jonah go down into the lowest parts of the ship and fall asleep there?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

⁶ So the captain came to him, and said to him, "What is the matter with you, sleeper?" Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish."

? What does the captain mean by asking Jonah: "What is the matter with you, sleeper"?

⁷ And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble *has come* upon us." So, they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸ Then they said to him, "Please tell us! For whose cause *is* this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?"

? Why do the mariners cast lots to find out who is the cause of the storm that came to them?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

They saw that the other ships were sailing in the sea calmly, and theirs was breaking. They said, "Because of one of us, this is taking place." (RaSHI)

⁹ So he said to them, "I *am* a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry *land*."

Extra Bonus ? What is telling in Jonah's answer to the mariners?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

¹⁰ Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "Why have you done this?" For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. ¹¹ Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?"—for the sea was growing more tempestuous.

¹² And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me."

¹³ Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.

Extra Bonus ? Jonah had told the men to throw him into the sea, so the sea will become calm. Why don't they?

¹⁴ Therefore they cried out to the Lord and said, "We pray, O Lord, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O Lord, have done as it pleased You." ¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly and offered a sacrifice to the Lord and took vows.

Extra Bonus **?** Why did the men fear the Lord exceedingly?

"...and took vows" — that they would proselytize (RaSHI).

Chapter 2

1 Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Extra Bonus **?** Why does the Lord send a fish to swallow Jonah instead of killing him for his disobedience?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

2 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly. ³ And he said:

"I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction,
And He answered me.

"Out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
And You heard my voice.

⁴ For You cast me into the deep,
Into the heart of the seas,
And the floods surrounded me;
All Your billows and Your waves passed over me.

⁵ Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight;
Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.'

⁶ The waters surrounded me, *even* to my soul;
The deep closed around me;
Weeds were wrapped around my head.

⁷ I went down to the foundations of the mountains;
The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever;
Yet You have brought up my life from the pit,
O Lord, my God.

⁸ "When my soul fainted within me,
I remembered the Lord;
And my prayer went *up* to You,
Into Your holy temple.

⁹ "Those who regard worthless idols
Forsake their own Mercy.

¹⁰ But I will sacrifice to You
With the voice of thanksgiving;
I will pay what I have vowed.
Salvation *is* of the Lord."

¹¹ So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry *land*.

Chapter 3

3 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, ² "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey *in extent*. ⁴ And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

Extra Bonus ? Why does Jonah go this time to Nineveh?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

⁵ So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. ⁶ Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered *himself* with sackcloth and sat in ashes. ⁷ And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,

Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. ⁸ But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. ⁹ Who can tell *if* God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

¹⁰ Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

Extra Bonus ? How do we know that the people's repentance was sincere?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Bonus ? In verse 5 we already learned that the people of Nineveh "believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them." Why is it important to know that the king does the same?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Bonus ? The king of Nineveh proclaimed: "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands."

What did God see from among all the actions the people of Nineveh did?

Chapter 4

1 But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. ² So he prayed to the Lord, and said, "Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore, I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You *are* a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm. ³ Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for *it is* better for me to die than to live!"

Extra Bonus ? Jonah was successful in his mission (as a matter of fact he is the only prophet who was successful). Why is he displeased and angry?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____

⁴ Then the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

Extra Bonus ? "Is it right for you to be angry?" Why doesn't Jonah answer God's question?

Extra Bonus ? Why doesn't God demand an answer to the question?

⁵ So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city. ⁶ And the Lord God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah *rejoiced with great joy* for the plant. ⁷ But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered. ⁸ And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?"

And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"

¹⁰ But the Lord said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"

Extra Bonus ? What is the entire point of God bringing a plant to give shade to Jonah and then bringing a worm to kill the plant?



Extra Bonus ? God's rhetorical question to Jonah at the end of book remains unanswered. Do you think Jonah got the point or not?



Extra Bonus **?** God doesn't demand an answer from Jonah to his last question?

Answer 1 _____

Answer 2 _____

Answer 3 _____



Afterthought

Wrapping Up: Cast of Characters - Who is who in the story? (Part 2)

- God – He must convey an important message to the people of Nineveh, and believes Jonah is the right messenger.
- The mariners – They go through a traumatic and transformative experience and get the message that God is in charge!
- The people of Nineveh – They also go through a transformative experience and get the message!
- The king of Nineveh – He also goes through a transformative experience and gets the message!
- Jonah – He goes through a traumatic experience, gets the message that God is in charge, successfully fulfills his mission, but we are left with the feeling that perhaps he didn't get the full message.