

Jonah

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Chapter 1

The book of Jonah is read every year, in the synagogue, on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16).

The Day of Atonement: (In Judaism)

1. Is about worship. We have to worship G-d appropriately – on His terms and not on ours. When we do things our way the result is death. (Leviticus 10v1-3, Romans 6v23) Worship is about conforming our lives to the plans and purposes of G-d.
2. Is a day of seeking G-d's mercy and forgiveness.
3. Allowed for atonement to be made, to cover sins, and kept G-d's judgement at bay, while waiting for something better to happen. (i.e. Redemption)
4. Causes them to think about a future work of G-d.

Atonement is good, but redemption is far better. Atonement covered up/over the sin, but redemption wiped the sin away! (Psalm 103v12) Redemption removes the necessity for G-d's judgement. (Romans 5v9)

The book of Jonah teaches us principles – we see the outcomes of both obedience and disobedience. We will also see, throughout the book, that Jonah, in many ways, personifies the people of Israel.

Verse 1: *“And it came about the Word of the L-rd to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying:”*

The story of Jonah is not a myth or an allegory. Jonah was a real person. (see also 2 Kings 14v25). As further proof of his existence, Jonah's father is named: Amittai. Amittai means 'The truthful one'.

Verse 2: *“Rise and go to Nineveh, this great city, and call unto it; for its evilness has come up before Me.”*

Nineveh was not in Israel. It was in the Assyrian kingdom and, during the days of Jonah, the Assyrians were Israel's chief enemies. G-d called Jonah to go and speak a message of destruction and judgement to his enemies; those whom Jonah hated.

Jonah knew G-d's character. He knew that G-d is gracious and willing to forgive. Jonah's concern was that G-d would forgive the Ninevites if he preached to them – Jonah 4v2. He wanted G-d to judge them.

Verse 3: *“And Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from before the L-rd. And he went **down** to Joppa, and he found a ship going to Tarshish. He gave payment and he went **down** into it (the ship) to flee with them from Tarshish from before the Lord.”*

Tarshish was in the west, Nineveh in the east. By fleeing from G-d, Jonah chose to rebel against the call and purposes of G-d. He did not value his relationship with G-d. He was more concerned about getting his own way than he was about the intimate relationship that a prophet should have with G-d.

Paul speaks of the upward call we have as believers (Philippians 3v14). Jonah is not on an upward call. In this verse we see he is going down.

Down

Down.

He gave payment : When G-d calls us to do something, or has given us an assignment, He will make available everything we need to accomplish it. G-d will provide. Disobedience to G-d gets expensive for us.

When Jonah heard about the purposes of God he went down to *Joppa*. This should cause us to think about another individual – G-d often uses terms, places and similar events in order to convey truth to His new covenant people. In Acts 10v9-48 Peter was in this city of Joppa. One afternoon, up on the rooftop, he also received a call to take the message of salvation to the Gentiles (those not in a covenant relationship with G-d). Even in the New Testament we see that the call and purposes of G-d have not changed. This is a foundational truth.

Verse 4: *“And the L-rd cast a great wind to the sea and it came about a great storm, in the sea, and the ship was thought to break up.”*

G-d is actively involved in Jonah's situation. This was not a usual storm – it was a supernatural one. We are going to see that everyone else, and everything else (including the wind), is going to obey G-d.

Verse 5: *“And the sailors feared, and they cried out, each man to his god. And they cast their cargo, which was in the ship, to the sea; to lighten the ship for them. But Jonah had gone **down** to the bowels of the ship. And he lay **down** and fell asleep.”*

These sailors were businessmen. They had the responsibility of taking that cargo to Tarshish. Jonah’s sin was affecting them adversely. My sin doesn’t only affect me, but also effects those around me.

This kind of sleep, spoken of here, is like an anaesthetized sleep. Jonah can’t just wake up; it is as if he is unconscious. Jonah, at this time, is unable to perceive what G-d is doing.

Sin makes us unaware of the danger that is all around us. When we walk in obedience G-d gives us an ability to perceive His Presence and His assistance.

G-d is wanting to bring Jonah to a right understanding of what a man of G-d is supposed to do.

Verse 6: *“The captain approached him and said to him: ‘What is with you O sleeper? Rise and call to your G-d. Perhaps G-d will do something for us, and we will not perish.’”*

When we walk in sin even non-believers will perceive things that we don’t.

Jonah was on a mission to flee from the L-rd, but now this captain is telling him to call out to G-d. Jonah is being commanded to heal his relationship with G-d.

Verse 7: *“Every man said to his neighbor: ‘Come, let us cast lots, that we might know on account of who this evil has come upon us. And they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.’”*

Evil – these sailors understand that what is happening here is supernatural. This was not a normal storm. G-d wanted every one of those sailors to know that Jonah was the cause of their troubles.

Verse 8: *“And they said to him: ‘Tell us please for who is this evil to us? What is your profession? From where have you come? What is your land? And of what people are you?’”*

They want to understand the identity of Jonah, and how one person can bring such evil upon them.

Verse 9: *“And he said to them: ‘A Hebrew am I. And the L-rd, The G-d of the heavens, I fear. (He) Who has made the sea and the dry land.’”*

Jonah gave them his standard/rote answer. Does he really fear G-d? Quite the contrary. This word for *fear* has to do with priority. Jonah thought of himself as one who gave priority to G-d, and his mindset didn't change - despite being in the midst of rebellion.

Verse 10: *“And the men feared a great fear. And they said to him: ‘What is this that you have done?’ For the men knew that from before the L-rd he was fleeing, for he told them.”*

Despite Jonah's rebellious spirit, G-d used him to testify and witness and make known the One True Living G-d. We all have a rebellious spirit within us, and the root of this rebellion is pride. Left unchecked, this can cause disastrous consequences in our lives.

Verse 11: *“They said to him: ‘What should we do to you, that the sea should be silent for us?’ Because the sea was raging.”*

Verse 12: *“And he said to them: ‘Lift me up and cast me into the sea. And the sea will be quiet for you. For I know that it is because of me this great tempest is upon you.’”*

This phrase “lift me up” has to do with that same idea of Messiah being lifted up in order for there to be salvation (John 3v14-15, John 12v32) Throughout the prophets we see verses that relate to the person and the work of Messiah. Jonah was basically saying: “If you want this chaos to stop, and if you want to be saved, you need to lift me up. I need to die.” To be saved, from our sins, Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ) had to be lifted up upon that tree.

Jonah is prepared to die – not for the service of G-d, but in order to not have to obey and serve G-d.

Verse 13: *“But the men rowed in order to return to dry land. But they were not able to, because the sea was raging against them.”*

These men didn't want to just take a human life. But these men were not able to save themselves – just as we are not able to save ourselves.

Verse 14: *“And they called to the L-rd, and they said: ‘Please, O L-rd, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life, and do not set upon us innocent blood. For You are the L-rd and You do what You like.’”*

This is the first time that these idol worshippers would have called on that sacred name for G-d (יהוה) G-d can use anyone. He was able to use rebellious Jonah to bring these men to a revelation of the One True G-d.

This verse teaches us about the sovereignty of G-d. These man wanted to do things according to G-d’s will. They asked G-d to remove any judgement from them because they were going to be obedient and do what G-d’s prophet had instructed them to do.

Verse 15: *“And they lifted up Jonah and they cast him into the sea, and the sea stood from its raging.”*

Everyone, even these unbelieving sailors, chose to obey G-d. Everyone and everything – except Jonah. A change happened to Jonah in this situation. G-d often brings us into a difficult situation so that we might change.

Jonah is going to experience the outcome of rebelliousness and pride...death (Romans 6v23)

Verse 16: *“And the men feared the L-rd with a great fear. And they sacrificed an offering to the L-rd and they made vows.”*

Up to this point, the sailors had feared the storm and their focus had been on the storm. They were afraid of death. But now, because of Jonah’s revelation of the One True G-d, they feared G-d, causing them to sacrifice and make vows of commitment to Him. These idol worshippers came to faith because of Jonah’s testimony about G-d (which they saw proved true when He stilled the waves), as well as because of the fearful events happening around them.

Feared the L-rd: this means that they gave G-d priority in and over their lives. This is the testimony of a true believer in the G-d of Israel. They understand the power of faith, instead of the powerlessness of rebelliousness before G-d.

Chapter 2

G-d had to work mighty miracles in order to bring about a change in Jonah's life. Jonah 1v17, in the English Bible, is Jonah chapter 2v1 in the Tanakh – which is what we will follow for this study.

Verse 1: *“And the L-rd appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah. And it came about that Jonah was in the intestines of that fish for three days and three nights.”*

Even the fish obeyed G-d!

Verse 2: *“And Jonah prayed to the L-rd His G-d from the intestines of the fish.”*

G-d put Jonah in a place of separation from Himself. Prayer has to do with intimacy. In Hebrew, this word used for *prayed* means “back and forth”. Not only did Jonah cry out to G-d but He also listened to G-d and sought G-d’s response.

What brought about this sudden desire for Jonah to pray? Trouble. (Jeremiah 30v7 – A time of trouble for Jacob; in the same way that G-d brought trouble upon Jonah, to bring him to submissiveness and capture his attention, G-d is going to bring trouble and affliction upon the house of Israel, in order that they might submit and have an end brought to their rebellious spirit)

Verse 3: *“And he said: ‘I cried out, because of my trouble (sorrow), to the L-rd, and He answered me. From the belly of Sheol I cried out, and He heard my voice.’”*

Sheol, biblically speaking, is the place of the dead. Jonah died, in the belly of the fish, and went to this place.

The religious leaders asked Yeshua for a miraculous sign to prove to them who He was (Matthew 12v38). Messiah told them that no sign would be given to them EXCEPT the sign of the prophet Jonah. In the same way that Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and night so also would the Son of Man be three days and nights in the heart of the earth – i.e. Sheol. (Matthew 12v39-41)

Yeshua rose from the dead after three days and nights. Resurrection is the sign that Messiah was speaking about. Resurrection power was also present in the life of Jonah.

Verse 4: *“I was cast into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the river surrounded me. And Your breakers and Your waves crashed against me.”*

Jonah talking about what he went through prior to his death.

Verse 5: *“And I said: ‘I have been cast away from before Your eyes but, nevertheless, I will look to the Holy Sanctuary.’”*

In chapter 1 Jonah was fleeing from G-d. Jonah got his wish/prayer. He was now separated from G-d, but, in that place of separation, he yearned to look again to the place where G-d dwells. He yearned for intimacy with G-d again.

Verse 6: *“The water encompassed me unto my soul, and the depths surrounded me, and the reeds covered my head.”*

Like a burial shroud.

Verse 7: *“To the roots of the mountains I went down. I went down to the earth – to the very bars (foundation) – forever. And You, my G-d, brought my life up from destruction.”*

Destruction has to do with:

1. Physical death
2. Spiritual death

Verse 8: *“My soul fainted unto me, but the L-rd I remembered. My prayer came unto You, to Your Holy Sanctuary.”*

My soul fainted unto me – Jonah had no physical ability to do anything to save himself.

The word for *remembrance* is so important. The scholars tell us that it is inherently tied to the covenant of G-d. (In Exodus, the Israelites cried out because of their affliction in Egypt, and finally God said: “I remember My covenant”- Exodus 6v5)

Jonah understands, here, that he has no merit in and of himself. He has fainted. He is dead. There is nothing more he can do. But he grasps onto one hope – that he has a covenant relationship with G-d.

Verse 9: *“Those who guard vanity forsake G-d’s grace.”*

Vanity is the imaginations of one’s thoughts.

Verse 10: *“And I, with a voice of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to You. And what I have vowed I will pay. For salvation is of the L-rd.”*

When Jonah experienced the outcome of rebellion – death and separation - Jonah wanted to change. In this affliction he had undergone a transformation. He had no hope, but he remem-

bered the covenant promises of G-d and so he sought these promises. (Romans 10v13) Jonah is going to grow in his understanding of G-d. We all need to grow.

G-d is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10v34-35). He will be faithful to His promises and to **all** who call upon Him.

When the sailors came to a revelation of the character and nature of the One True G-d they changed and sacrificed to Him. G-d wants to hear that we are willing to make sacrifices – to put our lives aside and to submit to the will of G-d – whatever it may be. *‘What I have vowed I will pay...’*

Verse 11: *“And the L-rd spoke to the fish, and he vomited Jonah onto the dry land.”*

Jonah got a second chance to be obedient to G-d.

Chapter 3

Verse 1: *“And it came about the Word of the L-rd to Jonah a second time, saying:”*

G-d called the children of Israel to be a blessing to the nations and to bring light to the Gentiles. (Genesis 12v3, Isaiah 60v1-3). G-d wanted to use Jonah, as an example of this call, to preach to the Ninevites.

Verse 2: *“Rise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and call unto it the message (calling) that I will speak unto you.”*

Notice that G-d’s call and purposes did not change. There was no change in location. There was no change in message. G-d brought about a change in His prophet – not a change in His Word. Jonah had to align himself to what the will of G-d had been all along.

What is G-d's will? G-d's will (from before the foundation of the world) was not to bring about destruction and judgement upon the people of Nineveh. G-d desires that all people might turn, repent and embrace G-d's grace and be saved and healed. (Ezekiel 33v11) When they don't repent the outcome is G-d's judgement.

In Revelation, Jerusalem is called "that great city" (Revelation 11v8) so why would G-d call Nineveh "that great city"? G-d has a great plan for Nineveh. G-d wants to bring His Presence and His revelation to these people.

Verse 3: *"And Jonah he arose, and he went to Nineveh, according to the Word of the L-rd. And Nineveh was a great city to G-d – it was a three-day journey."*

Nineveh had great potential. G-d wanted to use these people for His purposes. Even though this city didn't have a covenantal relationship with G-d they too belonged to Him. G-d wanted to bring them into a covenant.

Three has to do with revealing something – G-d wanted to reveal something to the inhabitants of this city.

Verse 4: *"And Jonah began to call to that city on the first day, a one-day journey, and he called out and he said: 'In forty more days Nineveh will be overturned.'"*

This is not a message of grace or forgiveness. It is a message of the Holiness of G-d. G-d wanted to reveal to these people His nature, truth and purposes. In chapter 1 we read about how this city's evilness had risen up to heaven. This means that G-d was standing ready to judge it. In Hebrew numerology the number forty relates to a transition or a change. G-d is warning these Ninevites that a change is coming and that He is going to *overturn* their city; bring about its destruction.

The Assyrians hated the Hebrews just as much as Jonah hated the Assyrians. What Jonah was doing was very dangerous. It took great faith for Jonah to go the enemies and tell them that in forty days they would be overturned. Most people would look at this foreigner, pronouncing judgement on them, and they would say: "Let's kill him and see what becomes of his G-d." When the Ninevites saw the faith of Jonah they responded to it.

Verse 5: *“And the people of Nineveh believed in G-d. And they proclaimed a fast. And they put on sackcloth; from the greatest of them to the least.”*

They responded to a Holy G-d who judges evil. (אלהים refers to G-d as a judge) We often shy away from talking about judgement, a wrathful G-d or things that are not pleasant to hear. If we are concerned about bringing change, people need to hear the truth about what their erroneous lifestyle, theology and philosophies of life are going to bring upon them. G-d’s judgement.

Proclaimed: The Ninevites began to demonstrate faith. They didn’t wait for the king’s proclamation, they simply responded. A *fast* speaks of self-denial. A person empties themselves in order to listen to G-d.

God’s truth speaks to EVERYONE (Romans 1v20) and each person must respond.

Verse 6: *“And the word reached the king of Nineveh and he got up from his throne and removed his mantle from upon himself. He covered (himself) with sackcloth and he sat on ashes.”*

When the reality of G-d’s Word confronts us, we need to respond and respond quickly. Even kings have to respond to this same message; no one is exempt from the truth of G-d. This king understood that his role, as king, was no more important to G-d than some peasant in his kingdom. All of what the king did was a sign of repentance.

Jonah’s proclamation held no message of forgiveness, offering of grace, or assurances from G-d. When these people heard that G-d was going to overturn their city in forty days, they believed the message and realised that they had time to make a change.

Verse 7: *“And he cried out and he said among Nineveh a decree saying: ‘From the king and his great ones: ‘Both man and beast, cattle and flock should not taste anything nor graze, and water they should not drink.’”*

This king understood that there needed to be a change in his kingdom, and it began with him. These people weren’t trying to earn merit. They were emptying themselves in the hope that G-d might move in their midst.

Verse 8: *““And let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. And let them call to G-d in fervency.’ And every man repented from his evil deeds and from the violence which was in their hands, and they said:”*

The word used here for violence (חַמַּדָּה) means doing violence for the sake of seeing people suffer.

Verse 9: *“Who knows whether G-d will relent and be comforted and turn His fierce anger, and we will not perish.”*

They have no assurance or definite hope that G-d would respond to them. Nevertheless, they are seeking G-d’s grace – which is the wisest thing a person can do.

In contrast, with the gospel of Messiah **there is an assurance of salvation**. With the gospel it is “everyone who calls upon the name of the L-rd will be saved” (Romans 10v13)

Comforted – נִחַם The outcome of G-d’s grace is that He is comforted. Messiah Yeshua comforted G-d, so that that the wrath of G-d does not have to fall upon those who have received Him.

Verse 10: *“And G-d saw their deeds, for they had repented(turned) from their evil ways. And G-d was comforted concerning the evil which He spoke to do to them. And He did not do it.”*

And G-d saw their deeds: We are saved by grace, through faith, and this is a gift from G-d (Ephesians 2v8-9). We cannot earn salvation. However, the outcome/fruit of faith is seen in our deeds – what we do or do not do. (Ephesians 2v10). Our deeds do not save us, but G-d looks at, and evaluates, them and rewards each person according to what they have done. (Romans 2v6-8. To each of the churches in Revelation 2-3 G-d told them: “I know your deeds”)

G-d is seeking people who *repent*, because they realise that what they are doing is wrong.

Comforted relates to the work of Messiah. What was the ‘evil’ that G-d was going to do? G-d does not do evil, in our definition of the word. This kind of evil, spoken of here, simply means ‘that which is contrary to His perfect will’. G-d’s desire, from the foundation of the world, was not a desire to destroy the Ninevites. G-d desires that all people will turn from sin and be saved. (Ezekiel 33v11) G-d is Holy, Righteous and Just and because of this there is an outcome of judgement on sin. (Romans 6v23, Galatians 6v7-9)

The Ninevites believed in, and responded to, the Word of G-d. As a result, they moved in obedience to change. This caused G-d to go back to His original purpose/His perfect will. He relented from the destruction that evil demands.

Chapter 4

Verse 1: *“And this was evil to Jonah, a great evil, and he was very angry.”*

G-d was not doing what Jonah willed. Jonah wanted this city to be destroyed. He had malice and hate for the Ninevites (didn't love or pray for his enemies – Matthew 5v43-44) and was not happy that G-d had forgiven them.

Jonah has changed, outwardly. He is no longer running to Tarshish. He is out of the fish. He is in the place where G-d wants him to be and doing what G-d has told him to do. Has a heart change really happened though? Or has Jonah simply changed to escape affliction and troubles? Jonah has not changed inwardly.

There is a disconnect between the prophet and G-d.

Verse 2: *“And he (Jonah) prayed to the L-rd and he said: ‘Aha O L-rd; was this not my word when I was still upon my soil? Therefore, I rose up (moved forward) to flee to Tarshish because I knew that You are a gracious and merciful G-d, slow to anger and abundant in grace. and that You are comforted concerning that evil.’”*

In this context, Jonah's prayer is really his complaint. Jonah was unhappy that G-d was doing for the Ninevites what He had done for Israel. Giving them salvation.

rose up (moved forward) to flee: Jonah thought he was making progress/moving forward when he fled to Tarshish.

Jonah knew G-d very well, and he benefitted from this knowledge. He was glad that G-d was all these things (gracious, merciful, slow to anger, abundant in grace), but He wanted it for Israel and not for Nineveh/the nations. He wanted to keep that all for himself/Israel.

In doing so it shows that Jonah did not understand why Israel was created. G-d supernaturally created Israel that she might be used, by G-d, in order to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. (Genesis 12v3) Israel was called to take the message of G-d to the nations, but Jonah (personified as Israel) did not want to do that. He wanted salvation for Israel, but not salvation for the nations.

Verse 3: *“And now, O L-rd, please take my soul from me, for my death is better than my life.”*

G-d has a perfect plan, but Jonah would prefer to die rather than to live and serve G-d. How quick we are to forget what G-d tries to teach us! Jonah had just been dead, yearning for the sanctuary of G-d and intimacy with Him again. Just a short while later he is angry and full of emotion, not thinking according to the truths of Scripture.

Verse 4: *“And the L-rd said: ‘Is it good that you are angry?’”*

Jonah doesn't respond because he knows that it is not good to be angry. He is being driven by emotions/feelings rather than by truth. We need to be careful that we don't allow bitterness and rebellion to take hold of us.

Jonah is not experiencing the joy of the L-rd. When we do not experience the joy of the L-rd we are in a rebellious state. (Philippians 4v12)

Verse 5: *“And Jonah went out from the city and he sat on the east side of the city. He made for himself there a sukkah (booth) and he sat underneath it in the shade, until he could see what should be with the city.”*

Biblically and prophetically speaking the east is where judgement comes from. (Genesis 41v6, Exodus 10v13 etc) Jonah is still hoping that G-d is going to overturn Nineveh, and that he will get what he wants – the annihilation of his enemies (who are, incidentally, no longer G-d's enemies).

A sukkah is the same word used for the booth constructed for the Feast of Tabernacles. It is a symbolic representation of dependence upon G-d. By building this sukkah Jonah is making a false statement. He is implying that He is G-d's man, but in return he wants G-d to do his will. Never try to negotiate or put conditions before G-d; you are going to be disappointed.

Verse 6: *“And the L-rd G-d appointed a gourd (small tree) to go up over Jonah, to be shade upon his head to save him from evilness. And Jonah rejoiced concerning the gourd with a great joy.”*

G-d provided for Jonah in the desert place – in the midst of his disobedience. G-d showed Jonah mercy, trying to communicate to Jonah that he should, likewise, show mercy to these people of Nineveh. The *evilness* spoken of here is the hot sun. Jonah *rejoiced* in G-d's provision of mercy.

When Jonah was a recipient of mercy it brought him joy, but when someone else was the recipient it brought him anger. Jonah had had no joy but now, because G-d has done something so small, Jonah was thrilled and full of joy. But Jonah missed (did not realise) the greater work of G-d – G-d's work of forgiveness. That of non-covenantal people brought into a relationship with G-d. (first the sailors and now the Ninevites)

Jonah had forgotten the forgiveness he had received. He had forgotten his need for atonement. Atonement is not simply for escaping the judgement of G-d. Atonement is also for the purpose of worship and service – but Jonah had lost sight of all of this.

Until we understand these simple truths of the forgiveness and mercy of G-d, and being able to love those who we are at odds with, we are not going to be able to be used by G-d to accomplish His purposes. When we understand the outcome of G-d's grace there is joy for us but also a burden/concern for the spiritual condition of others.

Verse 7: *“And The G-d appointed a worm, early in the morning, on the next day; and the worm struck the gourd and it withered.”*

G-d gives but G-d also takes away (Job 1v21). Even the worm, in this book, obeys G-d. The G-d who does great things is also intimately aware of the small things as well.

Verse 8: *“And it came about, when the sun was shining, that G-d appointed a strong eastern wind and the sun smote Jonah on his head and Jonah fainted. And he asked that his soul be taken from him that he might die. And he said: ‘My death is better than my life’”*

Jonah is on the east side of the city. As mentioned in 4v5, 'east' is related to judgement. Jonah, not realising what he is asking for, wants G-d's wrath to come and overthrow this city. G-d allowed him to experience a small degree of judgement in this wind.

This is the second time we see Jonah passed out. G-d is again bringing Jonah to the point where he has no power in and of himself. He is totally dependant on G-d. He had quickly forgotten that he had no capability of doing anything without G-d. Jonah does not remember G-d's faithfulness. Everyone else, in this book, has been moved by G-d's faithfulness but Jonah, stubbornly, has not been.

Many of the sages say that Jonah is not serious – he is just trying to manipulate G-d. "If You don't give me what I want I would rather die."

Verse 9: *"And G-d spoke to Jonah: 'Is it right that you are angry concerning the gourd? Is it right for you to be angry, even unto death?'"*

Jonah doesn't want to see things from G-d's perspective.

Verse 10: *"You had pity on the gourd which you had not laboured with and did not grow it. That one night it was and another night it perished."*

Jonah wasn't personally invested in the gourd – he had just received the benefit of it. Here G-d is saying that He is personally invested in the Ninevites. We need to understand that there is a call upon our lives. When Peter (who personifies believers in Messiah) was asked to take the gospel to the Gentiles (See comment in 1v3) he responded positively. This is what our response should be.

Verse 11: *"Therefore should I not have pity for Nineveh, the great city, which is in it 120 000 men who do not know their right hand from their left? And (there are) many animals. "*

G-d is trying to get Jonah to see things from His perspective. G-d is wanting to take the holiness, that is supposed to characterise Jerusalem, and see it in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the outermost places of the earth. Jonah stood firmly against this, because he couldn't get over his hatred for the enemy. He is not able to pray for the peace, salvation and wellbeing of his enemies.

Do not know their right hand from their left: this is a Hebrew idiom that means that they had no Divine revelation. Some sages see this as an indictment on Jonah (and ultimately on Israel) be-

cause they say Jonah/Israel did not take revelation to them. G-d created Israel so that they could be a light to the nations. Jonah dragged his feet all the way. He didn't want G-d's revelation to have any effect on these people.

Animals, biblically speaking, have to do with wealth. Wealth is often, prophetically, an image of potential. Great wealth has great potential. G-d is showing Jonah that this is a city that can be used by Him. It can be a city that brings about fruitfulness.

- Don't think that people are so wicked, and so far removed from G-d, that they are beyond redemption. G-d can still use/save them. The wickedness of the people of Nineveh went up to the heavens, but they believed G-d's Word when it was spoken to them. They repented of their ways, humbling themselves by calling out to G-d with sackcloth and fasting.
- G-d is still looking for people to be faithful Jonah's. To take the simple message of judgement to people so that they can have a chance to repent. This message moved 120 000 people. When we stop sharing the message of judgement we stop sharing the message of the Bible. A message of judgement provokes people's souls.
- Yeshua pointed the religious leaders to the sign of Jonah – we need to have faith, like those people of Nineveh (Matthew 12v41)
- Resurrection speaks of the reality of the Kingdom. The Kingdom won't be established until judgement comes first.
- Salvation overcomes the judgement of G-d by only one means – the grace of G-d. The blood of Messiah.