

Introduction

1. Song of Songs 6:9; Hosea 7:11

My dove, my perfect one is unique; she is the only one from her mother, pure to the one who birthed her... Ephraim has become like a foolish dove, lacking a [wise] heart...

2. Midrash, Pirkei d'R' Eliezer 9

Jonah judged for himself, saying, "I know that the nations are close to repentance. Now they will repent, and G-d will send His anger against Israel. Further, it is enough that Israel calls me a false prophet; now, the nations will, too!"

3. Rabbi Don Isaac Abarbanel (15th century Spain, Portugal, Italy) to Jonah 1:1

He decided not to go to Nineveh, so that the people of Assyria would not be saved from destruction by his hand. How could his going cause the Assyrians to be saved, and to destroy the children of Israel?... If G-d wishes to save them Himself, let Him do as He wishes – but not via Jonah and by his hand.

4. Kings I 19:10

And [Elijah] said, "I have been zealous for G-d, Master of multitudes, for the children of Israel have left Your covenant, they have ruined Your altars, they have killed Your prophets, and only I remain, and they seek to take my life."

5. Midrash Tanchuma, Vayikra 8

Rabbi Tarfon said: The fish was appointed from the six days of Creation to swallow Jonah, as it is written, "And G-d appointed a great fish."

1:1-3 Flight of the Prophet

6. Jonah 1:1-3

And the word of G-d came to Jonah son of Amitai, to say: Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and call to her, for their evil has risen before Me. And Jonah rose to flee to Tarsus from before G-d. And he descended to Jaffa, and he found a boat going to Tarsus, and he paid for it, and he descended into it to go with them to Tarsus from before G-d.

7. Midrash, Mechilta d'R' Yishmael Bo 1

Was he truly fleeing from before G-d? It is already written, 'Where can I flee from Your spirit' ... Rather, Jonah said, "I will leave Israel, to a place where the Shechinah is not revealed."

1:4-16 Jonah 1, G-d 0 ?

8. Jonah 1:4-16

And G-d cast a great wind into the sea, and there was a great storm on the sea, and the boat seemed about to be smashed. And the sailors were afraid, and each cried out to his god, and they cast the implements in the boat into the sea to lighten the load. And Jonah descended to the inner areas of the boat, and he lay down and slumbered. And the lead sailor drew near to him and said to him, "Why are you slumbering? Rise and call to your G-d; perhaps G-d will pay attention to us, and we will not be lost."

And the [sailors] said to each other, "Let us cast lots, and we will know for whom this evil has befallen us!" And they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. And they said to him, "Tell us now, for what reason is this evil befalling us? What is your trade, and where are you coming from? What is your land, and from what nation are you?"

And he told them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear Hashem, G-d of Heaven, who made the sea and the land." And the men feared greatly, and they said to him, "What have you done?" The men knew he was fleeing G-d, because he had told them. And they said to him, "What should we do to you, and the sea will be quiet from

upon us," for the sea continued to storm. And he told them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea, and the sea will be quiet from upon you. I know that this storm has come upon you because of me."

And the men rowed to return to land and they could not, for the sea was storm-tossed around them. And they called out to G-d, and they said, "Please, G-d, let us not be lost for the life of this man, and do not place innocent blood upon us. You are G-d; as you wish, so you do." And they picked up Jonah and they cast him into the sea, and the sea ceased its rage. And the men felt great fear of G-d, and they brought offerings to G-d and they made vows.

9. Commentary of Rashi to Jonah 1:10

Why did you do this, to flee from such a ruler?!

10. Commentary of Rabbi Meir Leibush "Malbim" to Jonah 1:11

They asked whether he wanted to repent and commit himself to go to Nineveh... or if they could return him to Israel, "and thus the sea would quiet itself from upon us."

2:1-11 The Divine Comeback

11. Talmud, Taanit 15a

On the sixth blessing he says: May the One who answered Jonah in the innards of the fish answer you, and hear the sound of your cries on this day. Blessed is the G-d who answers in a time of trouble!

12. Rabbi Moses Maimonides, Guide of the Perplexed 2:46

Just as a person envisions in a dream that he travels to a foreign land, marries a woman, lives there for a while and has a son whom he names *Ploni*, and he has such-and-such involvements, so are these prophetic parables. Any time the parable mentions an act or a conversation of the prophet, that's all in the prophetic vision... Doubtless, this applies to Ezekiel's vision... Isaiah... Jeremiah... Hosea... And from what I have specified you may take proof for that which I have not mentioned; it is all along one path in prophetic visions...

13. Jonah 2:1-11

And G-d assigned a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the innards of the fish for three days and three nights. And Jonah prayed to Hashem, his G-d, from within the innards of the fish. And he said: I called to G-d in my trouble, and He answered me. From the belly of the depths I cried out, and You heard my voice.

And You cast me into the depths, the heart of the seas, and the river surrounded me; all of Your breakers and waves passed over me.

And I said, 'I have been exiled from before Your eyes,' still, I would look toward Your holy sanctuary.

Water surrounded me, to the point of my life; the depths surrounded me, the reeds enwrapped my head.

To the ends of the mountains I descended; the land's bars upon me forever; and You elevated my life from the pit, Hashem, my G-d.

When my soul fainted upon me, I remembered G-d, and my prayer came to You, to Your holy sanctuary.

Those who guard empty vanity abandon the generosity which would have been there.

And I, with a voice of thanks I will sacrifice to You. That which I have vowed, I will fulfill. Salvation is G-d's!

And G-d spoke to the fish, and it spat Jonah on to the land.

14. Genesis 3:24, 4:13-14

And He exiled Man, and He placed east of Eden the cherubs...

And Cain said to G-d: My sin is too great to bear! Behold, You have exiled me today from upon the face of the earth, and from You I shall be hidden, and I shall wander the land...