

JONAH THE MOANER

JONAH 1 - 4

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the story about a loner called Jonah.
He'll be shown and he'll be known as a bit of a moaner.
But it's not just a ditty about a desperate God escaper,
It's a tale that explains the very nature of the Maker.
So take a seat and stay awake as this yarn is spun,
Let's dive in at the beginning reading Chapter One.



I. JONAH RUNS FROM GOD

The family line is vital for a Jewish guy,
So kicking off, Jonah's dad was tagged as Amittai.
Amittai means 'truth' and Jonah means 'dove'
And a dove is a bringer of love from above.

GOD SPEAKS TO JONAH

Now a bolt from the blue of God's word occurred,
Get a lock on this shocker that Jonah heard,
"I've spotted a problem, a hornet's nest to address,
That Nineveh city's in a bit of a mess.
So behold, I've resolved to get this problem solved
By selecting and electing you to get involved.
You're my man on a mission with a message to impart;
Tell the Ninevites it's time for them to make a fresh start."
But Jonah disagreed and made a mighty quick exit;
Bags packed, roof racked, the lad off and legged it.

So on the run from God he fled south to Joppa
And bought a single trip ticket on the Med non-stopper,
Heading west for Tarshish on a voyage of defection,
A two thousand mile sail in the opposite direction.

GOD SENDS A STORM

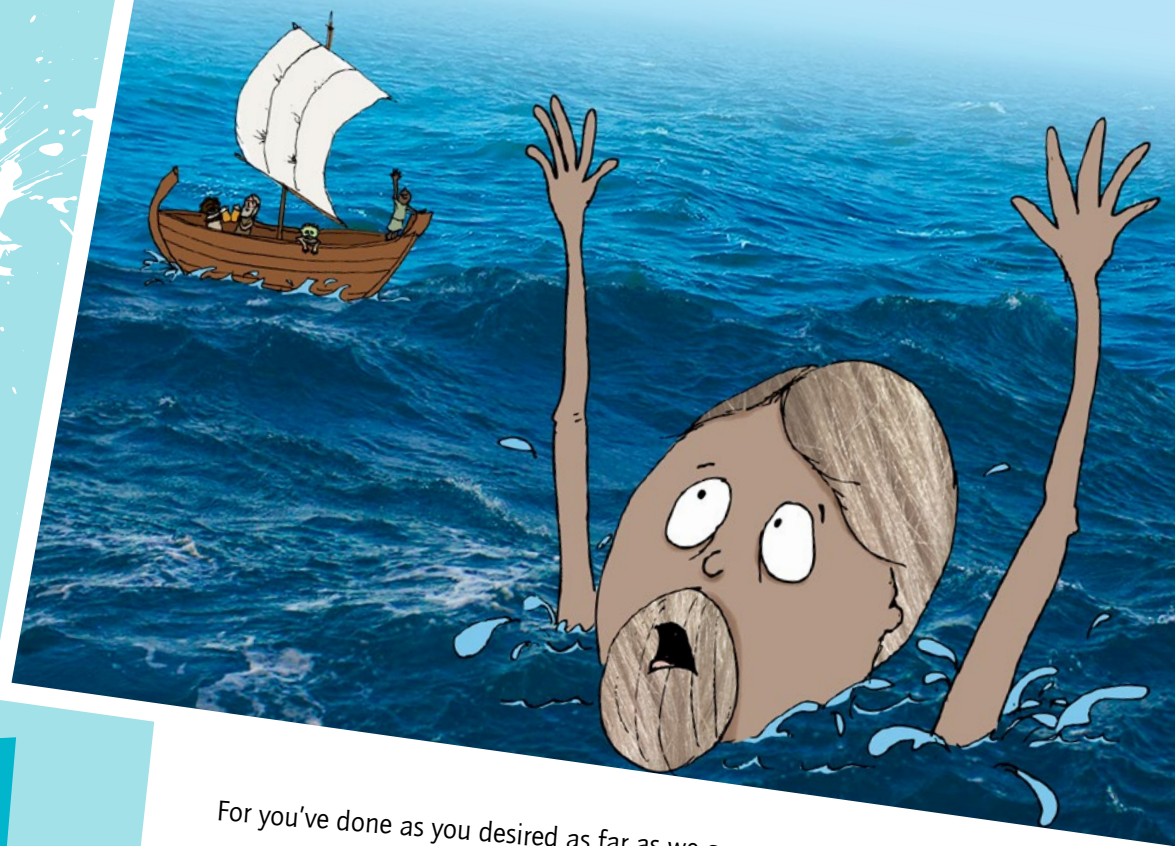
Then the Lord sent a storm
that could send the boat down.
The waves pounded the ship which
risked running aground.
But the sailors were afraid
and so they knelt and prayed.
They paid respects to their
gods to quickly come to their aid.
And to lighten the freight
they obeyed the captain's code,
Making haste to cast away
the weighty laden payload.
But Jonah'd gone below and
he was safely stowed,
He was power saving batteries
in a deep sleep mode.
So the skipper went to J before the ship
became a wreck
Saying, "How can you sleep?
Get your butt up on the deck!
'Cause it's time to get down on your knees and pray.
Perhaps your God'll take note so we won't be washed away?"



WHO CAUSED THE STORM

Now back in the day, when disaster struck,
With a run of bad luck you had to pass the buck.
So the crew debated who was fated, how to name and shame,
"Let's take aim, cast lots and discover who's to blame!"

They rolled a dice, tossed a coin and who should win the prize draw?
Jonah's name was hat-pulled, Jonah picked the short straw.
Straight away they plied questions and pressurised,
"It's time to whistle-blow the deity that's got us hog-tied!
So tell us your profession, where you're from and your nation.
You've gotta spill the baked-beans about your background situation."
J replied, "I'm a Hebrew so I back the main man,
That's the Lord, God of heaven who made the sea and dry land."
The crew were terrified, afraid, 'cause he was on the run.
J explained, but they campaigned, "What the beep have you done?"



JONAH GETS THROWN OVERBOARD

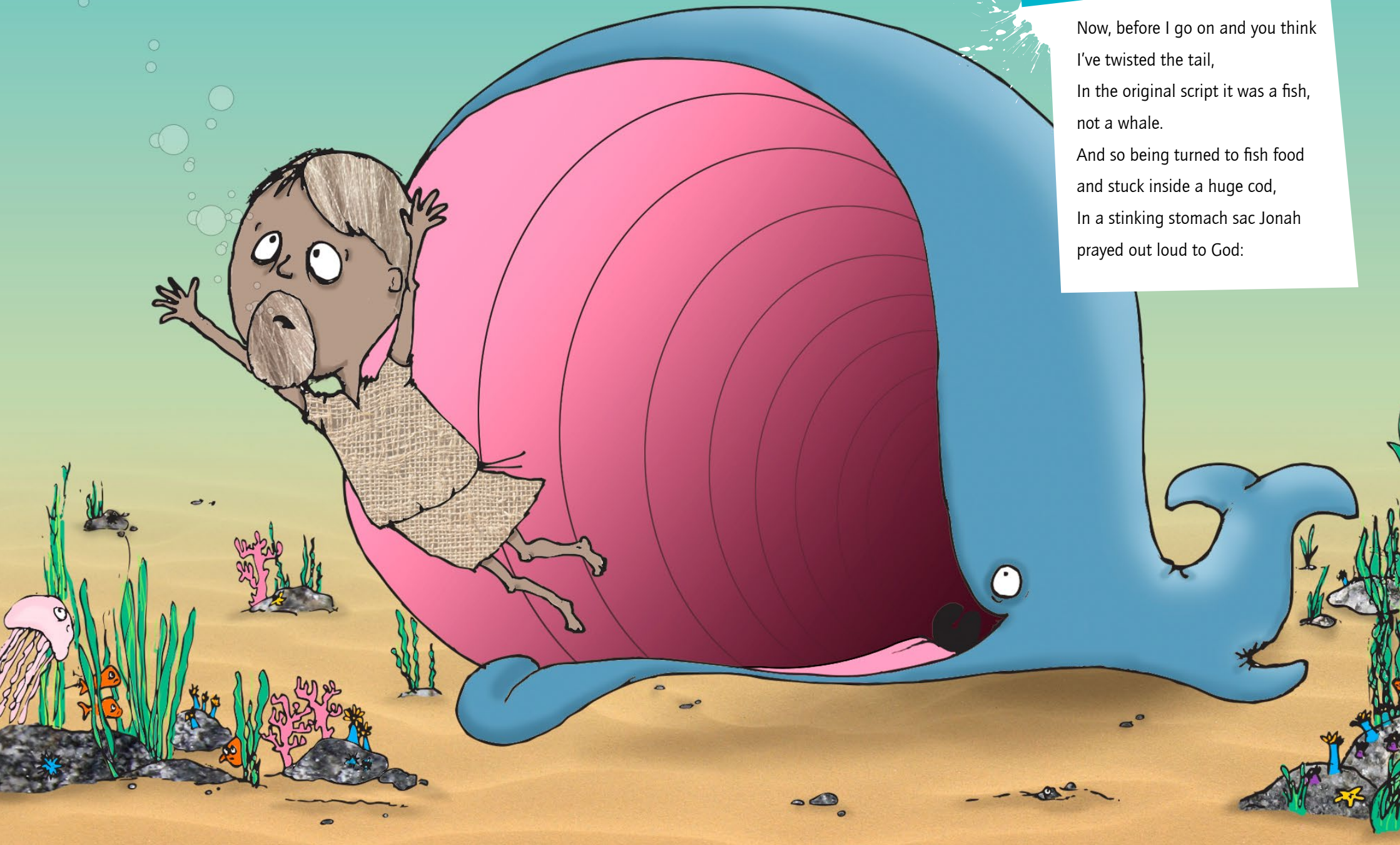
Meanwhile, the sea was getting rougher,
staying upright getting tougher,
"Tell us what to do to you so that we don't have to suffer?"
So Jonah professed, "If you want to achieve success
Then toss me into the sea and the storm will be suppressed.
It's the only acid test to lay this crisis to rest.
I confess it's my fault for I'm your unwelcome guest!"
But taking to the oars the crew gave it their best
But the hurricane progressed like something possessed.
Then the crew beat their breasts, hard pressed and stressed
Crying, "Lord, don't let us die as we progress Jonah's death.

For you've done as you desired as far as we can surmount.
It's a necessary evil, please don't hold us to account!"
So they nabbed and grabbed Jonah who didn't fight arrest.
They threw him overboard, no rubber ring or life vest,
And then straight away as if a wizard waved a magic wand,
The sea was as calm as a farm millpond.
And with conditions restored the crew onboard were awed,
With offerings and vows they bowed and praised the Lord.
So Jonah sank down, it was his time to go,
Blowing bubbles as he flowed to the depths below.
But God supplied a huge fish, he wasn't read his last rites
And it swallowed Jonah whole for three days and three nights.

2. JONAH'S PRAYER

Now, before I go on and you think
I've twisted the tail,
In the original script it was a fish,
not a whale.

And so being turned to fish food
and stuck inside a huge cod,
In a stinking stomach sac Jonah
prayed out loud to God:



"In distress I called on God who tuned in to my cry.
From the depths of the dead I got his fishy reply.
You hurled me deep down to the bottom of the sea,
Currents carried, tides twisted, breakers swept over me.
I said, 'I've been banished, and I'm out of your sight,
But I'll see you once again when this trouble's put right.'
I was swamped and dragged down, my feet were lumps of lead,
Man, I even had seaweed slapped and wrapped around my head!
I sank down to the roots of the mountains off-shore,
No, I couldn't sink lower than the firm sea floor.
But my life was saved and from the depths I've risen
'Cause you busted me out of my undersea prison.
I kept God in my mind as my life was slowly throttled.
My prayers floated upwards like a message in a bottle.
'If you wanna save your life then hold to heaven above.
Don't cling to shoddy idols and ignore God's love.'
So I will meditate and celebrate with grateful praise,
Devout and shouting out that 'our God saves!'
And as I pay my respects I will offer and respond,
Making good on my promise for my word is my bond."

And after J had finished praying the Lord issued a command.
The fish retched and fetched him up, spewing J on dry land.

3. JONAH OBEYS GOD

Then God was on repeat, his looping rap had never changed.
He dictated and restated and related again,
"Time to pack up your bags and go to Nineveh town
To announce the state of play and the law I've laid down."



JONAH PREACHES IN NINEVEH CITY

So Jonah agreed, book played and obeyed,
But the city was so big that it took him three days.
And after one day of tripping, his record started spinning,
Preaching, "You're out of control and your morals are slipping.
I've started my stopwatch to count down forty days
Then the city will be crushed so amend your ways!"

THE PEOPLE HEAR JONAH

Jonah's words rang true and the people saw the light.
The Ninevites, that night, began a hunger strike.
As a sign to the Divine, right down the line,
Dressing up in old sacks became the vogue design.

THE KING OF NINEVEH ISSUES A ROYAL DECREE

Now being told of Jonah's omen the king listened and took note.
He rose up from his throne, unclothed and disrobed.
And getting the message and the cut and the thrust,
He sack wrapped himself up and sat down in the dust.
Then making and dictating a notification,
He royally announced this public information:

"By order of the king and his sovereign crew
You've gotta show that you're sorry, let me tell you what to do.
Not you, not your dog, cat, chickens or herds
Are allowed to eat or drink 'cause action's louder than words.
Every person and every creature will have to don the sack,
'Cause it's time to plead with God and get your lives back on track.
No more breaking the law in the Nineveh locality.
Give up your wrongdoing and your wicked brutality.
And with God's anger burning and our conscience returning,
Concerning our fate the Lord might be U-turning.
And you're never, ever knowing, he might start showing
Some pity for the city and let his mercy start flowing?"

THE PEOPLE OBEY AND GOD RELENTS

The crowds listened to the message and inwardly digested,
Then they dressed in sacks exactly as the king had requested.
Now when the Lord God surveyed how they'd changed their ways,
He put a stop to Plan A and he re-appraised.
He saw how the people had been good and behaved,
So he didn't bring destruction and the city was saved.

4. JONAH MOANS

• But Jonah got all angry and his mood was dark.
• He thought that God was all wrong and acting way off the mark.
So he raised his eyes to the sky and began to vent,
"I told you this would happen, it's what I tried to prevent!
That's why I made my escape and evaded your request
I took to Tarshish because I second-guessed
What would happen, what you're like - you love and don't ration it.
You're full of mercy, kind and compassionate.
You're always slow to anger and you long to hold back,
Taking up the slack, you don't want to attack.
Now, Lord, take my life and put a gun to my head.
I don't want to be alive 'cause I'd be better off dead!"

GOD GETS THROUGH TO JONAH USING A STRANGE PLANT

But the Lord God replied, taking Jonah to one side,
Asking, "Do you have the right to be so angry inside?"
You see, Jonah'd set up camp to the east of the town,
And in the shelter, home-made, in the shade he sat down.
With a grand-stand position, to witness God's mission,
Jonah sat, watched and waited for the city's demolition.
And as J was hot sweating, the Lord came to his aid.
The Lord raised a strange plant to give Jonah more shade.
Being relieved by the tree and with his sunburn eased,
He was appeased, feeling glee, care free and pleased.
But at the break of day God provided a worm
Which in turn, chewed for food and went and withered the fern.
And when the sun returned, God provided a scorcher;
Solar wind and blazing rays, a baking oven of torture.
And as his brain began to boil, J began to fade and faint
No restraint and true to form Jonah vented his complaint,
"I wanna curl up and die!" he cried, "there's no misgiving!
Listen up, take it in, I'm saying dying beats living!"

GOD CHALLENGES JONAH

But God said to Jonah, "I can hear you blurbing.
Is it right for you to find that plant so disturbing?"
"Yes it is!" J replied, and then he went on and said,
"I'm so angry, seeing red, that I wish I were dead!"

GOD EXPLAINS ABOUT THE PLANT

"You're concerned about a plant you didn't seed or even sow.
You didn't tend it or water it or make the thing grow.
It sprouted overnight and it quickly flowered.
It lived and died within twenty-four hours.
So don't you reckon, for a second, I should be concerned
If the great city of Nineveh stands or burns?
It numbers a hundred and twenty thousand strong,
Full of animals and people that don't know right from wrong."

OUTRODUCTION

So that was the story about a loner called Jonah.
You can see why he was known as a bit of a moaner.
But it wasn't just a ditty about a desperate God escaper,
It was tale that explained the very nature of the Maker.
So I hope you stayed awake as this yarn was spun,
We've read the whole story and now we're done.

