Angles on Jonah

Five Approaches to the Study of the Text of Jonah

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# CONTENTS

Introduction ................................................................................................................................................................................. 3

1. Hebrew Manuscript Angle: Textual Criticism of the Book of Jonah ................................................................. 4

2. Ancient Version Angle: The Septuagint and Vulgate Translations of Jonah ................................. 10

3. Comparison Angle: Jonah Among the Prophets—A Stylistic Comparison of the Introductory Headings of the Prophets ................................................................. 13

4. Grammatical/Literary Angle: Superlative Contrasts in Jonah .............................................................. 16

5. Philological Angle: Search Strategies for Dialectical Phenomena in Jonah ........................................ 22

Conclusion .................................................................................................................................................................................. 24

Appendix: Parallel Aligned Texts and Translations of Jonah ........................................................................... 25
Introduction

Texts are read through filters and from angles. Filters are mostly subconscious; they are typically comprised of the cultural backgrounds in which readers have been raised that predispose them to understand a text in certain ways and within preset boundaries or presuppositions. Angles on the other hand are intentional and programmatical. They represent a reader’s conscious and systematic attempt to understand a text within parameters articulated and defined by the reader. A reading of a text from a pre-defined angle does not mean, however, that the reading occurs entirely without filters. What one actually “sees” from any particular angle is to some extent still subconsciously filtered information. There is always some mixture of filters and angles in varying proportions. This paper investigates five angles through which the text of the prophet Jonah can be read and examined. No attempt is made to identify and analyze filters, and each angle presented is only lightly sampled; much additional work could be expended to yield fruitful results for a deeper understanding of the text and context of Jonah.

Some of angles discussed in this paper form fields of biblical criticism, a term that refers to the scientific or methodological investigation of a literary work. Each of the five angles represents a separate discipline for which distinctive tools and approaches are applied. Each delivers unique sets of results that do not necessarily contradict results obtained from the views through the other angles. By way of analogy, a stone may be looked at in the sun, in the rain, or under a microscope; it may be picked up and handled, tasted, smelled, and thrown. It may be thrown against various kinds of objects. We learn lots of different things about the stone by various kinds of interactions with it. We would not say the stone itself changes with each new mode of interaction. In the same way we can learn lots of different things about a text by applying various angles and approaches to its words and message. The text itself remains the same in all cases. Just as there is no primacy of interaction with a stone, so there is no primacy of angle in looking at a text. Each angle or point of view has its own justification independent of the others. The more ways we learn to interact, the more we learn. The five angles presented here represent only a small sample of the many ways one could choose to interact with the words of the prophet Jonah and learn something new about them.
1. Hebrew Manuscript Angle: Textual Criticism of the Book of Jonah

General Issues

The Problem

For many years New Testament textual scholars have had at their disposal far more tools than Hebrew Bible textual scholars for the text critical study of their respective texts. Even for the mere identification of Biblical Hebrew manuscripts, there still does not exist anything approximating the comprehensiveness, accuracy, and availability of Aland’s Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments, 1994, supplemented and updated in the Bericht der Hermann Kunst-Stiftung zur Förderung der neustamentlichen Textforschung (Münster, see website for the years 1995 to 2004). For each of the more than 5,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament in all four categories (Papyri, Uncials, Minuscules, Lectionaries) the List and its supplement records manuscript siglum, content, date, number of leaves, number of columns, size (format), and current location. There is nothing comparable for Biblical Hebrew manuscripts. The situation is improving, however, and complete data should be available within a few years. For the time being, various sources and personal contacts must be consulted in order to proceed in any scientific way with a text-critical evaluation of any particular text of the Hebrew Bible.¹

Hebrew Manuscript Categories

For the text of the Hebrew Bible there are two primary categories of textual evidence: (1) Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), dating from the 2rd cent. B.C.E. to the 1st cent. C.E., and (2) Masoretic Texts (MT) dating from the 9th cent. C.E. and later. There are a couple of early textual witnesses (silver amulets from Jerusalem, ca. 6th cent. B.C.E., and the Nash Papyrus, ca. 2nd–1st cent. B.C.E.), but these represent short popular and

¹ The situation was partially aggravated by the long delays in publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls documents. In addition, within the last decade over 21,000 Hebrew manuscripts (maybe 10–15% of which are biblical) in Russian archives in St. Petersburg and Moscow have been made available to scholars for microfilming and cataloguing. Analysis of these manuscripts will require several more decades of intense scholarly labor. See Malachi Beit-Arie “The Accessibility of the Russian Manuscript Collections: New Perspectives for Jewish Studies” in Jewish Studies in a New Europe: Proceedings of the Fifth Congress of Jewish Studies in Copenhagen 1994..., published in 1998, pp. 82–98.
liturgical texts and are not biblical manuscripts in the strict sense. Documents so far examined from the Cairo Genizah represent masoretic traditions and do not verifiably date before the 9th cent. C.E. There is thus a gap of over nearly a millennium between the two primary manuscript categories for the Hebrew Bible.²

Dead Sea Scrolls Publications

With the recent publications of the remaining Dead Sea Scroll materials, scholars now have complete access to this category of Hebrew biblical manuscripts. A handy volume, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (Abegg, Flint, Ulrich, 1999), has all the biblical fragments identified and translated into English. While there are severe limitations to the scholarly usefulness of this volume, it at least provides for the first time a kind of rough index by biblical book to the Dead Sea Scroll materials. Comprehensive indices of biblical passages in the DSS are now also available³, along with images of the scrolls themselves.⁴

Masoretic Manuscript Publications

In 1980 the publication of Yeivin’s *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah* included a list of thirty pre-1100 Masoretic manuscripts (pp. 12–29). In late 1994 through personal letter and fax exchange with Professor Malachi Beit-Arie (Professor of Codicology and Palaeography, Hebrew University) many items in Yeivin’s list were found to contain inaccurate data. In a personal meeting with Professor Beit-Arie in January 1995 in Claremont, CA, he kindly provided me a printout of a codicological database with updated and corrected, but unpublished, information on pre-1100 C.E. manuscripts. Currently, data are still being entered into this database maintained by the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem, directed by Benjamin Richler, but the database is in Hebrew and is neither complete nor readily accessible via the internet. It also includes data on all Hebrew manuscripts, biblical and non-biblical. There is therefore still no separate source

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for scholars to consult to obtain exclusive and complete information on masoretic biblical manuscripts.

The most recent publications describing the earliest Masoretic texts are two large folio volumes composed in French and Hebrew (with English introductions): (1) For manuscripts dating from 894/5 to 1020: *Codices Hebraicis Litteris Exarati Quo Tempore Scripti Fuerint Exhibentes, Tome I: Jusqu’a 1020* (Brepols, 1997, semi-literal translation of title: “Codices written in Hebrew letters (script) showing from what time they were written”); and (2) for manuscripts from 1021–1079 there is a second volume with the same title (1999).

*Access to the Materials of Both Categories*

At present access to the best images of the Dead Sea Scrolls and microfilms and/or facsimiles of the earliest masoretic manuscripts is obtained by a visit to the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center (ABMC) in Claremont, CA. The Center and its staff are most helpful in locating needed materials. Through its generous ILL policies, the ABMC will loan microfilms to scholars so that a trip to Claremont can in some cases be avoided. However, since complete cataloguing information on the majority of masoretic texts is still lacking, it is difficult for a scholar to know what microfilm to borrow.

**Text-Critical Study of the Book of Jonah**

In April 2001 I visited the ABMC for the purpose of identifying and consulting images, microfilms and facsimiles of the most ancient manuscripts of the book of Jonah. Unfortunately, the Dead Sea Scrolls images available to me at that time were extremely difficult to read, partly due to the fragmentary nature of the scroll materials. Ultimately for this category I needed to depend on the publication series *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* (DJD). For the masoretic category, I was able to consult 5 early manuscripts. The results of the study are as follows:

**Manuscript Category 1: Dead Sea Scrolls — 5 manuscripts**


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5 The ABMC has a private collection of high quality images on CD-ROM.


8Hev1 LXX (XIIgr) fragments of the Septuagint of Jonah, Col. 2: Jon 1:5–2:7a; Col. 3: Jon 2:7b–4:5a; Col. 4: Jon 4:5b–end, DJD 8 (1990), 84ff., plates I–III. Dated to 1st century B.C.E. (DJD 39, pg. 371).

Observations:

General: For 4Q76 there are several spacing issues that would indicate a slightly different text here and there, but the text is missing (lacunae).

Jonah 1:3 4Q82, Frg. 76 has non-locative והרשמה for MT והרשפה.

Jonah 1:8 4Q76, Col. V has defective אליא for MT והנה נא.

Jonah 1:8 4Q76, Col. V has defective and non-cohortative והנה נא for MT והנה נא.

Jonah 1:8 4Q76, Col. V has an alternative word באשל for MT באשל.

Jonah 1:8 4Q82, Frg. 81 reads והנה with conjunction: And what is your occupation?

Jonah 1:13: Mur88 has the spelling נכש for MT נכש.

Jonah 2:6(5) 4Q82, Frg. 78 has defective ינפפ for MT ינפפ.

Jonah 2:7(6) 4Q82, Frg. 78 adds the word והני before ובש for MT והני ובש, making 3 words each for the last two phrases, thus:

4Q82 reads: MT reads:
You brought up from the pit my life, You brought up from the pit my life
My soul, O Yahweh my God. O Yahweh my God.

Jonah 3:2 4Q76, Frg. 22 reads הקירה instead of MT הנורה. Frg. 22 is closer to the idea of LXX, but not identical to it.

4Q76 reads: MT reads:
the proclamation the proclamation
like the one that I spoke that I am speaking

Jonah 3:8 Mur88 has על instead of MT על.

Jonah 4:6 4Q82, Frg. 89 reads adonai yhwh instead of MT yhwh adonai.

Jonah 4:7 4Q82 has instead of MT with no appreciable difference in meaning.
Jonah 4:9  Mur88 has plene פלט for MT פלט.
Jonah 4:10  4Q82 has alternate spelling ליל for MT ליל.
Note:  For a list of purely orthographic variants in 4Q82, see DJD 15, pg. 274.

Manuscript Category 2: Early Masoretic — 5 manuscripts

Cairo Codex: 894/95 AD
Firk.II.B.124: 941/1030 AD
Firk.II.B.9: 951/1000 AD
Firk.II.B.225: 10th cent. AD
Firk.II.B.19a: 1008–1010 AD (Leningrad Codex)

[Note: Jonah is entirely missing in the Aleppo Codex, 930 AD]

Jonah 1:3: The 4 masoretic mss besides L have חנניא with the composite qamets under the aleph (see apparatus in BHS “sic L”).
Jonah 1:12 In Firk.II.B.124 the reading is חנניא — written defective.
Jonah 2:1 Scrnal correction in Firk.II.B.124: ינוש is written in small letters in the margin (left of the column).
Jonah 3:2 In the 4 masoretic mss besides L, the reading is חנניא with no chireq point under the waw (see apparatus in BHS “sic L”).
Jonah 3:3 In the 4 masoretic mss besides L, the reading is חנניא with tsere under the waw instead of seghol (see apparatus in BHS “sic L”).

Entire Book:  The accents in all 5 masoretic mss were identical throughout.

Summary

Most of the textual variants affect only matters of spelling and vocalization. In Mur88 of Jonah 3:8, the sense can hardly be: “And let them call out against God with strength…” This variant may rather show the interchangeability in some contexts of ל and לא. On this issue, see also sections 2 and 5 following. The most interesting variants affecting the sense are at Jonah 2:7 (vs. 6 in English) and 3:2. The exchange of divine names in 4:6 demonstrates that a substitute for the pronunciation of the tetragrammaton (YHWH) is a very old practice.

A significant observation is the number of times that all other masoretic mss agree in vocalization against L. Since there is no scientific reason for any single manuscript to be viewed as the standard, the textual critic should have no problem replacing the pointing of L with that of other mss, especially when they all agree and mostly pre-date
L. The primacy of L is due in large part to its being the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible, but that in itself is not sufficient reason to assume it is at the same time the most accurate manuscript in every respect.

The material for this section is derived from an examination of the parallel texts that form the Appendix of this paper. Translation can be a tricky business. Human beings share enough commonality that individual languages can describe equally many similar experiences, emotions, and objects encountered in human existence. On the other hand, climatic, geographical, technological, religious, cultural, political and a host of other areas are often sufficiently different among groups of humans that languages can often differ widely in their modes of expression. Those differences present challenges when experiences expressed in one language (known in translation theory as the source language) are transferred to another language (the target language).

Two ancient translations of the book of Jonah are examined here in reference to their differences. What are some of the causes for those differences, and what might we learn about the text itself through those differences? The items presented below are not exhaustive; they are mere samples of many kinds of interesting phenomena that occur in the process of translation. Additional samples may be found in the comments of the parallel texts in the Appendix.

**Word Meaning Ranges**

*Hebrew words translated more broadly in a target language.*

The Hebrew expression לָיְךָ תָּמָא frequently evokes the feeling of some kind of pronouncement against someone or something. It has a negative connotation. One anticipates a coming punishment, curse, or some kind of destructive activity. Literally however, לָיְךָ by itself means simply *call* or *call out*. Does the addition of the preposition by itself affect the meaning of the verb, or are there also contextual elements at play? How wide does one look to establish that context? For example, what if the end result of the story is known and it turns out that in fact there is no punishment or destruction? Could that possibly influence a translator’s decision? Such may be the case with both the LXX and V texts, which apply words of broader scope than לָיְךָ would normally suggest. These translations use words typical of the activity of a herald or announcer of news, whether that news be *good* or *bad*. The immediate context of Jonah 1:2 might
suggest a more negative term. The broader context of the book may have suggested to the LXX and V translators a corresponding broader choice of vocabulary.

_Hebrew words translated more specifically in a target language._

In Jonah 1:3 the purpose of Jonah paying the ship’s fare is stated simply to go (lit. to come, but perhaps there is a dialectical use of נָהַר here.) The LXX chooses to translate with the specific nautical word to sail. V mirrors the Hebrew with the general word for go.

**Words Added to Further Explain or For Some Agenda**

_Explanatory Additions_

Hebrew has a special word for deep- or heavy-sleep from the root מָדָר, and it is used of Jonah in 1:5. V translates approximately as one would in English, employing the word heavy as a descriptive to sleep. LXX goes one step further. It is as though the translator first asked himself the question, “How does one tell if someone is in a deep sleep?”, and then came up with the answer, “Why, one snores of course!” The verb מָדַר is thus translated “and he was snoring.”

_Theological or Literary Agenda?_

In Jonah 1:2 the LXX adds a word to the MT phase “their wickedness has come up before me” — “the cry of its wickedness has come up before me.” (There is also a possessive pronoun change here. MT says their taking city as a collective but focusing on the individuals that comprise it; LXX maintains grammatical congruence.) What gave rise to the addition of the word cry in LXX? Is there something inappropriate about wickedness coming up directly before God? Is there some theological block here that says since God is completely righteous, wickedness can’t come up to him, only the cry of it can? Or perhaps there a literary point the translator wants to make for parallel image balance — Jonah is to preach to Nineveh because the cry of Nineveh’s wickedness has come before God.

_Polysemy_

The book of Jonah probably employs both polysemy and paronomasia in its use of the root דָרַשׁ. What should the translator do when the root is used in a phrase that is idiomatic, such as Jonah 1:3 in reference to embarking a ship? The LXX translators here made a
choice in favor of the idiom, which in Greek is to go up (not down) into a ship. Of course, the polysemy the Hebrew author may have intended by the use of יָּסַר is missed in the translation.6

**Poetic Imagery**

Poetic imagery is sometimes extremely difficult to translate, and for that reason there is often no attempt to do so.

Jonah 1:4 employs two poetic images, neither of which is captured with parallel vocabulary or poetic devices in LXX or V. For the first, the Hebrew says that Yahweh hurled a great wind, an image which conjures a mighty arm in a throwing motion. LXX has aroused which doesn’t specify the imagery at all. Did the arousal occur through throwing with the arm, or stirring with the hand, or blowing with the mouth, or some other activity? V is even less descriptive, choosing the common, indeed bland word sent.

In the second image, the Hebrew uses personification, as well as onomatopoeia via the sounds imitating the storm, and paronomasia in the repetition of those sounds, all in the expression “the ship was thinking to be (it was going to be) broken.” Both LXX and V translate “the ship was in danger of being broken,” which makes perfect sense, and is certainly objectively correct, but mirrors none of the poetic devises of the Hebrew.

**Textual Differences: Typos or Different Vorlage?**

When asked specific questions relating to his identity, Jonah responds in 1:9 with “I am a Hebrew.” LXX has what seems on first inspection a rather puzzling, “I am a servant of the Lord.” One possibility is that the translator read the unpointed text יְהוָה to read something like יָּהוָה, either mistakenly, or because that’s what his Vorlage read. Or was there some other reason? Did the translator have and read the consonants we have, but emend it for some particular reason? The term Hebrew is generally reserved for the mouth of foreigners to describe Israelites, though that is not exclusively the case. But perhaps in this context and at this time the LXX translator chose rather to emend the text in a way that also conveniently parallels the idea of the next line (“and the Lord God of heaven I fear”) rather than have Jonah describe himself as a Hebrew, even though to foreigners.

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3. Comparison Angle: 
Jonah Among the Prophets—A Stylistic Comparison of the Introductory Headings of the Prophets

Introduction

In his commentary on Isaiah 1–12, Hans Wildberger makes the following comment on the “Form” of Isaiah 1:1:


The heading has been produced in keeping with a firmly fixed tradition for introductions to literary works. The “normal” form for a title to a prophetical book may be found in Hosea 1:1: “The word of Yahweh that came to Hosea the son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah…” (pp. 1–2).

Is there such a thing as a “normal” form? If so, how often is it followed? A thorough examination of all the prophetic headings reveals that no two are alike, and that differences among the group are so great that one can dismiss the idea of a “normal” form. Certainly the concept of a “heading” is in itself a common link among these books, but the forms they take are as individual as the messages and personalities of each prophet.

Elements of the Headings

Elements of introductions to prophetic books can be categorized as follows:

A. Form of the verb hayah
   1. wayehi
   2. (asher) hayah
   3. hayoh hayah
   4. watehi

B. Designation of the content
   1. Noun designation of the content
      a. chazon
      b. dibre
      c. debar yahwe
      d. massa’/hamassa’
      e. sepher chazon
2. Verbal designation of the content or delivery
   a. chaza
   b. lemor

C. Information about the prophet
   1. Name of the prophet
   2. Name of the father of the prophet
   3. Occupation of the prophet
   4. Place of the prophet
   5. Family of the prophet

D. Prophet as recipient
   1. el with suffix
   2. el (with name of prophet)
   3. al with suffix
   4. Expanded description of the prophetic experience
   5. yad yahwe
   6. be-yad (with name of prophet)

E. Audience of the Prophet
   1. with al
   2. Name of recipient
   3. with el

F. Time of the Prophecy
   1. Names of Kings
   2. Other Event
   3. Absolute

G. Secondary Introduction

Sequence of Elements for Each of the Prophetic Books:

Isaiah 1:1 B1a / C1 / C2 / B2a / E1 / F1
   GA1 / B1c / D1 / B2b
Hosea 1/1–2a B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C2 / F1 / D4
Joel 1:1 B1c / A2 / D1 / C2
Amos 1:1 B1b / C1 / A2 / C3 / C4 / B2a / Ea / F1 / F2
Obadiah 1:1 B1a / C1
Jonah 1:1 A1a / B1c / D2 / C1 / C2 / B2b
Micah 1:1 B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C5 / F1 / B2a / E1
Nahum 1:1 B1d / E2 / B1e / C1 / C5
Habakkuk 1:1 B1d / B2a / C1 / C3
Zephaniah 1:1  B1c / A2 / D2 / C1 / C2-C2-C2-C2 / F1
Zechariah 1:1 F1 / A2 / B1c / D2 / C1 / C2-C2 / C3 / B2b
Malachi 1:1  B1d / B1c / E3 / D6 / C1

Discussion

The headings of the prophetical books differ from each other in at least these three points:

(1) in the number of elements
(2) in the order of the elements
(3) in the mode of expression of the elements

Examples of (3) include: (a) different descriptions of the prophetic message, (b) different expressions for the reception of the prophecy, (c) different methods for dating the prophecy.

The only two elements that all the headings have in common are items from group B and group C, i.e. designation of the content and information about the prophet. Only one of the headings confines itself to just one element from each of these two groups. A “normal” form for prophetic headings doesn’t exist.
4. Grammatical/Literary Angle: Superlative Contrasts in Jonah

Introduction

Story-telling in both ancient and modern worlds involves the use of numerous literary devices that attract and engage the attention of the reader. Occasionally, stories may highlight one particular device or technique that forms the backbone of the entire narrative. From the beginning to the end of the story of Jonah, the reader is made aware that this is no common storyline. There is something special here, something remarkable, and it is made apparent to the reader throughout the story via frequent contrasts presented in polaristic fashion.

I. Grammatical Superlatives

A. Determinate Adjective.

One of the simplest ways to express the superlative degree is to make an adjective determinate by means of the definite article (GKC 133g; Waltke 14.5c)\(^7\). Occurrences in Jonah are: 1:2, 3:2; 4:11: הָנִיבָא הַגַּדֵֹּלָה \(= \) the great city = the greatest city. Nineveh belonged to the first of the great cities established by Nimrod, the mighty hunter before Yahwe (Gen. 10:11). Other superlatives (see later) are associated in Jonah with Nineveh. By contrast, Jonah is the son of Amittai, and although his place of origin is not mentioned in the book of Jonah, we find in 2 Kings 14:25 that he was from Gath-hepher, mentioned only there and (without the article before ‘hepher’) in Joshua 19:13 as a city belonging to Zebulun, but otherwise of no great significance. This is the introductory contrast in the book of Jonah: a “small town” prophet is instructed to go to the “greatest” city known.

B. Participle of \(וַיְלָלֶנֶד\) with Additional Participle.

This construction shows ongoing action and is semantically equivalent to the similar construction with infinitives absolute.

Jonah 1:11,13: The sea was continually storming, in contrast to Jonah’s continuing to appear calm and in self-control.

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C. Construct Combination of Two Nouns of Similar Meaning
Jonah 2:9: הָעֵצִים תִּשְׁפָּע, vanities of emptiness = utter vanities

D. Connecting a Word with the Divine Name
Jonah 3:3: יִירֶה הָאָרְדֵּנִים לַאֲלָלוֹת, Nineveh was a great city even to God. For similar constructions see examples in Waltke, pg. 268.

E. Construction with the root מַתָּה (death, to die)
Jonah 4:3,8: “better is my death than my life,” but more directly Jonah 4:9: “It rightly burns to me unto death.”

F. Merism
Jonah 3:5: “from their greatest to their smallest”
Jonah 4:11: “who do not know between their right hand and (lit. to) their left hand”

II. Superlatives in the Narrative
A. Geographical/Directional
1. Jonah 1:2–3: Nineveh — Tarshish. From Jonah’s town, one gets to Nineveh by traveling northeast and then east by land. To Tarshish one travels southwest and then west by sea. Though its precise location has not been determined, Tarshish was considered far enough away that ship deliveries to Solomon took place only once every three years (1 Kings 10:22). The inhabited world could be described in Psalm 72:8–10 as “from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth” the latter associated with Tarshish (vs. 10), and Nineveh in the direction of “the River” (Euphrates).
2. Jonah 1:3: Jonah is fleeing לפני יוהו from before Yahwe (who is always “on high”) and he is going down (Root: יָרַד): Jonah 1:3 (2x), 1:5; 2: 7. The contrast here is heightened in its temporal sense in Jonah 4:2 with the word נתתי, I preempted, acted preemptively.

B. Action of the Plot
1. Jonah 1:3: נָשַׁל שְׁכָבָה is generally interpreted as “he paid its fare” referring to the normal passenger fare for a trip to Tarshish. However שְׁכָבָה could be taken in the sense
of “the ship’s wage” in which case Jonah hired the entire ship and its crew, indicating the extreme to which Jonah was willing to go in fleeing from his assigned task.

2. Jonah 1:5: The action of the sailors is in sharp contrast to that of Jonah. The sailors are afraid, Jonah just “goes down”; the sailors cry out to their gods, Jonah quietly “lies down”; the sailors are up on the deck fully exposed to the elements, Jonah heads for the innermost part of the ship; the sailors frantically throw things off the ship to “make it light”, Jonah sleeps a deep (“heavy”) sleep.

3. Jonah 1:12,15 cp. 1:4: Hiphil of לָשֵׁת. Yahwe “hurls” the storm to the sea; Jonah must also be “hurled” into the sea to stop the storm. Hurling Jonah overboard was considered such as extreme action that the sailors first tried to avoid it by attempting to bring the ship back to dry land. When that became impossible, they prayed to Jonah’s God, offered sacrifices and vowed vows, all extreme actions.

4. Jonah, ch. 1. The entire chapter contrasts Jonah’s relationship toNineveh with that of other foreigners on the ship. Jonah is unwilling to go to Nineveh to save the Ninevites from destruction, but he is willing to allow himself to be destroyed in order to save other foreigners who worship other gods.

5. Jonah 3:5: The people of Nineveh believe immediately and universally. This creates a sharp contrast to God sending his prophets early in the morning and repeatedly to His own people, who do not repent (Jeremiah 44:4 and numerous parallels).


7. Jonah 3:7–8: Even the animals are included in the call to repentance.

8. Jonah 3:8: The people are to call out to God הֹוֶז, with strength, force.


C. Magnitude by Measure

1. Jonah 3:3: Nineveh was a “walk of three days.” However interpreted, the intent of the idiom is to express in superlative terms the great size of the city.

2. Jonah 4:11: Nineveh was large by virtue of its population: 120,000 count only those who “do not know their right hand from their left,” an expression limited to those who fall under the juvenile court legislation. The entire population is thus much greater than 120,000.

III. Poetic Contrasts and Extremes
(“Hyperbole” in Jonah’s Prayer)

1. Jonah’s position is described by words that play on the idea of ירד—he has “gone down” as far as it is possible to go:
   a. Jonah 2:3: מים של שבע, from the belly of Sheol
   b. Jonah 2:4: נחלות, to the deep
   c. Jonah 2:4: בלב ים, into the heart of the seas
   d. Jonah 2:4: כל המשבר והגלות, all Your breakers and waves
   e. Jonah 2:6: ירהו, up to my life
   f. Jonah 2:6: הים הגדול, the great deep (same word as in Genesis 1:2)
   g. Jonah 2:7: ספוא החרמון, to the extremities of the mountains (lowest parts, very foundations of the mountains)
   h. Jonah 2:7: ארבעה פעמים של עולמות, its bars were about me forever
   i. Jonah 2:7: משלחת, from the pit

2. Jonah’s relationship to God:
   a. On the one hand he is completely cut off from God:
      1) Jonah 2:5: Jonah was “cut off, expelled” from Yahwe’s eyes
      2) Jonah 2:8: Jonah was “fainting away” in despair of his life
   b. By contrast, there is great hope for the future:
      1) Jonah 2:3: Yahwe answered him and heard his voice
      2) Jonah 2:5: Jonah will again gaze on the holy temple
      3) Jonah 2:7: Yahwe brought up his life from the pit
4) Jonah 2:8: Jonah’s prayer would come to Yahwe’s holy temple
5) Jonah 2:10: Salvation belongs to Yahwe

IV. General Vocabulary

1. Use of the word *great*.
   a. Jonah 1:2; 3:2,3; 4:11: נאשא, Nineveh, the great(est) city; even to God!
   b. Jonah 1:4: רוח, a great wind, but not just a great wind; this one was “hurled” by Yahwe.
   c. Jonah 1:4,12 (with articles): כנער רוח, a great storm, but not just a great storm as frequently occurs on the Mediterranean; this one threatened to break up the ship.
   d. Jonah 1:10,16: כרותא, a great fear, but more than that; it was a great fear of Yahwe (v. 16).
   e. Jonah 2:1: כרותא, a big fish, but so big that it could swallow a man
   f. Jonah 3:5: מרשמה שלות, from their greatest to their smallest, also a merism.
   g. Jonah 3:7: והנה, and his (the king’s) great ones (referring back to “their greatest” in 3:5)
   h. Jonah 4:1: כרותא, a great evil, so much that Jonah burned with it.
   i. Jonah 4:6: שהנה, a great joy, in sharp contrast to the “great evil” (4:1)
   j. Jonah 4:10: (verb) ההנה, Jonah did not help make the qigayon plant “get large” (i.e. grow).

2. Other vocabulary.
   a. Jonah 4:8: ihtir, a word of doubtful meaning, but likely intended to intensify the meaning of “east wind” in some way
   b. Jonah 4:11: רכבה, much cattle

V. Concluding Message of the Book

The reader may be surprised and possibly even shocked to find at the end of the book that God does not punish this disobedient, arrogant, defiant prophet Jonah. The book ends with another question placed to the prophet by God, and again, as in 4:4–5, there is no answer from Jonah, just continued sulking silence. So why doesn’t God “resolve” the problem with Jonah by removing him from the scene just like he intended to do earlier
with the Ninevites until they repented? One is left to ponder the unstated, final superlative contrast: Even Jonah can still find an opportunity to experience the God who is “gracious and merciful, slow to anger and great in lovingkindness, and relenting concerning the evil matter.”
5. Philological Angle:
Search Strategies for Dialectical Phenomena in Jonah

Search Tools
Many advanced Bible software packages now exist that allow various kinds of search routines on both translations and original language versions of Biblical texts. One such package is *Bible Windows* produced by Silver Mountain Software for the PC (current version: 6.0). The package comes with an updated morphologically tagged Hebrew Old Testament based on the analysis of Alan Groves, et al, at Westminster Theological Seminary (2001). A number of sophisticated grammatical searches are possible. The following represents only two samples of the kinds of searches that could prove useful in delineating dialectical forms and constructions, and determining semantic ranges.

Sample Search 1: The Hendiadys קְרִית וַנָּשָׁן
Search for “Word 1” = imperative of קְרִית followed by “Word 2” = imperative of וַנָּשָׁן.
Results: 14 occurrences.
Gen 28:2 Jacob told to go to Paddan Aram
Num 22:20 Account of Balaam and Balak
Deut 10:11 Moses repeats God’s instructions to him on Sinai
1 Sam 9:3 Saul’s father Kish instructs Saul to look for lost donkeys
2 Sam 13:15 Amnon’s dismissal of Tamnar after he raped her
1 Kings 14:12 Ahijah the prophet dismissing Jeroboam’s wife
1 Kings 17:9 God tells Elijah to go to Zarephath of Sidon
2 Kings 8:1 Elisha sending away the woman of Shunem
Jer 13:4 God tells Jeremiah to go to Perath (Mesopotamia?)
Jer 13:6 God tells Jeremiah to go to Perath (Mesopotamia?)
Jonah 1:2 God tells Jonah to go to Nineveh
Jonah 3:2 God tells Jonah to go to Nineveh
Micah 2:10 God’s dismissal of false prophets
Cant 2:13 Beloved inviting his lover to come with him

A large number of these occurrences are connected with events in or to the north of Israel.
Sample Search 2: The “Call Against”

Search for “Word 1” = any form of לָעַד followed by “Word 2” = preposition לְ

Results: 8 occurrences, all prophets and later writings

Isaiah 31:4  a band of shepherds called out against him

Jer 25:29  call out a sword against

Jer 49:29  they will call out against them terror on every side

Ezek 38:21  call out a sword against

Jonah 1:2  call out against (Nineveh)

Lam 1:15  call an army against

Neh 6:7  to make a proclamation about (concerning) [not against]

2 Chron 20:3  to proclaim a fast on all Judah

(Passages in which God’s name is called out upon Jerusalem or the temple are not included above—Jer 7:10,11,14,30; 25:29; 32:34; 2 Chron. 6:33; similarly Ezra 2:61; Neh. 7:63; 1 Chron. 23:14; 2 Chron. 7:14 in reference to being called by a name.)

The general usage is to call against, but Neh. 6:7 does show an alternate possibility of לָעַד meaning about or concerning after the verb לָעַד.
Conclusion

Other angles remain to be investigated, such as the historical angle, or the history of interpretation angle, or various types of structural analysis angles. It is intriguing to consider the fact that within each angle of examination, there are various sub-angles that emerge. For example, there are various approaches to the analysis of the textual criticism angle. The end result is a multi-dimensional matrix of angles of observation, providing a rich experience in extracting ever new ideas from a very ancient source.
Parallel Aligned Texts of Jonah

MT / LXX / V

and their English Translations
### Jonah’s Call
1:1–2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יְהֹוָה נָּנָה בָּהִיר</td>
<td>And there was the word of Yahweh to Jonah the son of Amittai saying:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 And there was the word of the Lord to Jonas the son of Amathi saying:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 Arise and go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry against it; for its wickedness has come up before me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.1 **Cry against it.** The Hebrew phrase implies a negative, sharp rebuke. LXX and V use language typical of the activity of a herald or announcer of good or bad news. The versions *broaden* the Hebrew meaning.

1.2.2 **Cry of its wickedness** (LXX). LXX adds the word “cry” perhaps for parallel image balance: Jonah is to *preach* to Nineveh because the cry of Nineveh’s wickedness has come before God.

### Jonah Flees
1:3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>יָנָה קָם לָכוֹת לְבַרְטָה וַתַּשׁוֹש</td>
<td>And Jonah rose up to flee to Tharsis from before Yahwe. And he went down to Joppa, and he found a ship going to Tharsis. And he gave its fare, and he went down into it to go with them to Tharsish from before Yahwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 And Jonah rose up to flee to Tharsish from the face of the Lord. And he went down to Joppa, and he found a ship going to Tharsish. And he gave its fare, and he went up into it to sail with them to Tharsish from the face of the Lord.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.1 **He went down.** LXX has “he went up,” the normal Greek verb used for embarking a ship. The translators made a choice between two alternatives here. They chose (1) to translate into an equivalent idiom for embarking a ship rather than (2) translating literally. In discarding option (2) they demonstrate their lack of awareness that the Hebrew root יָפָה may play a literary role in the book.

1.3.2 **To sail** (LXX). LXX chooses to *specify* the verb of travel.
**A Great Storm**

1:4–5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 And Yahwe hurled a great wind to the sea, and there was a great storm in the sea; and the ship was thinking to be broken.</td>
<td>4 And the Lord aroused a wind to the sea, and there was a great storm in the sea; and the ship was in danger to be shattered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 And the mariners feared, and they cried, each man to his god; and they hurled the wares that were in the ship to the sea to lighten it from upon them. And Jonah went down to the inside of the ship, and he lay down, and he fell fast asleep.</td>
<td>5 And the mariners feared, and they cried, each to their god; and they made a casting-out of the wares that were in the ship to the sea that it might be lightened from them. And Jonah went down into the hollow of the ship, and he was sleeping, and he was snoring.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Jonah Reproached for Sleeping**

1:6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 And the chief sailor approached him and he said to him: what is there to you sleeping? Arise, call to your God. Perhaps God will give thought to us, and we will not perish.</td>
<td>6 And the shipmaster came to him and he said to him: Why are you snoring? Arise, and call upon your God, that God may save us, and we may not perish.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1.4.1 **Hurled.** LXX uses a different figure, V uses a neutral verb. Neither attempt to translate the Hebrew literally.

1.4.2 **Thinking.** Neither LXX nor V capture the personification of the Hebrew.

1.4.3 **Fast asleep.** V provides a most literal match to the Hebrew; LXX uses a different verb to capture the idea. (See also 1:6.)

1.6.1 **Give thought.** LXX is more specific than the Hebrew.
Lot Falls on Jonah
1:7

7 And they said, each man to his fellow:
Come, and let us cast lots,
and let us know on whose account
this evil is to us.
And they cast lots,
and the lot fell on Jonah.

8 And they said to him:
Tell now to us on account of whom
this evil is to us.
What is your work?
And from where do you come?
What is your land?
And from what people are you?
9 And he said to them:
I am a Hebrew,
and Yahwe the God of heaven
I fear,
who made
the sea and the dry land.

Jonah Reveals Himself
1:8–9

8 And they said to him:
Tell us on whose account
this evil is to us.
What is your work?
And from where do you come?
What is your land?
And from what people are you?
9 And he said to them:
I am a servant of the Lord,
and the Lord God of heaven
I fear,
who made
the sea and the dry land.

1.7.1 On whose account. V is less specific than the Hebrew.

1.8.1 Hebrew. LXX apparently read in place of מַעַרְבֹּ֔ר, something like מַעַרְבֹּ֔ר, the servant of Y'(ahwe). This is a textual difference.
Sailors Ask What to Do
1:10–11

10 And the men feared a great fear, and they said to him:
What is this you have done? For the men knew
that from before Yahwe he was fleeing,
for he told them.
11 And they said to him:
What shall we do to you that the sea will be quiet from upon us?
For the sea was going, storming.

1.11.1 Going, storming. The Hebrew idiom implies continuous as well as intensive action. V translates literally, but LXX captures both aspects of the Hebrew idiom by adding the intensive μᾶλλον to the continuous aspect mirroring the Hebrew with ἐπορευέτο. (See also 1:12.)

Attempt to Avoid Jonah’s Solution
1:12–13

12 And he said to them:
Lift me up and hurl me to the sea,
and the sea will be quiet from upon you;
for I know that on account of me
this great storm is upon you.
13 And the men dug [with the oars]
to return to dry land,
and they were not able,
for the sea was continually storming upon them.

1.13.1 Dug. The Hebrew idiom for rowing hard is explained by LXX; V uses a literal expression for “row.”
Jonah Cast into the Sea
1:14–16

14 And they cried to Yahwe, and they said:
Please, o Yahwe,
do not let us perish
on account of the life of this man,
and do not put upon us clean blood;
for you, o Yahwe,
as you have pleased, you have done.
15 And they lifted up Jonah,
and they hurled him to the sea;
and the sea stopped from its raging.
16 And the men feared
with a great fear Yahwe,
and they sacrificed a sacrifice to Yahwe,
and they vowed vows.

1.14.1 Clean. The Hebrew word is interpreted by both LXX and V.

A Great Fish Swallows Jonah
2:1

1 And Yahwe appointed a great fish
to swallow Jonah.
And Jonah was in the belly of the fish
three days and three nights.
Jonah Prays
2:2
2 And Jonah prayed to Yahwe his God from the belly of the fish.

Jonah Calls; God Hears
2:3
3 And he said: I called from my distress to Yahwe, and he answered me. From the body of Sheol I cried for help; you heard my voice.

Hope Remains
2:4–5
4 And you cast me into the deep, in the heart of the seas, and the river [current] was surrounding me; all your breakers and your waves passed by upon me. Yet surely I will again gaze toward your holy temple.

2.5.1 In LXX, the Greek interrogative particle implies anxiety or impatience. In MT and V, the particles are positive and intensive.
## The Descent

### 2:6–7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>LXX</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 ηῶς πνεῦμας ἐκόλουσέν με</td>
<td>6 εἰς σχισμάς ὅρεων</td>
<td>6 Waters encompassed me up to my life; the abyss was surrounding me;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>τοῦ κυρίου ἐμνήσθην</td>
<td>7 κατέβην</td>
<td>the sea has covered my head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καὶ ἀναβήτω φθορὰ ζωῆς μου</td>
<td>κατὰ ἀναβητὺς φθορὰ ζωῆς μου</td>
<td>I descended; the earth’s bars have shut me up for ever.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Remembering the Lord in Prayer

#### 2:8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>LXX</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 καὶ ἔλθεις ἐνίοτε τὴν ψυχήν μου</td>
<td>8 καὶ ἔλθεις ἐνίοτε τὴν ψυχήν μου</td>
<td>8 cum angustiaretur in me anima mea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>θαυμάσῃ κύριε μου</td>
<td>θαυμάσῃ τῷ κυρίῳ μου</td>
<td>Domini recordatus sum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>καὶ ἔλθοι πρὸς σέ ἵπποις καὶ πονηροὺς σου</td>
<td>καὶ ἔλθοι πρὸς σέ ἢ προσευχῆς σου</td>
<td>ut veniat ad te oratio mea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

#### 2.6.1 Reeds. LXX apparently read the unvocalized text as ηῶς end. It is not clear what V read. Nor is the connection of LXX "plunge" and V "covered" to MT "bound" clear.

#### 2.6.2 Vv. 6b–7a. Syntax of LXX differs from MT. Following MT, the semi-major disjunctive accent makes a phrase out of “to the extremities of the mountains I descended” leaving the next phrase to start proleptically in a casus pendens with “as for the earth, its bars…” The same sense if followed by V. LXX has in place of “reeds were bound to my head” an entirely different structure and different vocabulary creating a different parallelistic layout:
| 8 In the fainting upon me of my life,   | 8 In the failing away from me of my life,   | 9 When my life was in distress within me,   |
| I remembered Yahwe;                    | I remembered the Lord;                      | I remembered the Lord;                      |
| and my prayer will come to you,        | and may my prayer come to you,              | that my prayer may come to you,             |
| to your holy temple.                   | into your holy sanctuary.                   | to your holy temple.                        |

Vain Idols vs. Salvation from the Lord

2:9–10

| 9 Those who guard vanities of emptiness | 9 Those who guard vanities and lies          | 9 Those who guard vanities in vain          |
| forsake their own mercy.                | have forsaken their own mercy.              | forsake their own mercy.                    |
| 10 And I, with a voice of thanksgiving, | 10 But I, with a voice of praise and thanks, | 10 But I, with a voice of praise.           |
| I will sacrifice to you;                | I will sacrifice to you;                    | I will sacrifice to you;                    |
| what I have vowed, I will pay.          | what things I have vowed, I will pay to you, | Whatever things I have vowed I will pay for |
| Salvation belongs to Yahwe.             | to the Lord of salvation.                   | salvation to the Lord.                      |

2.10.1 Thanksgiving. LXX uses two words to try to capture a broader meaning felt to be inherent in MT.

2.10.2 Salvation… LXX and V have constructions that differ both with the MT as well as from each other.

Jonah Vomited on Dry Land

2:11

| 11 And Yahwe said to the fish,          | 11 And it was commanded to the fish,        | 12 And the Lord spoke to the fish,          |
| it and it vomited up Jonah              | and it cast out Jonah                       | and it vomited out Jonah                    |
| to the dry land.                        | onto the dry land.                          | onto the dry land.                          |

2.11. Yahwe said. MT construction is awkward. One expects the content of speech after רעיה. LXX converts the phrase into a passive, but therefore also eliminated the subject. V ‘dixit’ is not quite as problematic since it can mean simply ‘spoke’ and doesn’t anticipate the speech content to the same degree as רעיה.

Second Call to Jonah

3:1–2

| 1 And there was the word of Yahwe to Jonah a second time saying: | 1 And there was the word of the Lord to Jonas a second time saying: | 1 And there was the word of the Lord to Jonas a second time saying: |
| to Jonah a second time saying:                                  | to Nineveh the great city,                  | to Nineveh the great city,                  |
| the great city,                                                | and preach in it the proclamation          | and preach in it the preaching              |
| and proclaim to it the proclamation                            | that I am speaking to you.                  | that I speak to you.                        |
| that I am speaking to you.                                     | that I spoke to you.                        | that I speak to you.                        |
### Jonah at Nineveh, the Great City

#### 3:3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 καὶ ἀνέστη Ἰωνᾶς καὶ ἔπορεύθη εἰς Νινεveh καθὼς ελάλησεν κύριος ἢ δὲ Νινεveh ἤν πόλις μεγάλη τῷ θεῷ ὡσεὶ πορείας ὅδου θερόν τριῶν</td>
<td>3 et surrexit Iona et abit in Nineven iuxta verbum Domini et Nineve erat civitas magna Dei itinere dierum trium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 And Jonah arose, and he went to Nineveh as the Lord spoke. But Nineveh was a great city to God, as of a journey of three days.

### Jonah Preaches

#### 3:4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 καὶ ἤρεστο Ἰωνᾶς τοῦ εἰσελθέν τε ὑπὸ τῆν πόλιν ὡσεὶ πορείας ἡμέρας μιᾶς καὶ ἐκήρυξεν καὶ εἶπεν ἠτί τρεῖς ἡμέραι καὶ Νινεveh καταστραφήσεται</td>
<td>4 et coepit Iona introire in civitatem itinere diei unius et clamavit et dixit adhuc quadraginta dies et Nineve subvertetur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city as a journey of one day. And he called out, and he said: Yet forty days, and Nineveh is being overturned.

#### 3.4.1 Forty. LXX “three” may indicate a different Vorlage, or an early emendation based on feeling the forty is too high.

### People of Nineveh Believe

#### 3:5–6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Latin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 καὶ ἐνεπίστευσαν οἱ ἄνδρες Νινεveh τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐκήρυξαν νυστείαις καὶ ἐκνασάντο σάκκους ἀπὸ μεγάλου αὐτῶν ἐας μικροῦ αὐτῶν καὶ ἤδης ὁ λόγος πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τῆς Νινεveh καὶ ἐξανέστη ἀπὸ τοῦ θρόνου αὐτοῦ καὶ περεμβάλετο τὴν στολὴν αὐτοῦ ἄφεστοι καὶ περικύκλητο σάκκου καὶ ἐκάθισαν ἐπὶ σπόδους</td>
<td>5 et crediderunt viri ninevitae in Deo et prædictaverunt ieiunium et vestiti sunt saccis a maiore usque ad minorem et pervenit verbum ad regem Nineve et surrexit de solio suo et abiecit vestimentum suum a se et indutus est sacco et sedit in cinere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 And the men of Nineveh believed in God. And they called out a fast; and they put on sackcloths, from their great one and unto their small one. And the word reached to the king of Nineveh. And he arose from his throne, and he took away his mantle from upon him. And he covered himself with a sackcloth, and he sat down upon the ashes.

5 And the men of Nineveh believed in God. And they proclaimed a fast; and they put on sackcloths, from their great one unto their small one. And the word reached to the king of Nineveh. And he rose up out from his throne, and he took of his mantle from himself. And he put around himself a sackcloth, and he sat down upon ashes.

5 And the men of Ninive believed in God. And they proclaimed a fast, and they put on sackcloths, from the greatest to the least. And the word reached to the king of Nineve. And he rose up out of his throne, and he cast away his robe from himself. And he was clothed with sackcloth, and he sat in ashes.
And he had it cried out, and one said in Nineveh:
From the decree of the king and his great ones, saying:
Man and beast, herd and flock, do not let them taste anything; do not let them feed, and water do not let them drink.

And let them cover themselves with sackcloths, man and beast; and let them call out to God with strength. And let them return each from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.

Who knows, God may turn back and relent; and he may turn back from the burning of his anger, and we will not perish.

And it was proclaimed and it was said in Nineve:
From the king and from his great ones, saying:
Men and beasts, and oxen nor sheep, do not let them taste anything; do not let them feed, and water do not let them drink.

And they put around themselves sackcloths, men and beasts; and they cried to God earnestly. And they returned each from his evil way and from the unjustness that is in their hands, saying:

Who knows, if God will repent; and will turn back from the wrath of his anger, and we may in no way perish?

7 And he cried out and he said in Ninive:
From the mouth of the king and of his princes, saying:
Men and beasts, and oxen nor sheep, do not let them taste anything; do not let them feed, and water do not let them drink.

And let them be covered with sackcloths, men and beasts; and let them cry to the Lord with strength. And let them turn each from his evil way, and from the iniquity that is in their hands.

Who knows, if God will turn and forgive; and will turn away from his fierce anger, and we will not perish?

3.8.1 MT and V use jussive constructions as admonitions to perform what is not yet accomplished. LXX uses aorists to indicate completed action. The unvocalized MT would not be clear as to whether waw-consecutives or waw-copulatives were intended.
## God Relents

3:10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 καὶ εἶδεν ὁ θεὸς τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν ὃτι ἀπέστρεψαν ἀπὸ τῶν ὁδῶν αὐτῶν τῶν πονηρῶν καὶ μετενόησαν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ τῇ κακίᾳ ἦλθὰ τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτοῖς καὶ οὐκ ἔποιήσαν</th>
<th>10 et vidit Deus opera eorum quia conversi sunt a via sua mala et misertus est Deus super malitiam quam locutus fuerat ut faceret eis et non fecit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 And God saw their deeds, that they turned back from their evil way. And God relented concerning the evil that he had spoken to do to them; and he did not do it.</td>
<td>10 And God saw their deeds, that they turned back from their evil ways. And God repented concerning the evil that he had spoken to do to them; and he did not do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 And God saw their deeds, that they were turned from their evil way. And God had mercy concerning the evil that he had said that he would do to them; and he did not do it.</td>
<td>10 And God saw their deeds, that they were turned from their evil way. And God had mercy concerning the evil that he had said that he would do to them; and he did not do it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Jonah’s Prayer of Displeasure

4:1–3

| 1 καὶ ἐλυπήθη Ιωνᾶς λίπην μεγάλην καὶ σονεχύθη | 1 et adflictus est Iona adlictione magna et iratus est |
| 2 καὶ προσεέχασεν πρὸς κύριον καὶ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος οὐχ ὁὔτοι οἱ λόγοι μου ἐτι ὄντος μου ἐν τῇ γῇ μου διὰ τὸ τοῦτο προεόρισα | 2 et oravit ad Dominum et dixit obsecro Domine numquid non hoc est verbum meum cum adhuc esset in terra mea propter hoc praecoccupavi |
| 3 καὶ νῦν δέσποτα κύριε λαβὲ τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἀπ’ εμοῦ ὅτι καλὸν τὸ ἀποθάνειν με ἢ ἥζην με | 3 et nunc Domine tolle quaeso animam meam a me quia melior est mihi mors quam vita |

1 And it was evil to Jonah, a great evil, and it burned to him.
2 And he prayed to Yahwe, and he said: Please, Yahwe, was this not my word while I was still on my land? Therefore I went before [was quick] to flee to Tarshish, for I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow of anger and great of kindness, and one relenting concerning evil.
3 And now, Lord, take now my life from me; for my death is better than my life.

1 And Jonas was distressed with a great distress, and he was confounded.
2 And he prayed to the Lord, and he said: O Lord, were these not my words while I was still in my land? Therefore I went before [was quick] to flee to Tarsis, for I knew that you are gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and of great mercy, and one repenting concerning evils.
3 And now, Master Lord, take my life from me; for my dying is better than my life.

1 And Jonas was afflicted with a great affliction, and was angry.
2 And he prayed to the Lord, and he said: I beseech, O Lord, was this not my word while I was still in my own land? Therefore I went before [was quick] to flee into Tharsis, for I know that you are a gracious and merciful God, patient and of much compassion, and one forgiving concerning evils.
3 And now, O Lord, take, I beseech, my life from me; for death is better for me than life.
God’s Response; Jonah’s Reaction

4:4–5

4 And Yahwe said:

Does it rightly burn to you?

5 And Jonah went out from the city, and he sat down east of the city.

And he made for himself there a shelter, and he sat down under it in the shade, until he could see what would be in the city.

4.4.1 Rightly. LXX interprets the adverbial use of the infinitive absolute as an intensive. (See also 4:9.)

God Grows a Plant for Jonah

4:6

6 And Yahwe God appointed a qiqayon-plant, and it came up over Jonah to be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his evil.

And Jonah rejoiced over the qiqayon-plant with a great joy.

6.1 Qiqayon. MT and LXX (?) words possibly related to Akkadian kukanitu, a gourd used in magical incantations.

6.2 Over Jonah. LXX add “the head of” and thus have two instances of “head” in the phrase.

6.3 Deliver. LXX sees the verb from the root λέγειν Hi. to give shade, rather than from λέγειν Hi. to rescue, deliver.

Plant Removed

4:7–8

7 And Yahwe said:

Are you exceedingly distressed?

5 And Jonah went out from the city, and he sat down against the east of the city.

And he made for himself there a shelter, and he sat down under it in shade, until he could view what would happen to the city.

7 et paravit Deus verrem ascendus diluculo in crastinum et percussit hederam et exaruit sol

8 And the Lord God prepared an ivy, and it came up over the head of Jonas, to be a shade over his head, and to cover him (for he was fatigued).

And Jonas rejoiced over the ivy with a great joy.

8 et cum ortus fuisse sol praecepit Dominus

7 paravit Deus verrem ascendus diluculo in crastinum et percussit hederam et exaruit

8 et cum ortus fuisse sol praecepit Dominus

vento calido et urente et percussit sol super caput Ionæ
7 And God appointed a worm in the rising up of the dawn on the next day, and it struck the qiqayon-plant, and it dried up.
8 And it was as the rising of the sun, and God appointed an east wind __ [?].
And the sun struck on the head of Jonah, and he became faint.
And he asked his life to die; and he said: Better is my death than my life.

4.8.1 MT तथाश्रव्य is not well enough attested to translate. LXX and V conjecture the meaning from context.

### Jonah Justifies His Anger

**4:9**

| 9 And God said to Jonah: Does it rightly burn to you over the qiqayon-plant? | 9 And God said to Jonah: Are you exceedingly distressed over the gourd? And he said: Rightly it burns to me unto death. | 9 And God said to Jonas: Do you think you are rightly angry, over the ivy? And he said: I am exceedingly distressed unto death. |
| 9 kai ἐπεν ο θεός πρὸς Ιωνᾶν εἰ σφόδρα λελύπητοι σὺ ἐπὶ τῇ κολοκύνθῃ καὶ ἐπεν σφόδρα λελύπηται εἰγὼ ἐκατοντᾶτον | 9 et dixit Dominus ad Ionam putasne bene irascitis tu super hederam et dixit bene irascor ego usque ad mortem |

### God Justifies His Compassion

**4:10–11**

| 10 And Yahwe said: You had compassion on the qiqayon-plant, for which you did not labor, and you did not cause it to grow; which was a son of a night, and as a son of a night perished. | 10 And the Lord said: You had mercy on the gourd, on which you have not suffered, and you did not raise it up; which came under a night and under a night perished. | 10 And the Lord said: You are grieved over the ivy, on which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow; which under one night came up, and in one night perished. |
| 10 καὶ ἐπεν κύριος σὺ εὐφίλησα ὑπέρ τῆς κολοκύνθης καὶ σὺ οὐκ εἴκοσιπάθησας ἐπὶ αὐτήν καὶ σὺ οὐκ ἔζωρθήσας αὐτήν καὶ οὐκ έγενήθη ὑπὸ νύκτα καὶ ὑπὸ νύκτα ἀπόλετο | 10 et dixit Dominus tu doles super hederam in qua non laborasti neque fecisti ut cresceter quae sub una nocte nata est et una nocte perit |
| 11 εἰ δὲ σὺ φείεσμαι ὑπέρ Νινεveh τῆς πόλεως τῆς μεγάλης ἐν ἡ κατοικίασιν πλείον οὐ κατηγορήθησαν στίνας οὐκ ἐγνωσαν δεξαμέν αὐτῶν ὡς ἀριστεράν αὐτῶν καὶ κτήν | 11 et ego non parcam Nineve civitati magnae in qua sunt plus quam centum viginti milia hominum qui nesciant quid sit inter dexteram et sinistram suam et iumenta multa |

And Yahwe said: You had compassion on the qiqayon-plant, for which you did not labor, and you did not cause it to grow; which was a son of a night, and as a son of a night perished.

And the Lord said: You had mercy on the gourd, on which you have not suffered, and you did not raise it up; which came under a night and under a night perished.

And the Lord said: You are grieved over the ivy, on which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow; which under one night came up, and in one night perished.
11 And shall I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city in which there are more than twelve-ten thousand people, who do not know between their right hand and their left hand, and much cattle?

11 But shall I not have mercy on Nineveh, the great city in which dwell more than twelve-ten thousands of people, who do not know their right hand or their left hand, and much cattle?

11 And shall I not spare Ninive, the great city in which there are more than a hundred twenty thousand people who do not know what is between their right hand and their left hand, and many beasts?

4.10.1 **Son of...** An idiom that is translated according to the sense of the context in both LXX and V.