

## Yonah, Nineveh, and the Positive Hypocrisy of *Teshuva*

### Yonah Runs – Chapter 1 יונה

- א וַיְהִי דְבַר-ה' , אֶל-יוֹנָה בֶן-אֲמִטַּי, לֵאמֹר. 1 Now the word of Hashem came to Yonah the son of Amittai, saying:
- ב קוּם לֵךְ אֶל-נִינְוָה, הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה--וּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ : כִּי-עָלְתָה רָעַתְּם, לְפָנָי. 2 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim against it; for their wickedness has arisen before Me.'
- ג וַיִּקָּם יוֹנָה לָבוֹא לְתַרְשִׁישׁ, מִלְּפָנָי ה'; וַיֵּרָד גִּבּוֹ וַיִּמְצָא אֲנִיָּה בָאָה תַרְשִׁישׁ, וַיִּתֵּן שְׂכָרָהּ וַיֵּרָד בָּהּ לָבוֹא עִמָּהֶם תַרְשִׁישׁ, מִלְּפָנָי, ה'. 3 But Yonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from before the presence of Hashem; and he went down to Yaffo, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, from before the presence of Hashem.

### Nineveh's Repentance - Yonah Chapter 3 יונה

- א וַיְהִי דְבַר-ה' אֶל-יוֹנָה, שֵׁנִית לֵאמֹר. 1 And the word of Hashem came to Yonah, a second time, saying:
- ב קוּם לֵךְ אֶל-נִינְוָה, הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה; וּקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ אֶת-הַקְּרִיאָה, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי דֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ. 2 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call to it that which I speak to you.'
- ג וַיִּקָּם יוֹנָה, וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-נִינְוָה--כַּדְּבַר ה'; וַנִּינְוָה, הִיְתֵה עִיר-גְּדוֹלָה לְאַלְהֵים--מֵחֶלֶד, שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים. 3 So Yonah arose, and went to Nineveh, according to the word of Hashem. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, of three days' journey.
- ד וַיִּחַל יוֹנָה לָבוֹא בְעִיר, מֵחֶלֶד יוֹם אֶחָד; וַיִּקְרָא, וַיֹּאמֶר, עוֹד אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם, וַנִּינְוָה נִהְפָּכֶת. 4 And Yonah began to enter into the city, a day's journey, and he proclaimed, and said: 'In another forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.'
- ה וַיִּאֱמִינוּ אַנְשֵׁי נִינְוָה, בְּאַלְהֵים; וַיִּקְרְאוּ-צוּם וַיִּלְבְּשׁוּ שָׂקִים, מִגְּדוֹלָם וְעַד-קִטְנָם. 5 And the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.
- ו וַיָּגַע הַדְּבַר, אֶל-מֶלֶךְ נִינְוָה, וַיִּקָּם מִכִּסְאוֹ, וַיַּעֲבֵר אֶדְרָתוֹ מֵעָלָיו; וַיִּכַּס שָׂק, וַיֵּשֶׁב עַל-הָאֲפֶר. 6 And the tidings reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and took off his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
- ז וַיִּזְעַק, וַיֹּאמֶר בְּנִינְוָה, מִטַּעַם הַמֶּלֶךְ וּגְדָלָיו, לֵאמֹר: הֲאֵדָם וְהַבְּהֵמָה הַבֹּקֵר וְהַצֹּאן, אֶל-יִטְעְמוּ מְאוּמָה--אֶל-יִרְעוּ, וּמִים אֶל-יִשְׁתּוּ. 7 And he cried out, and it was proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying: 'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water;
- ח וַיִּתְכַּסּוּ שָׂקִים, הָאָדָם וְהַבְּהֵמָה, וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֶל-אֱלֹהִים, בְּחִזְקָה; וַיִּשְׁבוּ, אִישׁ מִדַּרְכּוֹ הָרָעָה, וּמִן-הַחֲמָס, אֲשֶׁר בְּכַפְיָהֶם. 8 but let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and beast, and let them cry mightily to God; let each turn away from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.
- ט **מִי-יָדוּעַ יֵשׁוּב, וְנָחַם הָאֱלֹהִים קַיִם;** וַיִּשָּׁב מִחֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, וְלֹא נֹאבֵד. 9 **Who knows whether God will not turn and forgive,** and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we will not perish?'
- י וַיִּרְא הָאֱלֹהִים לִקְיָם אֶת-מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם, כִּי-שָׁבוּ מִדַּרְכֵּם הָרָעָה; 10 And God saw their actions, that they turned away

וַיִּנְחַם הָאֱלֹהִים, עַל-הַרְעָה אֲשֶׁר-דָּבַר לַעֲשׂוֹת-לָהֶם--וְלֹא עָשָׂה. from their evil ways; and God relented from the evil, which He said He would do unto them; and He did it not.

### Yonah's Anger - Chapter 4

- א וַיִּרַע אֶל-יוֹנָה, רָעָה גְדוֹלָה; וַיַּחַר, לוֹ. 1 But it displeased Yonah greatly, and he was angry.
- ב וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אֶל- ה' וַיֹּאמֶר, אָנֹכָה ה' הֲלוֹא-זֶה דִּבַּרְתָּ עַד-הַיּוֹתָי עַל-אַדְמָתִי--עַל-כֵּן קִדַּמְתִּי, לְבָרַח תִּרְשִׁישָׁה: כִּי יָדַעְתִּי, כִּי אַתָּה אֵל-חַנוּן וְרַחוּם, אָרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חַסֵּד, וְנוֹחֵם עַל-הַרְעָה. 2 And he prayed to Hashem, and said: 'Please Hashem, is this not what I said, when I still on my own land? That is why I fled to Tarshish; because I knew that You are a gracious God, and compassionate, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy, and **forgiving of evil**.
- ג וְעַתָּה ה', קַח-נָא אֶת-נַפְשִׁי מִמֶּנִּי: כִּי טוֹב מוֹתִי, מִחַיִּי. {ס} 3 And now, Hashem, please take my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live.'
- ד וַיֹּאמֶר י ה', הֲהֵיטֵב חָרָה לָךְ. 4 And Hashem said: 'Are you truly angry?'
- ה וַיֵּצֵא יוֹנָה מִן-הָעִיר, וַיֵּשֶׁב מִקְדָּם לְעִיר; וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שֵׁם סֹכָה, וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחְתֶּיהָ בַצֵּל, עַד אֲשֶׁר יִרְאָה, מֵה-יִהְיֶה בָּעִיר. 5 Then Yonah left the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and made himself a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, in order to see what would become of the city.
- ו וַיִּמַן ה'-אֶל-לֵקִים קִיקְיוֹן וַיַּעַל מַעַל לְיוֹנָה, לְהִיּוֹת צֵל עַל-רֹאשׁוֹ, לְהַצִּיל לוֹ, מִרְעָתוֹ; וַיִּשְׂמַח יוֹנָה עַל-הַקִּיקְיוֹן, שִׂמְחָה גְדוֹלָה. 6 And Hashem, God, appointed a gourd, that grew over Yonah, as a shadow over his head, to save him from his evil. And Yonah rejoiced greatly on account of the gourd.
- ז וַיִּמַן הָאֱלֹהִים תוֹלַעַת, בְּעֹלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר לְמַחֲרָת; וַתֵּךְ אֶת-הַקִּיקְיוֹן, וַיִּיבֹשׁ. 7 But God prepared a worm, which when the morning rose the next day, it attacked the gourd, and it withered.
- ח וַיְהִי כַּזֶּרֶחַ הַשָּׁמֶשׁ, וַיִּמַן אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ קָדִים חֲרִישִׁית, וַתֵּךְ הַשָּׁמֶשׁ עַל-רֹאשׁ יוֹנָה, וַיִּתְעַלֵּף; וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ, לָמוֹת, וַיֹּאמֶר, טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי. 8 And it came to pass, when the sun rose, that God prepared a vehement easterly wind; and the sun beat down on Yonah's. He fainted, and asked to die, and said: 'It is better for me to die than to live.'
- ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-הַקִּים אֶל-יוֹנָה, הֲהֵיטֵב חָרָה לָךְ עַל-הַקִּיקְיוֹן; וַיֹּאמֶר, הֵיטֵב חָרָה-לִּי עַד-מָוֹת. 9 And God said to Yonah: 'Are you truly angry on account of the gourd?' And he said: Greatly angry, even unto death.'
- י וַיֹּאמֶר ה'-אֶתָּה חֲסַת עַל-הַקִּיקְיוֹן, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עָמַלְתָּ בּוֹ וְלֹא גִדַּלְתָּ: שָׁבֹן-לַיְלָה הִיא, וּגְבֹן-לַיְלָה אָבָד. 10 And Hashem said: 'You had pity on the gourd, for which you neither laboured, nor made it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night;
- יא וְאֲנִי לֹא אַחֹס, עַל-נִינְוָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה--אֲשֶׁר יֵשׁ-בָּהּ הָרַבָּה מִשְׁתִּים-עֹשֶׂרָה רַבּוֹ אָדָם, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדַע בֵּין-יְמִינוֹ לְשְׂמֹאלוֹ, וּבִהֶמָּה, רַבָּה. {ש} 11 should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city, where there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people that do not know the difference between their right and left hand, and also many animals?'

## Additional Sources

### Who Is Yonah? Melachim II – Ch.14

- כג בשנת חמש-עשרה שנה, לאמציחו בן- יואש מלך יהודה--מלך ירבעם בן-יואש מלך-ישראל, בשמרון, ארבעים ואחת, שנה.
- 23 In the fifteenth year of Amziah the son of Yoash king of Yehudah, Yeravam the son of Yoash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned for forty one years.
- כד ויעש הרע, בעיני ה': לא סר, מפל- חטאות ירבעם בן-נבט, אשר החטיא, את-ישראל.
- 24 He did evil in the eyes of Hashem; and did not depart not from all the sins of Yerevam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin
- כה הוא, השיב את-גבול ישראל, מלבוא חמת, עד-ים הערבה--כדבר ה', אלהי ישראל, אשר דבר ביד-עבדו יונה בן-אמתי הנביא, אשר מגת החפר.
- 25 He restored the border of Israel from the entrance of Hamath until the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Hashem, the God of Israel, which He spoke by the hand of His servant **Yonah the son of Amittai**, the prophet, from Gath-hepher.
- כו כי-ראה ה' את-עני ישראל, מרה מאד; ואפס עצור ואפס עזוב, ואין עזר לישראל.
- 26 For Hashem saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there was none shut up nor left at large, and there was no helper for Israel.
- כז ולא-דבר ה'--למחות את-שם ישראל, מתחת השמים; ויושיעם, ביד ירבעם בן-יואש.
- 27 And Hashem said that He would not blot out the name of Israel from under heaven; but He saved them by the hand of Yeravam the son of Yoash.

### מסכת אבות דרבי נתן נוסחא ב פרק מז - Avot D'Rebbi Natan, Ch.47

שלשה נביאים הם. אחד תבע כבוד האב ולא תבע כבוד הבן. ואחד תבע כבוד הבן ולא תבע כבוד האב. ואחד תבע כבוד הבן וכבוד האב. אליהו תבע כבוד האב ולא תבע כבוד הבן שנאמר קנא קנאתי לה' אלהי (ישראל) [צבאות] (מלכים א' י"ט י'). יונה תבע כבוד הבן ולא תבע כבוד האב שנאמר ויקם יונה לברוח תרשישה מלפני ה' (יונה א' ג'). ירמיה תבע כבוד האב וכבוד הבן שנאמר נחנו פשענו ומרינו אתה לא סלחת (איכה ג' מ"ב):

There were three prophets. One who protected the honour of the father but not of the son. One who protected the honour of the son but not of the father and one protected the honour of both the father and the son.

Eliyahu protected the honour of the father but not of the son, saying 'I have been very zealous for you' (Melakhim I:19:10). Yonah protected the honour of the son but not of the father, as is said, 'And Yonah arose to run to Tarshish from in front of God' (Yonah 1:3). Yirmiyahu protected the honour of both the father and the son saying, 'We have transgressed and rebelled. You have not pardoned' (Eikha 3:42)

### שמות פרק לד - Shemot Ch.34

(ה) וַיֵּרֶד יְקֹנָק בְּעָנָן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב עִמּוֹ שָׁם וַיְקַרְא בְּשֵׁם יְקֹנָק: (ו) וַיַּעֲבֹר יְקֹנָק עַל פְּנֵי וַיְקַרְא יְקֹנָק יְקֹנָק א-ל רְחוּם וְחַנוּן אֲרָר אֲפִים וְרַב חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת: (ז) נִצַּר חֶסֶד לְאֲלֹפִים נִשָּׂא עוֹן וְפָשַׁע וְחַטָּאָה וְנִקְּהָ לֹא יִנְקְהָ פִקֵּד עוֹן אָבוֹת עַל בְּנִים וְעַל בְּנֵי בָנִים עַל שְׁלֹשִׁים וְעַל רְבָעִים

The Lord descended in a cloud, and he stood with Him there. Then he called out with the name of Hashem. Hashem passed in front of him and called out, "Hashem, Hashem, the Lord, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in kindness and **truth**. Preserving kindness for thousands of generations, bearer of iniquity, rebellion and sin, Who absolves, but not entirely; He reckons the iniquity of parents on sons and on grandsons, even to the third and fourth generation".

### Yoel Ch.2 – Superficial Teshuva?

- 13 יג וְקָרְעוּ לְבַבְכֶם וְאֵל-בְּגְדֵיכֶם, וְשׁוּבוּ אֶל-  
ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: כִּי-חַנוּן וְרַחוּם, הוּא--אֲרֹךְ  
אֲפַיִם וְרַב-חַסֵּד, וְנָחֵם עַל-הַרְעָה.
- 13 Tear your heart, and not your garments, and return to Hashem your God; for He is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering, abundant in mercy, and forgiving of evil
- 14 יד מִי יוֹדֵעַ, יִשׁוּב וְנָחֵם; וְהִשְׁאִיר אַחֲרָיו,  
בְּרִכָּה--מִנְחָה וְנִסְדָּד, ל' ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. {פ}
- 14 Who knows whether He will not turn and forgive, and leave a blessing behind Him...

### Yonah and Eliyahu

#### Eliyahu at Har Carmel – Melakhim I, Ch.17

- לח וַתִּפֹּל אֵשׁ-ה', וַתֹּאכַל אֶת-הַעֲלֵה וְאֶת-הָעֵצִים,  
וְאֶת-הָאֲבָנִים, וְאֶת-הָעֶפְרָר; וְאֶת-הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר-בַּתְּעֹלָה,  
לִחְכָּה.
- 38 The fire of Hashem fell, and consumed the burnt-offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench
- לט וַיֵּרָא, כָּל-הָעָם, וַיִּפְּלוּ, עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם; וַיֹּאמְרוּ-- ה'  
הוּא הָאֱ-לֹהִים, ה' הוּא הָאֱ-לֹהִים.
- 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said: Hashem, He is God; Hashem, He is God.'

#### Eliyahu Runs to Horev – Melakhim I, Ch.18

- (ח) וַיִּקָּם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתֶּה וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּכַח הָאֲכִילָה הַהִיא אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה עַד הַר הָאֱלֹהִים חֲרֹב: (ט) וַיָּבֵא שֵׁם  
אֵל הַמַּעְרָה וַיֵּלֶן שָׁם וְהִנֵּה דָבָר יִקְוֶה אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מִה לָּךְ פֹּה אַלִּיהוּ:  
(י) וַיֹּאמֶר קָנָא קְנָאתִי לִיקוֹק אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת כִּי עֲזָבוּ בְרִיתְךָ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִזְבְּחֹתֶיךָ הָרְסוּ וְאֶת נְבִיאֶיךָ הָרְגוּ  
בְּחָרֶב וְאוֹתֵר אֲנִי לְבַדִּי וַיִּבְקָשׁוּ אֶת נַפְשִׁי לְקַחְתָּהּ:  
(יא) וַיֹּאמֶר צֵא וְעַמְדָתָ בְּהָר לִפְנֵי יִקְוֶה וְהִנֵּה יִקְוֶה עֲבַר וְרוּחַ גְּדוּלָה וְחִזְק מִפָּרֶק הַרִים וּמִשְׁבַּר סִלְעִים לִפְנֵי יִקְוֶה  
לֹא בְרוּחַ יִקְוֶה וְאֶחָר הָרוּחַ רָעַשׁ לֹא בְרָעַשׁ יִקְוֶה: (יב) וְאֶחָר הָרַעַשׁ אֵשׁ לֹא בָאֵשׁ יִקְוֶה וְאֶחָר הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּמָמָה  
דְּקָה:

8. And he arose and ate and drank, and he went with the strength of this meal forty days and forty nights up to the mountain of the Lord, Horeb. 9. And he came there to the cave, and he lodged there. And behold! The word of the Lord came to him. And He said to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
10. And he said: "I have been zealous for the Lord, the God of Hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant. They have torn down Your altars and they have killed Your prophets by the sword, and I have remained alone, and they seek my life to take it.
11. And He said: "Go out and stand in the mountain before the Lord, *Behold! the Lord passes, and a great and strong wind splitting mountains and shattering boulders before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake-not in the earthquake was the Lord.*12. *After the earthquake fire, not in the fire was the Lord, and after the fire a still small voice.*