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Numerical Features of the Book of Jonah

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Numerical Features of the Book of Jonah

A New Approach to its Compositional Structure

Please read the [General Introduction](#) and the Introduction to the [Embedded Poetry](#).

The compositional unity of the story of Jonah

What meets the eye immediately in terms of storytelling is that the book divides into three episodes:

Episode 1 (1,1-16): Jonah at sea: he tries to escape from YHWH but ends up in the sea.

Episode 2 (2,1-11): Jonah in the belly of a great fish: he thanks God for his deliverance.

Episode 3 (3,1-4,11): Jonah in and at Nineveh: he fulfils his mission, but mistrusts God's judgement.

This strongly suggests that it is a compositional unity. However, many modern scholars regard the Prayer of Jonah (2,2-10) as an inset poem, arguing that a prayer of thanksgiving is totally inappropriate on the lips of Jonah who is still in the belly of the fish. In my opinion, they fail to realize that when Jonah finds himself in the 'belly of the fish', he has actually just been saved from the 'belly of Sheol' (2:3), and that YHWH has 'brought him up alive from the deep' (2:7). That he offers a prayer of thanksgiving from there is perfectly in place, because the 'great fish' functions as a life-boat used by YHWH to rescue Jonah from the waters of death. The 'belly of the fish' is the safe haven Jonah finds himself in after he had been rescued by Yahweh from drowning.

Others assert that the disobedient and recalcitrant Jonah we encounter in Chapters 1 and 4 cannot be the humble and thankful person we meet in Chapter 2, and that there is no trace of the prophet's confession of guilt or his praying for forgiveness. But why should his conversion and rehabilitation be a prerequisite for Yahweh to free him from the belly of the fish? What matters is that Yahweh has already saved him from drowning and will now also free him in order to let him fulfil his commission.

Scholars who raise objections against the suitability of the prayer in its context, are obviously influenced by the interpretation of the story of Jonah ascribed to Jesus in Matthew 12:40. There, the Old Testament image of the 'belly of Sheol' (representing *the sea*) and the image of the 'belly of *the fish*' (relating to *the fish* as the safe haven), are not differentiated but understood as one and the same: 'the sea monster's belly', "*Just as Jonah was in the sea monster's belly for three days and three nights, the Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*". The story of Jonah should be interpreted from its own perspective, not from that of the New Testament writers who had their own way of interpreting Old Testament texts.

Such objections used as arguments to buttress the idea that the prayer was secondarily inserted into the narrative simply cannot hold water against an unbiased interpretation of the story. I agree with the growing number of scholars who argue that the prayer is genuinely integral within its context: G.M. Landes (1967), G.H. Cohn (1969), O. Kaiser (1973), J. Magonet (1976/1992), B.S. Childs (1978), D. Stuart (1987), F.W. Golka (1991), D.L. Christensen (1998), D.A. Dorsey (1999), I. Willi-Plein (2001), E. Achtemeier (2005), and J. Jeremias (2007). See also my plea (2014) for all the [embedded poems](#) as integral parts within their context.

The quantitative structural analysis confirms the prayer's firm embedding in the narrative. The evidence strongly suggests that the prayer was not selected because it more or less suited the context, but rather points to its being specifically composed to suit the context with which it forms a structural unity. It cannot be excluded that the author used one or more existing poems which he adapted to let the prayer function meaningfully. It has clearly been designed to function as a prayer of thanksgiving, for having found a temporary refuge in the belly of the fish, the prophet offers Yahweh praises for his escape from death by drowning. At the same time, he anticipates Yahweh's next saving act: to free him from the belly of the fish. The author expressly left out of consideration as totally irrelevant the idea of a confession of guilt by the disobedient prophet.

The prayer is an essential component for the flow of thought in the story, especially in light of the fact that in Chapter 1 the sailors *pray*, each to his own god (1,5) and collectively to YHWH (1,14) and in Chapter 3 the people of Nineveh are ordered by the king '*to cry mightily to God*' (3,8). In Chapter 1, on board of the ship, everyone prays except Jonah. That he *prays* from the belly of the great fish stands to reason: it is now his turn. Moreover, without Jonah's prayer, the reference to his stay of three days and three nights in the belly of the fish would hang in the air as a piece of casual information, which it is not. From a rhetorical point of view, Jonah's prayer is an indispensable element to fill in this crucial period.

In the present quantitative structural analysis I shall produce evidence to show that the book as a whole, as it came from the hand of the author, is a logical, coherent literary unity shaped as a numerical composition.

Various views on the structural design of the book of Jonah

- R.F. VON UNGERN-STERNBERG (*Der Tag des Gerichts. Habakuk, Zephanja, Jona, Nahum*, in: Die Botschaft des Alten Testaments, 23/IV, Calwer Verlag: Stuttgart, 1960, pp. 133-202): 1,1-16; 2,1-11; 3,1-10; 4,1-11 (chapter arrangement).
- L.C. ALLEN (*The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah*, in: The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1976, pp. 173-235): I: 1,1-3; 4-5; 6-8; 9-12; 13-16; 2,1-11; II: 3,1-4; 5-9; 10; 4,1-3; 4-11.
- H.W. WOLFF (*Dodekapropheten 3 Obadja und Jona*, in: BK XIV/3, Neukirchner Verlag: Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1977, 53-151): 1,1-3; 4-16; 2,1-3,3a; 3b-10; 4,1-11.
- A.S. VAN DER WOUDE (*Jona, Nahum*, in: POT, Callenbach: Nijkerk, 1978): 1,1-3; 4-16; 4,17-2,11 | 3,1-3a; 3b-10; 4,1-11.
- D. STUART (*Hosea – Jonah*, in: WBC 31, 1987, pp. 224-510): 1,1-3 | 4,1-16 | 2,1-11 | 3,1-3a | 3,3b-10 | 4,1-11.
- J.M. SASSON (*Jonah*, in: AB 24B, 1990): 1,1-3; 4-6; 7-12; 13-16 | 2,1-3a; 3b-10; 11 | 3,1-4; 5-10; 4,1-6; 7-11.
- F.W. GOLKA (*Jona*, in: Calwer Bibelkommentare, Stuttgart, 1991): 1,1-3; 4-6; 7-10; 2,1-11 | 3,1-3; 4-5; 6-9; 10; 4,1-4; 5-11.
- K.A. DEURLOO (*Jona*, in: Verklaring van de Hebreeuwse Bijbel, Callenbach: Baarn, 1995): 1,1-3; 4-5; 6; 7-10; 11-13; 14-16 | 2,1-2; 3-10; 11 | 3,1-3a; 3b-5; 6-9; 10 | 4,1-4; 5-6; 7-9; 10-11.
- D.A. DORSEY (*The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999, pp. 290-295): 1,1-3; 4-16 | 2,1-11 | 3,1-3a, 3b-10; 4,1-4; 5-11. A deep-drilling study of the structural design.
- E. ACHTEMEIER (*Minor Prophets II*, in: New International Commentary, 253-84): §1 1,1-3; §2 4-6; §3 7-8; 9-12; §4 13-16; §5 2,1-9; 10; §6 3,1-4; §7 3,5; 6-9; 10; §8 4,1-4; §9 5-8; §10 9-11.
- J. JEREMIAS (*Die Propheten Joel, Obadja, Jona, Micha*, ATD 24/3, 2007, 75-112): 1,1-3; 4-6; 7-10; 11-16; 2,1-2; 3-10; 4,1-11.
- J.D. NOGALSKI (*The Book of the Twelve: Hosea-Jonah*, in: Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary 18a, Macon GA, 2011, 401-57): I: 1,1-3; 1,4-16; II: 1,17-2,1; 2,2-9; 2,10; III: 3,1-3; 3,4; 3,5; 3,6-9; 3,10; IV: 4,1-4; 4,5-8; 4,9-11. (4 scenes: Jonah on the sea; Jonah in the sea; Jonah in Nineveh; Jonah outside Nineveh).

Additional Literature dealing with the structural design of the book

- R. PESCH, "Zur konzentrischen Struktur von Jona 1", in: *Biblica* 47 (1966), 577-581.
- S.M. LANDES, "The Kerugma of the Book of Jonah – The Contextual Interpretation of the Jonah Psalm", in: *Interpretation* 21 (1967), 3-31.
- G.H. COHN, *Das Buch Jona im Lichte der biblischen Erzählkunst*, in: *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 12, Assen, 1969.
- O. KAISER, "Wirklichkeit, Möglichkeit und Vorurteil. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Buches Jona", in: *Ev. Th.* 33 (1973), 91-103.
- P. TRIBBLE, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method and the Book of Jonah*, Minneapolis, 1978.
- B.S. CHILDS, "The Canonical Shape of the Book of Jonah", in: G.A. TUTTLE (ed.), *Near Eastern Studies: Essays in Honor of W.S. Lasor*, Grand Rapids, 1978.
- J. MAGONET, *Form and Meaning – Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah*, Sheffield, 1983.
- M. STERNBERG, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, Bloomington, Indiana, 1985, 318-320.
- D.L. CHRISTENSEN, "Narrative Poetics and the Interpretation of the Book of Jonah", in: *Directions in Biblical Hebrew Poetry*, ed. E.R. Follis (JSOTSup 40), Sheffield, 1987, 29-48.
- J. MAGONET, "The Book of Jonah" in: *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* III, 1992, 936-942.
- H.J. OPGEN-RHEIN, *Jonapsalm und Jonabuch* (SBS 157), Stuttgart, 1994.
- D.A. DORSEY, "Literary Architecture and Meaning in the Book of Jonah", in: David Merling (ed.) *To Understand the Scriptures* (FS W.H. Shea), Berrien Springs, Mich., Andrews University, 1997, 57-69.
- V.M. WILSON, *Divine Symmetries: The Art of Biblical Rhetoric*, New York: University Press of America, 1997, 146-156.
- I. WILLI-PLEIN, "Jona als Beispiel narrativer Diskussionskultur", in: *FS K. Seybold*, Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2001, 217-229.
- D.L. CHRISTENSEN, *The Hebrew Bible: A Study Guide*, BIBAL Press, North Richland Hills, TX, 1998, 243-245.

Outline based on extant layout markers, content, and numerical features

The paragraphs marked **blue** are individually and/or collectively highlighted by **17** and **26**.

Episode 1: 1,1-16 Jonah on the sea fleeing from YHWH:

- §1: 1,1-3 YHWH commissions Jonah but he flees: [] 3 vs; 41 words.
 §2: 1,4-6 A hurricane at sea: everyone prays except Jonah: [] 3 vs; 54 words.
 §3: 1,7-10 Jonah is singled out and unmasked as a Hebrew: [] 4 vs; 74 words.
 §4: 1,11-16 Jonah confesses and is thrown overboard: [] 6 vs; **85 (5x17)** words.

Episode 2: 2,1-11 Jonah prays to YHWH who sets him free: P

11 vs; 112 words.

Episode 3: 3,1-4,11 Jonah at Nineveh fulfilling his mission:

- §1: 3,1-3 YHWH sends Jonah to Nineveh to denounce the city: [] 3 vs; 36 words.
 §2: 3,4-9 Jonah proclaims his message: Nineveh repents: [] 6 vs; **85 (5x17)** words.
 §3: 3,10-4,3 YHWH spares Nineveh but Jonah objects: S 4 vs; **68 (4x17)** words.
 §4: 4,4-5 YHWH reproves Jonah; he leaves the city: [] 2 vs; 25 words.
 §5: 4,6-7 God ordains a plant for shade, but it withers: [] 2 vs; 30 words.
 §6: 4,8-11 God ordains a hot wind and reproaches Jonah: Col. 4 vs; **78 (3x26)** words.

Jonah 1-4 No less than **four paragraphs** are highlighted by **17** and **26**. 48 vs; 688 words.

Quantitative structural analysis of the book of Jonah

It cannot be excluded that some of the multiples of **17** and **26** are due to coincidence

Vs	Texts	Words	Letters	יהוה	Sum words	S/P	Structural Design	
Episode 1		1,1-16						Jonah on the sea fleeing from YHWH
1	1,1	8	27	1	8		§1 YHWH commissions Jonah but he flees	
2	1,2	12	44		20			
3	1,3	21/41	88/159	2-3	41/41	[]		
4	1,4	13	51	4	54		§2 A hurricane at sea: everyone prays except Jonah	
5	1,5	22	94		76			
6	1,6	19/54	68/213		95/54	[]	In terms of letters, <u>1,4</u> and <u>1,6</u> have multiples of 17 .	
7	1,7	18	77		113		§3 Jonah is singled out and unmasked as a Hebrew	
8	1,8	20	72		133			
9	1,9	16	59	5	149			
10	1,10	20/74	78/286	6	169/74	[]	§3 has 286 (11x26) letters; <u>1,10</u> has 78 (3x26) .	
11	1,11	12	45		181		§4 Jonah confesses and is thrown overboard	
12	1,12	18	73		199			
13	1,13	12	49		211			
14	1,14	23	83	7-9	234		The paragraph is highlighted by 85 (5x17) words.	
15	1,15	9	35		243		V. 16 has 51 (3x17) letters.	
16	1,16	11	51/336	10-11	254/85	[]	<u>1,1-16</u> has 254 words. 11x YHWH .	
16	Episode 1	254	336	11x	254			
Episode 2		2,1-11						Jonah prays to YHWH who sets him free
17	2,1	15	57	12	269			
18	2,2	7	29	13	276			
19	2,3	12	49	14	288			
20	2,4	11	51		299			
21	2,5	11	104 (4x26)	46	310		The prayer itself, including the introduction, clearly delimited by a Setumah after v. 10, which marks the end of the prayer, has 104 (4x26) words.	
22	2,6	9	36		319		See the Hebrew text on page 6 below.	
23	2,7	12	51	15	331		Until this point, the end of the prayer, 26 verses and	
24	2,8	12	48	16	343		17 instances of the name YHWH .	
25	2,9	5	22		348			
26	2,10	10	43/432	17	358/104	S		
27	2,11	8	29/29	18	366/8	P		
27	Episode 2	112	461	18x	112		Episode 2: 7 instances of the name YHWH.	

Episode 3		3,1-4,11		Jonah at Nineveh fulfilling his mission			
28	3,1	7	25	19	373	§1 YHWH sends Jonah to Nineve to denounce it	
29	3,2	14	52		387		
30	3,3	15/36	63	20	402/36		⌈
31	3,4	14	59		416	§2 Jonah proclaims his message: Nineveh repents 3,5-6 The people and king of Nineveh repent: 26 w. The paragraph is highlighted by 85 (5x17) words. 3,8-9 Be in sackcloth, pray, and abandon your wicked ways; maybe God will spare us: 26 words.	
32	3,5	11 11+	54		427		
33	3,6	15 15/26	58		442		
34	3,7	19 85 (5x17)	81		461		
35	3,8	16 16+	71		477		
36	3,9	10 10/26	38		487/85		⌈
37	3,10	18	69		505	§3 YHWH spares Nineve but Jonah objects The paragraph is highlighted by 68 (4x17) words.	
38	4,1	7 68 (4x17)	24		512		
39	4,2	32	113	21-22	544		
40	4,3	11	35/241	23	555/68		S
41	4,4	5	19	24	560	§4 YHWH reproves Jonah; he leaves the city 4,5 is made up of 68 (4x17) letters.	
42	4,5	20/25	68/87		580/25		⌈
43	4,6	20	83	25	600	§5 God ordains a plant for shade, but it withers	
44	4,7	10/30	46/129		610/30		⌈
45	4,8	22	87		632	§6 God ordains a hot wind and reproaches Jonah The paragraph is highlighted by 78 (3x26) words.	
46	4,9	15 78 (3x26)	54		647		
47	4,10	18	63	26	665		
48	4,11	23	83/287		688/78	P	Episode 3 (3,1-4,11) 8x YHWH.
21	Episode 3	322	744	8x	322		
48	Jonah 1-4	688	2700	26x	688	Sealed by 26 instances of the name YHWH.	
47	<Heading>	680 (40x17)	2673	25x	680 (40x17)	Highlighted by 680 (40x17) words.	

Observation 1 If we regard the 8 words in 1,1 as a heading, the story of Jonah is made up of precisely 680 (40x17) words. Then the story starts with a divine speech (1,2) and ends with a divine speech (4,10-11). This means that 1,2-4,11 is in its entirety governed by the divine name number 17 symbolizing YHWH's all-presence in the events described in the book. The number 40 may be a happy coincidence, but it may have been chosen deliberately in order to refer to the 40 days mentioned in Jonah's message of doom in 3,4b.

Additionally, 30 of the 48 verses (63%) and 420 of the 688 words (61%) are highlighted by the divine name numbers 17 and 26. Some multiples may be due to coincidence.

Observation 2 The text of the book as a whole is sealed by 26 instances of the name YHWH. Significantly, the passage from the beginning of the book to the end of Jonah's prayer (1,1-2,10) is sealed by 26 verses and 17 instances of the name YHWH.

Observation 3 In terms of the 81 words of the Prayer, its arithmetic centre is constituted by the 3 words in 2,6c, with 39 words on either side (81 = 39 + 3 + 39).

סוף חבוש לראשי Seaweed is wrapped about my head!

This vivid description of Jonah's state during his sinking to the bottom of the sea offers a most eloquent depiction of his near death situation, with his head already swathed in bandages as that of a corpse. Therefore, I regard these words as the consciously designed meaningful centre, containing the gist of the poem. Note the correspondence of the surrounding 39 words to the 39 words spoken by Yahweh in 4:10-11 and the 39 words spoken by Jonah in 4:2-4.

This shows that the prayer is a skillfully designed poem embedded in a painstakingly composed story.

Crucial pasages highlighted by the divine name numbers 17 and 26.

1. Jonah confesses and is thrown overboard (1,11-16): 85 (5x17) words.
2. The prayer with the introduction, delimited by S (2,1-10): 104 (4x26) words.
3. Jonah proclaims his message of doom and Nineveh repents (3,4-9): 85 (5x17) words.
4. The people and king of Nineveh repent (3,5-6): 26 words.

5. Fast, don sackcloth and pray to God; maybe he will spare us (3,8-9): **26** words.
6. YHWH spares Nineve but Jonah objects (3,10-4,3): **68** (4x17) words.
7. God ordains a hot wind and reproaches Jonah (4,8-11): **78** (3x26) words.

Words ascribed to God and to the humans in the book of Jonah

YHWH/Elohim	Jonah	The Sailors	The King of Nineve
1 <u>1,1-2</u> 8+12=20	1 <u>1,9</u> 2+14=16	1 <u>1,6</u> 6+13=19	<u>3,7-9</u> 7+38=45: See Observation 7.
2 <u>2,11</u> 3+0=3	2 <u>1,12</u> 2+16=18 34 (2x17)	2 <u>1,7</u> 4+8=12	An alternative is 3+42=45:
3 <u>3,1-2</u> 7+14=21	3 <u>2,2-10</u> 8+81=89	3 <u>1,8</u> 2+18=20 26	What is significant in this case is
4 <u>4,4</u> 2+3=5	4 <u>3,4b</u> 2+5=7 153	4 <u>1,10a</u> 6+3=9	that the humans speak altogether
5 <u>4,9a</u> 4+5=9	5 <u>4,2-3</u> 4+39=43 (9x17)	5 <u>1,11a</u> 2+6=8 17	163+67+42=272 (16x17) words.
6 <u>4,10-11</u> 2+39=41	6 <u>4,8b</u> 5+3=8	6 <u>1,14</u> 4+19=23	
	7 <u>4,9b</u> 1+5=6		
Totals: 26+73=99	Totals: 24+163=187 (11x17)	Totals: 24+67=91	

Observation 4 The speeches in which God orders Jonah to go to Nineveh (**1+3**) have altogether **26** words.

The next two divine speeches (**4-5**) have **8** words, bringing the four speeches up to **34 (2x17)** words.

The concluding speech (**6**) has **39** words, which represent the numerical value of יהוה אחד, YHWH is One: 10+5+6+5=26 + 1+8+4=13 = 39.

In addition, the introductions to the divine speeches have altogether **26** words, which is underscored by the **26** instances of the name YHWH in the book.

Observation 5 The words devoted to the **7** utterances of Jonah, including the introductions, are significant: to **1-2** **34 (2x17)** words; to **3-7** **153 (9x17)** words; altogether **187 (11x17)** words.

Observation 6 As for the words spoken by the sailors: in utterances **2-3** they speak **26** words. When they reproach Jonah and ask him what they should do (**4-5**), **17** words are devoted to their speaking.

Observation 7 There is no consensus about the precise delimitation of the proclamation in 3,7-9. Is it **7** words introduction and **38** proclamation, or **3** words introduction and **42** proclamation?

In the first case, **7+38=45**, the proclamation are made up of **156 (6x26)** letters (Eikelenboom), which may be conscious design, seeing the striking number of letters in 1,4 (**51**); 1,6 (**68**); 1,10 (**78**); 1,7-10 (**286=11x26**); 1,16 (**51**); 2,4 (**51**); 2,7 (**51**), and 4,5 (**68**). See the table above. Moreover, the fact that the proclamation is introduced by לאמר underscores this delimitation.

In the second case, **3+42=45**, the introductions to the human utterances have **51 (3x17)** words (resembling the **26** words introducing God's words), while they speak altogether **272 (16x17)** words. Also deliberately intended?

The Hebrew text is to be found on the next full page

Episode 1: 1,1-16

Jonah 1

YHWH: 1 1,1-2 8+12=20

1 וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יוֹנָה בֶן־אָמֶתַי לֵאמֹר:

2 קוּם לֶךְ אֶל־נִינְוָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה וּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ כִּי־עָלְתָה רָעָתָם לִפְנֵי:

3 וַיָּקָם יוֹנָה לִבְרַח תְּרִשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּרֶד יָפוֹ וַיִּמְצָא אֹנִיָּה בָּאָה

תְּרִישִׁישׁ וַיִּתֵּן שָׂכָרָה וַיֵּרֶד בָּהּ לָבוֹא עִמָּהֶם תְּרִישִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה:

4 וַיְהִי הַטַּיִל רוּחַ־גְּדוֹלָה אֶל־הַיָּם וַיְהִי סַעַר־גְּדוֹל בַּיָּם וַתֹּאנִיָּה חֹשֶׁבֶת לְהִשְׁבֵּר:

5 וַיִּזְרְצְאוּ הַמַּלְאָכִים וַיִּזְעַקוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אֶלְהֵוֹ וַיִּטְלוּ אֶת־הַכֶּלִּים אֲשֶׁר בָּאֹנִיָּה אֶל־הַיָּם

לְהִקָּל מֵעֲלֵיהֶם וַיּוֹנֶה יָרֵד אֶל־יַרְכְּתֵי הַסְּפִינָה וַיִּשְׁכַּב וַיִּרְדָּם:

The captain 1,6 6+13=19

6 וַיִּקְרַב אֵלָיו רֵב הַחֵבֶל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ

מַה־לָּךְ נִרְדָּם קוּם קְרָא אֶל־אֱלֹהֶיךָ אוּלַי יַעֲשֶׂה הָאֱלֹהִים לָנוּ וְלֹא נֹאבָד:

The sailors 1,7 4+8=12

7 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ לְכוּ וְנִפְלֵא גוֹרְלוֹת

וְנִגְדַעַת בְּשִׁלְמֵי הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת לָנוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ גוֹרְלוֹת וַיִּפֹּל הַגּוֹזָל עַל־יוֹנָה:

The sailors 1,8 2+18=20

8 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו הַיָּרֵדָה־נָא לָנוּ בְּאֲשֶׁר לְמִי־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת לָנוּ

מַה־מַּלְאָכֶיךָ וּמֵאַיִן תָּבוֹא מָה אַרְצֶךָ וְאִי־מִנָּה עִם אֶתָּה:

Jonah: 1 1,9 2+14=16

9 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם עֲבְרֵי אַנְכִי

וְאֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם אֲנִי יָרָא אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־הַיַּבֵּשָׁה:

The sailors 1,10a 6+3=9

10 וַיִּזְרְצְאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יָרָאָה גְּדוֹלָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ

כִּי־יָרְדָנוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים כִּי־מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה הוּא בִּרַח כִּי הִגִּיד לָהֶם:

The sailors 1,11a 2+6=8

11 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו מַה־נַּעֲשֶׂה לָּךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּק הֵם מֵעֲלֵינוּ כִּי הֵם הוֹלְךָ וְסַעַר:

Jonah: 2 1,12 2+16=18

12 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׂאוּנִי וְהִטִּילְנִי אֶל־הַיָּם וַיִּשְׁתַּק הַיָּם

מֵעֲלֵיכֶם כִּי יוֹרֵעַ אֲנִי כִּי בְשָׁלִי הַסַּעַר הַגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה עֲלֵיכֶם:

13 וַיִּחַתְרוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים לְהִשָּׁב אֶל־הַיַּבֵּשָׁה וְלֹא יָכְלוּ כִּי הַיָּם הוֹלְךָ וְסַעַר עֲלֵיהֶם:

The sailors 1,14 4+19=23

14 וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ אָנָּה יְהוָה אֵל־נָא נֹאבְדָה בְּנַפְשׁ הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה

וְאֶל־תֵּתֵן עֲלֵינוּ דָם נְקִיא כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה כְּאֲשֶׁר חָפַצְתָּ עֲשִׂיתָ:

15 וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־יוֹנָה וַיִּטְלוּהוּ אֶל־הַיָּם וַיַּעֲמֵד הַיָּם מִזְעָפוֹ:

16 וַיִּזְרְצְאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים יָרָאָה גְּדוֹלָה אֶת־יְהוָה וַיִּזְבְּחוּ זִבְחַח לַיהוָה וַיִּדְּרוּ נְדָרִים:

Episode 2: 2,1-11

Jonah 2

2,1 15 words

1 וַיִּמֶן יְהוָה דָּג גְּדוֹל לִבְלַע אֶת־יוֹנָה וַיְהִי יוֹנָה בְּמַעַי הַדָּג

שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה לַיְלוֹת:

Jonah: 3 2,2-10 8+81=89

2 וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל יוֹנָה אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיו מִמַּעַי הַדָּגָה: 3 וַיֹּאמֶר

קָרָאתִי מִצָּרָה לִי אֶל־יְהוָה וַיַּעֲנֵנִי

מִבְּטֶן שְׂאוֹל שָׁנַעְתִּי שְׁמַעַת קוֹלִי:

4 וַתִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִצוּלָה בְּלִבְבַי יָמִים וַנְהַר יִסְבְּבֵנִי

כָּל־מִשְׁבְּרֵיךָ וַנִּגְלִיךָ עָלַי עֲבָרוּ:

5 וְאֲנִי אֲמַרְתִּי נִגְרַשְׁתִּי מִנְּגַד עֵינֶיךָ

אֶךְ אוֹסִיף לְחַבֵּיט אֶל־הַיִּכָּל קְדָשְׁךָ:

6 אֲפֹפוּנֵי מַיִם עַד־נַפְשׁ תְּהוּם יִסְבְּבֵנִי

סוּף חֲבוּשׁ לְרֹאשִׁי: 7 לְקַצְבֵי הַרִים

יָרְדְתִי הָאָרֶץ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ בַּעֲדֵי לְעוֹלָם

וַתַּעַל מִשְׁחַת חַיִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי:

8 בַּהֲתַעֲמֶךָ עָלַי נִפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה זָכַרְתִּי

וַתָּבוֹא אֵלַיךָ תְּפִלָּתִי אֶל־הַיִּכָּל קְדָשְׁךָ:

9 מִשְׁמָרִים הַבְּלִי־שׁוֹא חֲסָדֶם יַעֲזֹבוּ:

10 וְאֲנִי בְקוֹל תוֹדָה אֲזַבְּחָה־לָּךְ

אֲשֶׁר נִדְרַתִּי אֲשַׁלְמָה וְיִשׁוּעָתָה לִיהוָה: 11

YHWH: 2 1,11 3+0=3

11 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לְדָג וַיִּקָּא אֶת־יוֹנָה אֶל־הַיַּבֵּשָׁה: 12

Episode 3: 3,1-4,11

Jonah 3

YHWH: 3 3,1-2 7+14=21

1 ויהי דבר יהוה אל יונה שנית לאמר:

2 קום לך אל נינוה העיר הגדולה וקרא אליה את הקריאה אשר אנכי דבר אליך:

3 ויגם יונה וילך אל נינוה כדבר יהוה ונינוה הייתה עיר גדולה

לאלהים מתלך שלשת ימים: 4 ויחל יונה לבוא בעיר מתלך יום אחד

Jonah: 4 3,4b 2+5=7

ויקרא ויאמר עוד ארבעים יום ונינוה נהפכת:

5 ויאמינו אנשי נינוה באלהים

ויקראו צום וילבשו שקים מגדולם ועד קטנם:

26

6 ויגע הדבר אל מלך נינוה ויגם מכסאו וישב אדרתו

מעליו ויכס שק וישב על האפר:

King of Nineveh: 3,7-9 7+38=45

7 ויזעק ויאמר בנינוה מטעם המלך וגדליו לאמר

האדם והבהמה הבקר והצאן אל יטעמו

מאומה אל ירעו ומים אל ישתו:

156 (6x26) letters

8 ויתכסו שקים האדם והבהמה ויקראו אל אלהים בתוקה

For an alternative (3+42=45) see the table above: וישבו איש מדרך הרעה ומן החמס אשר בכפיהם:

and Observation 7.

9 מייודע ישוב ונתם האלהים ושב מחרון אפו ולא נאבד:

10 וירא האלהים את מעשיהם כי שבו מדרך הרעה

וינחם האלהים על הרעה אשר דבר לעשות להם ולא עשה:

Jonah 4

1 וירע אל יונה רעה גדולה ויחר לו:

Jonah: 5 4,2-3 4+39=43

2 ויתפלל אל יהוה ויאמר

אנה יהוה חלואי דברי עד תייתי על אדמתי

על כן קדמתי לברח תרשישה כי ידעתי כי אתה אל חנן ורחום

אריך אפים ורב חסד ונתם על הרעה:

3 ועתה יהוה קחנא את נפשי ממני כי טוב מותי מחי:

YHWH: 4 4,4 2+3=5

4 ויאמר יהוה הטיב תרה לך:

5 ויצא יונה מן העיר וישב מקרם לעיר ויעש לו שם סכה וישב

תחתיה בצל עד אשר יראה מה יהיה בעיר: 6 וימן יהוה אלהים

קיקיון ויעל מעל ליונה להיות צל על ראשו להציל לו מרעתו

וישמח יונה על הקיקיון שמתה גדולה:

7 וימן האלהים תולעת בעלות השחר למחרת ותך את הקיקיון וייבש:

8 ויהיו כזרח השמש וימן אלהים הות קדים תרישית

ותך השמש על ראש יונה ויתעלה

Jonah: 6 4,8b 5+3=8

וישאל את נפשו למות ויאמר טוב מותי מחי:

YHWH: 5 4,9a 4+5=9

9 ויאמר אלהים אל יונה הטיב תרה לך על הקיקיון

Jonah: 7 4,9b 1+5=6

והטיב תרה לי עד מות:

YHWH: 6 4,10-11 2+39=41

10 ויאמר יהוה

אתה חסתי על הקיקיון אשר לא עמלת בו ולא גדלתו

שבן לילה הוה ובן לילה אבד:

11 ואני לא אחוס על נינוה העיר הגדולה

אשר ישבה הרבה משתים עשרה רבו אדם

אשר לא ידע בין ימינו לשמאלו ובהמה רבה: