

## 1. Why Did He Flee?

### *Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 10*

Why did he flee ? Because on the first occasion when (God) sent him to restore the border of Israel, his words were fulfilled, as it is said, " And he restored the border of Israel from the entering in of Hamath " (2 Kings xiv. 25). On the second occasion (God) sent him to Jerusalem to (prophecy that He would) destroy it. But as soon as they repented, the Holy One, blessed be He, did according to the abundance of His tender mercy and repented of the evil (decree), and He did not destroy it ; thereupon Israel called him a lying prophet. On the third occasion (God) sent him against Nineveh to destroy it. Jonah argued with himself, saying, I know that the nations are nigh to repentance, now they will repent and the Holy One, blessed be He, will direct His anger against Israel. And is it not enough for me that Israel should call me a lying prophet ; but shall also the nations of the world (do likewise) !?

### פרקי דרבי אליעזר: פרק עשירי

ולמה ברח ? אלא, פעם ראשונה שלחו להשיב את גבול ישראל ועמדו דבריו. פעם שניה שלחו לירושלים להחריבה. כיון שעשו תשובה, עשה הקב"ה כרוב חסדו ונחם על הרעה ולא חרבה, והיו ישראל קורין אותו נביא שקר. פעם שלישי שלחו לנינוה. דן יונה דין בינו לבין עצמו. אמר, יודע אני שזה גוי קרובי תשובה הם. עכשיו עושין תשובה, והקב"ה שולח את רוגזו על ישראל. ולא די שישראל קורין אותי נביא שקר, אלא אף עכו"ם!?

## The Book of Jonah and The Days of Awe, Professor Jeffrey H. Tigay

The oldest Jewish interpretation of the book holds that Jonah fled because he wished to protect his credibility. Since the Ninevites were sure to be forgiven, Jonah, who was to predict their doom, would look like a false prophet.<sup>10</sup> A variation on this view holds that it was God's credibility that Jonah sought to protect. God's willingness to forgive and forget would destroy the fear of God; His word would become a mockery and men's trust in Him would be shaken if His threats were so easily evaded.<sup>11</sup> The book does raise this problem. The divine threat is phrased in absolute terms; even a date is set. Yet after forty days Nineveh remains standing...

...This is a view of prophecy that Jonah apparently did not share. He was a member of the old school. The Book of Deuteronomy had defined a simple test for the truth of a prophet:

If the prophet speaks in the name of the Lord and the oracle does not come true, that oracle was not spoken by the Lord; the prophet has uttered it presumptuously.... (Deuteronomy 18:22)

Under this conception the job of prophecy seems simple: Speak what God tells you and you will always be proved right. History is intelligible, God's word always comes to pass, and the prophet is a celebrity. But how tragic is the new conception! Speak what God tells you, but speak it so effectively that the people will be moved to change their ways and thus obviate your dire prediction (cf. Jer. 26:18-19). If your reputation suffers in the process-that's a small price to pay for what you will have accomplished!

<p><u>Mei HaShiloach, Volume II, Prophets, Jonah 4:1</u></p> <p>He left the city ... the prophet feared being in the city because he was sure that at least a few houses or courtyards would fall.... But the consequences of his destruction prophecy affected only his gourd.</p>	<p><u>מי השלוח, חלק ב, ליקוטים מנביאים, ספר יונה ד':א'</u></p> <p>(א) <b>ויצא יונה מן העיר וישב מקדם לעיר וגו' עד אשר יראה מה יהיה בעיר. ... פחד הנביא להיות בהעיר כי בטח כמה בתים וחוצות יפלו ע"כ יצא מן העיר והראה לו השי"ת שהרבה עמו פדות שכל פעולת הנבואה הלך רק על הקיקיון שלו.</b></p>
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## 2. Yom Kippur & Purim / Jonah & Esther

<p>The Vilna Gaon wrote: here is a rule for every Yom Tov, that it is half for God and half for you. Two holidays are exceptions to this rule. Yom Kippur is entirely for God, and Purim is entirely for you. But...there is no exception from the rule. For Yom Kippurim is Yom K-("like")-Purim. Meaning: both together make up one holy time. And in this holy time are included Purim</p>	<p>א הנה המהלך בכל יום טוב הוא "כתב הגר חציו לשם חציו לכם. שני זמנים יוצאים הם מן הכלל הזה. יום כפור הוא כולו להשם ופורים הוא כולו לכם, אלא שלקושטא דמלתא אין כאן שום יוצא מן הכלל. כי יום כפורים הוא יום כפורים. כלומר, שניהם ביחד מהווים בעניין זה מועד אחד. ובמועד הזה הכולל פורים ויום כפור, שפיר מתקיים בו חציו להשם וחציו רא. "לכם. עד כען דברי הג</p>
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<p>and Yom Kippur, and it stands as half for God and half for you. (Pachad Yitzchak, Purim 8)</p>	
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### Casting Lots

<p><b>Jonah 1:7(7)</b> And they said every one to his fellow: 'Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us.' So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.</p>	<p>יונה א'ז'ז) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ לְכוּ וְנִפְּלֵה גּוֹרְלוֹת וְנִדְעָה בְּשִׁלְמֵי הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת לָנוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ גּוֹרְלוֹת וַיִּפֹּל הַגּוֹרֵל עַל־יוֹנָה:</p>
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<p><b>Esther 3:7(7)</b> In the first month, which is the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, which is the month Adar.</p>	<p>אסתר ג'ז'ז) בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן הוּא־חֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן בְּשָׁנַת שְׁתַּיִם עֶשְׂרֵה לַמֶּלֶךְ אַחֲשֵׁוּרֻשׁ הַפִּיל פּוּר הוּא הַגּוֹרֵל לִפְנֵי הָמָן מִיּוֹם אֶל־יוֹם וּמִחֹדֶשׁ לְחֹדֶשׁ שְׁנַיִם־עָשָׂר הוּא־חֹדֶשׁ אָדָר: (ס)</p>
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<p><b>Rashi on Leviticus 16:8:1</b>And Aaron shall place lots upon the two goats. He placed one goat at his right and the other at his left. He then put both his hands into an urn and took one lot in his right hand and the other in his left. These he placed on them. The goat upon which fell the lot bearing the inscription Lashem was for God; and the one bearing the inscription Azazel would be sent to Azazel (a harsh wilderness).</p>	<p>(א) י על ויקרא ט"ז:ח:א"רש <b>ונתן אהרן על שני השעירים גרלות.</b> מעמיד אחד לימין ואחד לשמאל, ונותן שתי ידיו בקלפי ונוטל גורל בימין וחברו בשמאל, ונותן עליהם, את שכתוב בו לשם הוא לשם, ואת שכתוב בו לעזאזל משתלח לעזאזל:</p>
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### 3. Was the Repentance Real?

<p><u>Ibn Ezra on Jonah 1:2:1</u></p> <p>Our Rabbis taught correctly that it bothered him that they should survive on account of Israel ...In the earliest days they were God fearing and it was only recently, in the days of Yonah, that they started to do evil. If they had not been God fearing people, God would not have sent his prophet to them. We see that they did complete, unparalleled repentance. As a proof, it doesn't say that they smashed altars or idols and from this we learn that they had not been idol worshipers.</p>	<p><u>אבן עזרא על יונה א':ב':א'</u></p> <p>(א) (קום, נינוה .... -והנכון מה שאמרו קדמונינו ז"ל: כי חרה לו שימלטו בעבור ישראל .... כי היו יראים השם הימים הקדמונים, רק עתה בימי יונה החלו לעשות רע, ולולי זה שהיו בתחילה אנשי השם לא היה שולח נביאו אליהם. והנה ראינו ששב תשובה גמורה אין כמות ולא תמצא כתוב ששברו מזבחות בעלים, או גדעו פסילים והנה מזה נלמוד שלא היו עבו"ם.</p>
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<p><b>Abarbanel Yonah 2</b></p> <p>The truth of the matter is that Yonah regretted fleeing God and promised in his heart to fulfill God's command regarding Nineveh. But he was comforted in his realizing that the people of Nineveh were worshippers of</p>	<p><b>אברבנל יונה ב'</b></p> <p>אמתת הענין הוא שיונה נתחרט ממה שברח מלפני השם וגמר בלבו לעשות מצוותו בענין ננוה אבל היה מתנחם באומרו שאנשי ננוה שהם משמרים הבלי שוא אף על פי שיעשו</p>
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<p>nothingness and, so, even if they did Teshuva because his call, they would not be steadfast in their repentance—after a few days, they would leave their righteousness and return to their evil</p>	<p>תשובה מפני קריאתו לא יתמידו בתשובתם כי לימים מועטים חסדם יעזבו וישבו לרשעתם</p>
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<p><u>Pesikta D'Rav Kahanna 24:11</u>  ... Reish Lakish taught: The people of Nineveh did a liar's repentance. What did they do? R' Chunyah in the name of R. Shimon ben Chalafta taught, they stood the calves inside and their mothers outside. And these were crying inside and these were crying outside. They said, if you do not have mercy on us, we will not have mercy on them....</p> <p>“And let each person turn from his evil way”: R. Yochanan taught that what was in hand, they returned, and what was used in construction or a tower, they did not return.</p>	<p><u>פסיקתא דרב כהנא כ"ד:י"א</u>  ... א' ריש לקיש תשובה של רמיות עשו אנשי נינה מה עשו ר' חוניה בש"ר שמע' בן חלפותא העמידו העגלים מבפנים ואמותיהם מבחוץ שהיו אילו גועים מבפנים ואימותיהן מבחוץ והוון אילין מגעי מיכה ואילין מיכה אמרין אין לית את מרחם עלינו לית אנן מרחמין עליהון ...</p> <p>וישובו איש מדרכו הרעה וג' שם (א' ר' יוחנן מה שהיה בכף ידיהם החזירו ומה שהיה בשידה תיבה ומגדל לא החזירו</p>
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#### 4. Yom Kippur

##### Mishnah Yoma 8:9

(9) One who says, "I will sin, and then repent, I will sin [again], and then repent," will not receive an opportunity to repent; [for one who says] "I will sin, and Yom Kippur will atone," Yom Kippur will not atone. **Yom Kippur atones for transgressions between a person and God, but for a transgression against one's neighbor, Yom Kippur cannot atone, until he appeases his neighbor.** Thus R. Eleazar ben Azariah expounds the text, "From all your sins before the Lord shall ye be clean": For transgressions between a person and God, Yom Kippur atones, for transgressions against one's neighbor, Yom Kippur cannot atone, until he appeases his neighbor. R. Akiva says, Happy are you, Israel! Before whom are you purified, and who purifies you [of your transgressions]? Your Father Who is in heaven. For it is said, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean"; and it is also said, "The ritual bath of Israel is the

##### משנה יומא ח':ט'

(ט) (האומר, אחטא ואשוב, אחטא ואשוב, אין מספיקין בידו לעשות תשובה. אחטא ויום הכפורים מכפר, אין יום הכפורים מכפר. **עברות שבין אדם למקום, יום הכפורים מכפר. עברות שבין אדם לחברו, אין יום הכפורים מכפר, עד שירצה את חברו.** את זו דרש רבי אלעזר בן עזריה, ויקרא טז:ל" [מכל חטאתיכם לפני יי תטהרו], "עברות שבין אדם למקום, יום הכפורים מכפר; עברות שבין אדם לחברו, אין יום הכפורים מכפר, עד שירצה את חברו. אמר רבי עקיבא, אשריכם ישראל, לפני מי אתם מטהרין, ומי מטהר אתכם, אביכם שבשמים, שנאמר, [יחזקאל לו:כה] "וזרקתי עליכם מים טהורים וטהרתם." [ואומר], ירמיה זי:ג" [מקוה ישראל יי], "מה מקוה מטהר את הטמאים, אף הקדוש ברוך הוא מטהר את ישראל.

<p>Lord"; even as a ritual bath purifies the unclean, so does the Holy One, Blessed be He, purify Israel.</p>	
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<p><u>Taanit 15a:4-5</u></p> <p><b>MISHNA: What is the customary order of fast days?</b> Normally the sacred ark in the synagogue, which was mobile, was kept in a locked room. However, on fast days <b>they remove the ark to the main city square and place burnt ashes upon the ark</b>, as a sign of mourning. <b>And they also place ashes on the head of the <i>Nasi</i>, and on the head of the deputy <i>Nasi</i>, and each and every member of the community likewise places ashes upon his head. The eldest member of the community says to the congregation statements of reproof</b>, for example: <b>Our brothers, it is not stated with regard to the people of Nineveh: And God saw their sackcloth and their fasting. Rather, the verse says: "And God saw their deeds, that they had turned from their evil way"</b> (Jonah 3:10).</p>	<p><u>תענית ט"ו א:ד'-ה'</u></p> <p>מתני' <b>סדר</b> תעניות כיצד מוציאים את התיבה לרחובה של עיר ונותנים אפר מקלה על גבי התיבה ובראש הנשיא ובראש אב בית דין וכל אחד ואחד נותן בראשו הזקן שבהן אומר לפניו דברי כבושין אחינו לא נאמר באנשי כינוה וירא אלקים את שקם ואת תעניתם אלא (יונה ג, י (וירא אלקים את מעשיהם כי שבו מדרכם הרעה</p>
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