

D. Strophe 4: The Men Call Out to YHWH for Salvation (1:14)

[6.5]

1:14	And they called out to YHWH / and they said /	16 2	4 4 0
	“O YHWH / let us not perish / with the life / of this man /	26 4	8 8 0
	And do not put to our account / innocent blood //	17 2	5 5 0
	for you are YHWH / what pleases you / is what you have done //	23 3	6 0 6
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1:14	23 17 6

E. Strophe 5: When They Obey the Storm Stops Eliciting Great Fear (1:15–16)

[6.6]

1:15	And they picked up / Jonah /	9 2	3 3 0
	and they hurled him / into the sea //	12 2	3 3 0
	and the sea ceased / its raging //	12 2	3 0 3
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1:14–15	32 23 9
1:16	And the men feared / YHWH /	13 2	2 2 0
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1:14–15	34 25 9
	(It was) with a great fear //	13 1	4 4 0
	and they offered a sacrifice \ ^a to YHWH /	12 1	3 0 3
	and they vowed / vows //	10 2	2 0 2
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1:11–16	85 53 32
		1:9–16	121 66 55
		1:1–16	254 144 110

Scansion in Accentual Stress Units: (6.6).(5.6) . (8.9) . (6.5).(6.6)

$$= (12 + 11) + 17 + (12 + 14) = 23 + 17 + 23 = 63$$

or: 40 // 40 [with pivot counted in each half]

Concentric Compositional Formula: 121 = 60 + 1 + 60 [word count]

or: 61 // 61

Notes:1:9^a Reading *munaḥ* here in BHS as disjunctive.1:12^a Reading *munaḥ* preceded immediately by *gaʿya* (= *meṭeḡ*) in Letteris as disjunctive; BHS omits *gaʿya* (= *meṭeḡ*).1:16^a Reading *pašta* followed immediately by *zaqeḫ qaton* in BHS as conjunctive.

Summary of the Logoprosodic Analysis

1. Jonah 1:9–16 has 5 strophes: 1:9–10b, 10c–11, 12–13, 14 and 15–16.

A	1:9–10b	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	$(17 + 23) + 18 + (21 + 19)$	=	$40 + 18 + 40$	morae
B	1:10c–11	2 balanced dyads + pivot:	$(31 + 8) + 10 + ([6 + 15] + 14)$	=	$39 + 10 + 35$	morae
X	1:12–13	2 balanced triads + pivot:	$(25 + 13 + 17) + 14 + (24 + 9 + 18)$	=	$55 + 14 + 51$	morae
B'	1:14	2 balanced dyads:	$(16 + 26) + (17 + 23)$	=	$42 + 40$	morae
A'	1:15–16	2 balanced triads + pivot:	$(9 + 12 + 12) + 13 + (13 + 12 + 10)$	=	$33 + 13 + 35$	morae

- The first strophe (1:9–10b) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:9ab, 9c and 10ab.
 - 1:7–9 **26** words before *atnach*
 - 1:8–10b **23** words before *atnach*
- The second strophe (1:10c–11) is a single part arranged in a total of three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:10cd, 11 and 11b–d.
 - 1:19–10 **23** words after *atnach*
 - 1:6–11a **46** (= **23** x 2) words before *atnach*
 - 1:10–11 **32** (= 2x2x2x2x2) words and **17** words before *atnach*
- The third strophe (1:12–13) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:12a–c, 12d and 13.
 - 1:11–12d **26** words and **17** words before *atnach*
 - 1:11–12 **17** words before *atnach*
 - 1:9–13 **78** (**26** x 3) words
- The fourth strophe (1:14) is a single part.
 - 1:14 **23** words and **17** words before *atnach*
- The fifth strophe (1:15–16) is a single part arranged in three subdivisions on the basis of word-count: 1:15, 16a and 16b–d.
 - 1:14–15 **32** words and **23** words before *atnach*
 - 1:14–16a **34** (= **17** x 2) words
 - 1:11–16 **85** (= **17** x 5 words and **32** words after *atnach*)

Observations

1. The five strophes in Jonah 1:9–16 may be outlined in a concentric pattern, which is determined primarily on prosodic grounds in terms of the inverse concentric arrangement of syntactic accentual-stress units, rather than content as such—though repetition of themes underscores the concentric structure found in the prosodic analysis to some degree.

A	Jonah’s confession (“I am a Hebrew”) elicits great fear in the sailors	[6.6]	1:9–10b
B	The men ask Jonah what they should do	[5.6]	1:10c–11
X	Jonah tells them to throw him in the sea / they row for shore	[8.9]	1:12–13
B’	The men call out to YHWH for salvation	[6.5]	1:14
A’	They throw Jonah into the sea and the storm stops eliciting great fear	[6.6]	1:15–16

Jonah 1:1–16 is also a concentric structural unit in its own right, in which Jonah’s confession in verse 8 stands in the structural center as a “rhetorical peak.” It is interesting to note that the sailors are called sailors only in the first half of this larger structure. After Jonah’s confession in which he declares that he “fears” God, we find that it is the “men” who in fact fear the **great fear**. They are now YHWH’s “men” and are never referred to as sailors again. The chapter concludes with these “men” worshipping YHWH with sacrifices and vows (1:16).

2. Repetition is an important rhetorical feature in the book of Jonah. The word highlighted at the **arithmological center** of Jonah 1:1–8, *hayyam* (“the sea”), is repeated eight times in Jonah 1:9–16. In the structural center of this section, this word is linked to the **great storm** (1:12b), which elicits the **great fear** on the part of the sailors, which transforms them into YHWH’s “men.” In the first major section in the book of Jonah (1:1–8), we find the word “sailors” (literally “salty ones”); but once we move past the structural center of chapter 1 as a whole in verse 8, they are no longer referred to as “sailors.” They are “men” who in fact “fear the **great fear**” (1:10, 16) by offering a “sacrifice to YHWH” (1:16). Jonah claims that he is the one who “fears” God; but it is the pagan sailors who in fact fear Him.

Behind the word *hayyam* is a poetic allusion to the Canaanite god *Yamm* (“Sea”). As we will see, YHWH defeats the power of both *Yamm* (“Sea”) and *Mot* (“Death”) in this powerful text. It is no coincidence that Yeshua saw the message of this little book as proclaiming the essence of his own teaching—the “Sign of Jonah.” Yeshua grew up a short walking distance from the traditional grave site of the prophet Jonah, which is located a few miles from the town of Nazareth in Galilee. He knew this story well and he used it often in his teaching.

3. To understand what it means to “fear God,” the reader needs to recall the words of Deut 10:12–13.

And now, O Israel, what does YHWH your God ask of you?

But to fear YHWH your God—

to walk in all his ways and to love him;
and to serve YHWH your God with all your heart,
and with all your being.

Yes, to keep the commandments of YHWH,
and his statutes that I command you today,
that it might be well with you.

Jonah's actions demonstrate the fact that he does not in fact **fear the God of heaven**, as he claims (1:9). Deut 10:12–22 begins and ends with the command “to fear YHWH your God.” In many respects, the book of Jonah is a midrashic interpretation of this text. A close look at the book of Jonah reveals what it means to “fear God”—it is exactly the opposite of everything Jonah does! Jonah flees “from the presence of YHWH” (1:3), whereas “to fear YHWH” is “to walk in his ways” (Deut 10:12). Jonah eventually obeys YHWH and goes to Nineveh. But even there he is anything but an example of one who serves YHWH with all his heart and soul. It is interesting to note the fact that Deut 10:11 contains the phrase *qûm lēk*, “arise, go [on your journey].” That phrase appears only eight other places in the entire Tanakh, two of which are here in the book of Jonah, where it is the opening words of God's call to the prophet to serve him in Nineveh (1:2) and the renewal of that call (3:2). Jonah is a curious reversal of the figure of Moses. Both “prophets” (cf. Deut 18:18; 34:10–12) receive the same call: “Arise and go on your journey [*qûm lēk*] before the people” (Deut 10:11). Jonah's actions are a parody, of sorts, on the meaning of the command “to fear YHWH your God,” which, in essence, is summarized in the familiar words of Deut 10:13—“to keep the commandments of YHWH and his statutes that I command you today.”

4. Concentric structures within the book of Jonah have been noted by numerous scholars through the years. In my article on “Andrzej Panufnik and the Structure of the Book of Jonah: Icons, Music and Literary Art” (*JETS* 28 [1985], pp. 133–40), I tried to demonstrate the dominance of the circle as the overriding geometrical motif for understanding the structure of this narrative poem—much like Panufnik's *Sinfonia Votiva* that he composed in 1981 for the centennial celebration of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. At that time, I was not yet aware of the principle of nested menorah patterns as the dominant structuring device for the whole of the Tanakh—extending on to include the Second Testament as well, as the fifth and concluding section of the *Completed Tanakh* (see my book, *The Unity of the Bible: Exploring the Beauty and Structure of the Bible* (Paulist Press, 2003). The structure of the book of Jonah as a whole may be outlined in a three level series of nested menorah patterns, as follows:

The Book of Jonah in a Nested Menorah Pattern ***Jonah 1:1-4:11***

A	Jonah vs. YHWH: Jonah's flight and YHWH's storm (“anger”)	1:1–4
B	Dialogue between the sailors and Jonah: “Fear” motif	1:5–13
C	Sailor's prayer: “Hold us not responsible for this man's death	1:14a
X	The problem of freedom, anger and fear	1:14b–4:2
C'	Jonah's prayer: “I am better of dead than alive!”	4:3
B'	Dialogue between YHWH /G–d and Jonah: “Anger” motif	4:4–9
A'	YHWH vs. Jonah: YHWH justifies his compassion for Nineveh	4:10-11

2nd Level Menorah: Freedom, Anger and Fear ***Jonah 1:14b-4:2***

A	YHWH's freedom: “What pleases you is what you have done”	1:14b
B	The sea ceases its “anger”	1:15
C	The <i>men</i> fear YHWH with a great fear	1:16
X	Conversion is changing one's mind	2:1–3:10
C'	Jonah encounters a great fish (to deliver him from his anger)	4:1a
B'	Jonah becomes angry	4:1b
A'	YHWH's freedom: “I knew you would repent from the evil”	4:2

3rd Level Menorah: What God Wants Is Our “Conversion”	Jonah 2-3
A YHWH appoints a great fish to change Jonah’s mind	2:1–2
B Song of Jonah: a “proclamation” of deliverance	2:3–10
C Jonah’s deliverance from the fish	2:11
X Jonah’s “conversion”—he fails to understand his own message	3:1–4
C’ Nineveh’s repentance and deliverance from divine judgment	3:5–7a
B’ Decree of king of Nineveh: a proclamation to turn from “evil”	3:7b
A’ G–d changes his mind	3:10

As is the case with most great works of art, there are different ways to describe the literary structure of the book of Jonah. Perhaps the simplest and most useful way is that of a spatial chiasm:

A Jonah Outside the House of the Fish	Jonah 1
B Inside the House of the Fish	Jonah 2
B Inside another “House of the Fish” (Nineveh)	Jonah 3
A Jonah Outside the “House of the Fish” (awaiting his “conversion”)	Jonah 4

The chiasmic relationship between these four chapters may also be described theologically as follows:

A What YHWH requires is “fear” (cf. Deut 10:12–20)	Jonah 1
B Jonah as an anti-Moses figure [going down to the “roots of the mountains”]	Jonah 2
B The King of Nineveh as a Mosaic prophet	Jonah 3
A In place of anger, YHWH desires compassion	Jonah 4

Jonathan Magonet has shown the “mirror image” parallelism between chs. 2 and 3, which he correctly sees as conclusive evidence that the so-called “psalm” from the belly/womb of the fish was from the very outset an integral part of the author’s compositional design [*Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Techniques in the Book of Jonah* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), p. 62].

- Another observation of note in the Hebrew text of Jonah 1:14 is the fact that a word is misspelled, apparently by deliberate design on the part of the author of this text. The word *dām nāqīʾ* (“innocent blood”) here is spelled with the letter *aleph* rather than the usual *he*. The change has no effect on the meaning of the text, as such. It simply gives it a delightful poetic twist by anticipating another key word the reader/hearer will meet shortly when the **great fish** “vomits” the reluctant prophet Jonah (3:11). The verb there is *wayyāqēʾ* (“and it vomited”) from the Hebrew root *qyh*, which means “to vomit”—which is normally rendered in Hebrew as the word *qīʾ* (“vomit”). That same word is echoed once more in chapter 4 in the *qīqāyôn*, the mysterious plant that comes up in a night and perishes in a night (4:10, rendered literally in the Hebrew text as a “son/child of the night”). This plant is the great miracle of the book of Jonah, not the fish. The meaning of the *qīqāyôn*-plant is one of the primary keys for unraveling the literary structure and meaning of this powerful text. This word, which appears only in the book of Jonah, was coined by the author of this text to suggest one simple thing about this remarkable plant—it’s purpose is to “vomit” Jonah

(*yônāh*) so as to send him forth once again on God’s mission as a “light to the nations.” The efforts on the part of erudite colleagues to determine the specific genus and species of this plant make about as much sense as it does to determine such “facts” about Jack’s “bean-stalk.” It doesn’t make any difference what kind of a “bean” it was—it came up in a night, and it provides the pathway to a higher level of existence in the heavens. That’s all that matters.

6. The gematrical value of key words in the book of Jonah (listed in the order in which they appear in the text in three different groups) is as follows:

	<i>Value in 400-Gematria</i>	<i>Value in 22-Gematria</i>
Jonah	יונה 71 = 10+6+50+5	35 = 10+6+14+5
Amittai	אמתי 451 = 1+40+400+10	46 = 1+13+22+10
Nineveh	נינוה 101 = 40+10+40+6+5	49 = 14+10+14+6+5
Joppa	יפו 96 = 10+80+6	33 = 10+17+6
Tarshish	תרשיש 1210 = 400+200+300+10+300	94 = 22+20+21+10+21
city	עיר 280 = 70+10+200	46 = 16+10+20
wind	רוח 214 = 200+6+8	34 = 20+6+8
storm	סער 330 = 60+70+200	51 = 15+16+20
fear	יראה 216 = 10+200+1+5	36 = 10+20+1+5
fish	דג 7 = 4+3	7 = 4+3
evil	רעה 275 = 200+70+5	41 = 20+16+5
joy	שמחה 353 = 300+40+8+5	47 = 21+13+8+5
sailors	מלחים 128 = 40+30+8+10+40	56 = 13+12+8+10+13
qiqayon-plant	קיקיון 276 = 100+10+100+10+6+50	78 = 19+10+19+10+6+14
worm	תולעת 906 = 400+6+30+70+400	78 = 22+6+12+16+22
east wind	רוח קדים 368 = 200+6+8+100+4+10+40	80 = 20+6+8+19+4+10+1

7. Jonah 1:9–16 has 473 letters in BHS. The structural center in terms of letter-count falls on the third letter of the word **בשלי** “because of me” in Jonah 1:12b, with 236 letters on either side. The initial *concentric compositional formula* on the basis of letter-count is:

$$473 = 236 + 1 + 236 \quad [\text{letter-count}]$$

or: 237 // 237

A **meaningful center** on the basis of letter-count is found in the 23-letter statement:

כי יודע אני כי בשלי For I know that it is because of me
הסער הגדול הזה This **great storm** (has come).

The *concentric compositional formula* on the basis of letter-count becomes:

$$473 = 223 + 27 + 223 \quad [\text{letter-count}]$$

$$\text{or: } 250 // 250 \quad [\text{with pivot counted in each half}]$$

$$\{250 = 2 \times 5 \times 5 \times 5\}$$

Note that the total letter-count for Jonah 1:1–16 is 994 (= 521 + 473), which confirms the letter-count done by David Crookes (see Observation 8 below) and the observation that the total letter-count here has 71 as a factor {994 = 71 x 7 x 2}, which is the value of the name Jonah in 400-gematria.

8. Letter-count in the book of Jonah (done by David Crookes [Sept. 29, 2003]):

Jonah 1	994	= 2x7x71	71 = "Jonah" in 400 gematria
Jonah 2	461	= prime number	
Jonah 3	570	= 2x3x5x19	
Jonah 4	675	= 3x3x3x5x5	
Total Count	2,700	= 2x2x3x3x3x5x5	

9. In terms of the 121 words in Jonah 1:9–16, the **arithmological center** falls on the word כִּי ("that"), the second such occurrence of this word in the second half of verse 12. The initial **concentric compositional formula** is:

$$121 = 60 + 1 + 60 \quad [\text{word count—for Jonah 1:9–16}]$$

$$\text{or: } 61 // 61 \quad [\text{word count—with "pivot" included in each half}]$$

The **meaningful center** is found by adding three words on either side of the **arithmological center**, as follows:

כִּי יודע אני For I surely know—
 כִּי בשלי הסער הגדול That the great storm has come because of me.

In this instance, the **concentric compositional formula** is:

$$121 = 57 + 7 + 57 \quad [\text{word count—for Jonah 1:9–16}]$$

$$\text{or: } 64 // 64 \quad [\text{word count—with "pivot" included in each half}]$$

$$\{64 = 32 \times 2\}$$

A different **meaningful center** may be found in terms of the larger context in Jonah 1:1–16. In this instance the **arithmological center** falls between the words מִלְאכְתֶּךָ וּמֵאֵיךְ ("your profession and where") in verse 8, and the initial **concentric compositional formula** is:

$$254 = 127 + 0 + 127 \quad [\text{word count—for Jonah 1:1–16}]$$

The **meaningful center** is found by adding two words on either side of the **arithmological center**, as follows:

מֵהָ מִלְאכְתֶּךָ וּמֵאֵיךְ תְּבוֹא What is your profession and where do you come from?

The **compositional formula** then becomes:

$$254 = 125 + 4 + 125 \quad [\text{word count—with heading}]$$
$$\text{or: } \mathbf{129 // 129} \quad [\text{word count—with “pivot” included in each half}]$$
$$\{\mathbf{129} = \mathbf{43} \times 3; \text{ and } \mathbf{43} = \mathbf{17} + \mathbf{26}; \text{ and } 125 = 5 \times 5 \times 5\}$$

10. Summary of the concentric compositional formulae for Jonah 1:9–16

$$121 = 57 + 7 + 57 \quad \text{or: } \mathbf{64 // 64}$$

$$121 = 54 + 13 + 54 \quad \text{or: } 67 // 67$$

{with others in between}

$$121 = 20 + 81 + 20 \quad \text{or: } 101 // 101$$

$$121 = 14 + 93 + 14 \quad \text{or: } 107 // 107$$

$$63 = \mathbf{23} + \mathbf{17} + \mathbf{23} \quad \text{or: } 40 // 40 \quad \text{syntactic accentual-stress units}$$
$$\{40 = \mathbf{23} + \mathbf{17}\}$$

$$36 = 13 + 10 + 13 \quad \text{or: } \mathbf{23 // 23} \quad \mathbf{briques} \text{ (primary accentual-stress units)}$$

11. In the prosodic structure of Jonah 1:9–16 as a whole, the basic building blocks (**briques**) in each poetic **verset** are the **primary syntactic accentual stress units**. These sub-units are delineated by the Masoretes, who marked the boundaries with one of the following:

- **Soph Pasuq** A large colon following a word signifies the end of a verse, which does not always coincide with the end of a sentence
- **Atnach** A small caret-like mark (like ^) beneath the consonantal text, pointing upward, is used to divide most verses. Its primary importance for our purposes concerns its use in the matter of numerical composition—i.e., the total word-count in each line is divided into the number of words before and after *atnach*.
- **Ole Weyored** A combination of two accentual signs: a caret-like mark above the consonantal text, pointing to the left, used together with the accent *merka* (an upright line beneath the consonantal text slanting to the right). These two marks usually appear on the same word, but when that word is monosyllabic the *merka* falls on the following word. This major divider is usually considered to be a stronger disjunctive accent than *atnach*.

In the prosodic analysis presented with the translation (above), the presence of these three primary disjunctive markers is indicated with a double slash (/). Jonah 1:9-16 has 36 **briques** (primary stress units), 27 of which are marked by *soph pasuq* (8 times, at the end of each verse), *atnach* (8 times, in each verse) and *zaqeph qaton* (11 times). The boundaries of the remaining 9 **briques** are marked by *revia* (4 times, in verse 10, 12, 13 and 14), *tiphā* (1 time, in verse 9), *paštā* (3 times, in verse 10, 12 and 14) and *gereš* (1 time, in verse 14).

12. The prosodic structure of Jonah 1:9–16, in terms of its **primary syntactic accentual stress units (briques)**, may be displayed as follows [^ is *atnach*; : is *soph pasuq*; † is *ole weyored* and † is any other such boundary marker]:

- A ⁹ wayō²mer ʾălêhem ʿibrî ʾānōkî[^] wəʔet yhw ʾēlōhé haššāmayim ʾānî yārē[‡] †
 ʾāšer ʿāsāh ʔet hayyām[†] wəʔet hayyabbāšāh :
¹⁰ wayyîrəʔû hāʾānāšîm[†] yirʾāh gəḏôlāh[‡]
- B wayyō²mərû ʾēlāyw mah zōʔ ʿāsîta[^] kî yādəʿû hāʾānāšîm[†]
 kî millîpnê yhw hûʔ bōrēah[‡] kî higgîd lāhem :
¹¹ wayyō²mərû ʾēlāyw mah naʿāseh lāk[‡] wəyištōq hayyām mēʿālênû[^]
 kî hayyām hōlêk wəsōʿer :
- X ¹² wayyō²mer ʾălêhem[†] šāʾûnî[†] wahāʔîlûnî ʾel hayyām[‡]
 wəyištōq hayyām mēʿālêkem[^]
 kî yôḏēaʿ ʾānî[‡] [kî] bəšelli hassaʿar haggādôl hazzeh ʿālêkem :
¹³ wayyahtərû hāʾānāšîm[†] ləhāšîb ʾel hayyabbāšāh wəloʔ yākôlû[^]
 kî hayyām[‡] hōlêk wəsōʿer ʿălêhem :
- B ¹⁴ wayyîqrəʔû ʾel yhw[†] wayyō²mərû ʾonnāh yhw[†] ʾal nāʾ nōʔəḏāh[†]
 bənepeš hāʾîš hazzeh[‡] wəʾal tittēn ʿālênû dām nāqîʔ[^]
 kî ʾattāh yhw[‡] kaʾāšer ḥāpāšta ʿāsîta :
- A ¹⁵ wayyîsʔû ʾet yônāh[‡] wayəʔîlūhû ʾel hayyām[^]
 wayyaʿāmōd hayyām mizzaʿppô :
¹⁶ wayyîrəʔû hāʾānāšîm yirʾāh gəḏôlāh ʾet yhw[^]
 wayyizbəḥû zəḃah la-yhw[‡] wayiddərû nəḏārîm :

The **arithmological center** of Jonah 1:9–16 falls on the word [kî] (“that”) in the second half of verse 12, with a total of 60 words on either side. Jonah 1:9–16 has 63 syntactic accentual-stress units, 36 **briques** (primary accentual stress units, 9 **versets**, and 5 **strophes**. The **arithmological center** is in the middle **strophe**, the middle **verset**, the middle two **briques** (primary syntactic accentual stress units) and the middle three syntactic accentual-stress units.

According to the analysis presented here, the 36 **briques** are distributed within 5 **strophes** in Jonah 1:9–16 as follows: 36 = (6 + 7) + 10 + (7 + 6) = 13 + 10 + 13; or **23 // 23** with the central pivot (verses 12–13) included in each half.

13. Determining the details of the musical and literary structures of Jonah 1 as a whole calls for input on the part of others in the Word Count Project, as we consider the rhetorical features in greater depth and further information contained in the *teʿamim* of this particular text.

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