

## **Jonah Introduction**

There is a recognizable layer of additions to the book of Jonah, which seeks to transform him from a recalcitrant messenger forced to do as God commanded him, into a pious prophet. This later layer is apparent because it is at odds with the base narrative. The base text of Chapter 4 implies that Jonah does not know what will happen to the inhabitants of Ninveh and thus waits outside the city until God makes his decision. The end of Chapter 3 and the beginning of Chapter 4, however, state explicitly that God decided against punishing Ninveh and that Jonah is cognizant of this. The other sign of later intervention is the psalmic prayer in Chapter 2, which is stylistically different than all the surrounding material. Jonah showed no willingness to pray to God in Chapter 1, when the ship he was on was threatened. In the psalm in Chapter 2 and in the addition in Chapters 3 and 4 Jonah prays to God (an act he doesn't engage in otherwise) and thus Jonah is described as an actively engaged prophet, instead of a random individual forced to comply with God's will.