Connecting Messiah with the Prophet Jonah

On the road to Emmaus, Messiah Yahshua (although His identity was hidden from them) explained things concerning the Messiah through the scriptures to his disciples:

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them **in all the scriptures** the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27)

Those “scriptures” that Yahshua talked to them about were the writings contained in the Tanakh (commonly called the ‘Old Testament’). Jonah was one of those writings that Messiah talked about: fulfilling the sign of the prophet Jonah.

”But He (Yahshua) answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign. And there shall be no sign given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the huge fish, so the Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the proclaiming of Jonah, and behold, *One* greater than Jonah *is* here.” (Matthew 12:39-41) (emphasis mine)

What parallels and thematic connections can we conclude from the prophet Jonah and Yahshua the Messiah? A thematic connection is simply stated as: when two or more subjects, objects, titles, etc have a commonality. Within scripture, when there are similar events, situations, circumstances, words, and/or a phrase(s) that are found at multiple locations within the Bible; you have come across a “thematic connection”. Our Heavenly Father is trying to show us something deeper in His Word, not just in the literal sense.

One such “thematic connection” appears in the Book of Jonah, Chapter 1: Let’s see how many similarities or “connections” we can draw from Jonah and the Gospels...

**Jonah 1:1-17** Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that *were* in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. 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. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us; What *is* thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country? and of what people *art* thou? And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry *land.* Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest *is* upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring *it* to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. (KJV)

Now that we’ve read a little bit about what happened to Jonah, let’s turn to the gospels and see if we can draw any connections or similarities from the Messiah and his disciples.

**JONAH CHAPTER ONE**

Thematic connection #1 and #2:

One of the first connections that relate to the Book of Jonah and the Gospels is that Jonah (along with the mariners) and Messiah Yahshua (along with his disciples) are both on a boat in the water. A great storm rose upon the sea and was causing the boat to sink.

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| JONAH 1 | MATTEW 8:23-27 | MARK 4:35-41 | LUKE 8:22-25 |
| **1:4** But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. | **Mat 8:24** And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. | **Mar 4:37** And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. | **Luk 8:23** But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water,* and were in jeopardy. |

Thematic connection # 3:

The next connection appears in Jonah 1:5, where Jonah is asleep in the boat. Interestingly, the Gospels record Messiah Yahshua being asleep in a boat. Jonah 1:5 records Jonah being “fast asleep”. In Hebrew, the word used here is וַיֵּרָדַם (pronounced ‘va-ye-ra-dam), which comes from the Hebrew primitive root word H7290 (ra-dam) found in the Strong’s Concordance which means: ‘to stun, that is, stupefy (with sleep or death)’. In Jonah 1:5, the Apostolic Bible Polyglot (ABP) Version uses the Greek word G2518 καθεύδω (kath-yoo'-do) meaning to ‘fall asleep’. This same Greek word is used in Matthew 8:24 and Mark 4:38. So what am I getting at with all this Greek and Hebrew? Seven times within the Tanakh (commonly called the ‘Old Testament’) contains this primitive root word H7290 (ra-dam) and generally speaking, each of the seven instances deal with a person in a ‘deep sleep’, not just ‘sleeping’. Interestingly, when YHWH caused a ‘deep sleep’ to fall upon Adam (Genesis 2:21 – to bring forth Eve) and also upon Abraham (Genesis 15:12 –covenant of the pieces), the Hebrew word H8639 תַּרְדֵּמָה (tar-day-maw) is used. תַּרְדֵּמָה (tar-day-maw) comes from the primitive root word רָדַם (ra-dam) that we see in Jonah 1:5!

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| JONAH 1 | MATTEW 8:23-27 | MARK 4:35-41 | LUKE 8:22-25 |
| **1:5**(b) …But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep (H7290)\*.  \*Also (G2518) in the ABP Version | **Mat 8:24**(b) And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he *(Messiah)* was asleep (G2518). | **Mar 4:38** And he *(Messiah)* was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep (G2518) on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? | **Luk 8:23** But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water,* and were in jeopardy. |

Thematic connection # 4

Another ‘thematic connection’ can be found in Jonah 1:5-6 where the men on board the ship were afraid. The shipmaster came and woke up Jonah, asking him to arise and call upon his Elohim (God). Likewise, the Gospels show that the disciples on board the boat with Messiah Yahshua were afraid and they awoke Him!

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| JONAH 1 | MATTEW 8:23-27 | MARK 4:35-41 | LUKE 8:22-25 |
| **1:5** Then the mariners were afraid…  **1:6** So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper (H7290)? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. | **Mat 8:25** And his disciples came to *him,* and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. | **Mar 4:38** And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? | **Luk 8:23** But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water,* and were in jeopardy. |

Thematic connection #5:

I believe that this connection is the central theme of both Jonah Chapter 1 and the three Gospel stories of Yahshua in the boat with his disciples. Jonah the Prophet Fears YHWH (the LORD), even though he chose to run from YHWH’s presence, he understands that this storm has come upon them from YHWH. Later, Jonah instructs the men to throw him overboard so that the sea will become calm. Jonah has faith! In the Gospels Yahshua questions the ‘faith’ of his disciples. Is there a connection here? Absolutely!!

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| JONAH 1 | MATTEW 8:23-27 | MARK 4:35-41 | LUKE 8:22-25 |
| **1:9** And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry *land.* | **Mat 8:26** (a) And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?... | **Mar 4:40** And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? | **Luk 8:25** (a) And he said unto them, Where is your faith?... |

Thematic connection #6:

At the command of Jonah, the men pick him up and cast him overboard into the sea and the sea became calm. At the command of Yahshua, ‘He arose’ and ‘rebuked/spoke’ to the wind and sea, and the sea became calm!

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| JONAH 1 | MATTEW 8:23-27 | MARK 4:35-41 | LUKE 8:22-25 |
| **1:15** So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. | **Mat 8:26** (b) … Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. | **Mar 4:39** And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. | **Luk 8:24** (b) … Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. |

Thematic connection #7:

Are not all these connections exciting?! I’m sure there are more connections within Chapter one of Jonah but one that is a dead giveaway is Jonah 1:16 when the men on board the ship were fearful of YHWH after the calming of the sea. Take a look at the connection with the disciples: they ‘marvelled’, they ‘feared exceedingly’, they ‘being afraid wondered’.

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| JONAH 1 | MATTEW 8:23-27 | MARK 4:35-41 | LUKE 8:22-25 |
| **1:16** Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. | **Mat 8:27** But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! | **Mar 4:41** And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? | **Luk 8:25** (b) … And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him. |

\* Connection #8: Added Bonus ~

As an added extra, although not within the exact scriptures of what has been shown previously, YHWH is giving us ‘The Sign’ of Messiah in Jonah 1:17. This sign is what Yahshua talked about in the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke. Just as YHWH prepared a great fish to ‘swallow up’ Jonah, so will YHWH prepare a place for His Son, Messiah Yahshua. It is recorded that Jonah was in the belly (center) of the fish for three days and three nights. Our Messiah was three days and three nights in the belly (center) of the earth!

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| **JONAH 1** | **MATTEW 12:40** | **LUKE 11:29-30** |
| **1:17** Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. | Mat 12:39-40 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. | Luk 11:29-30 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. |

**JONAH CHAPTER TWO**

Jonah prays to YHWH from the stomach (center) of the great fish. Earlier it was shown that there was a connection with Jonah being in the center of the fish and Yahshua being in the center of the earth. Can anything be connected here concerning the prayer of Jonah and that of Messiah?

**Jonah 2:1-10** Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, *even* to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the LORD.

And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land.*

Is there any connections we can make from Chapter two? Look at the following similarities/parallels from chapter one and two:

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| **Jonah the Prophet (Chapter 2)** | **The men on the ship (Chapter 1)** |
| 2:3-6a Near death experience **in** the sea | 1:4 Near death experience **on** the sea |
| 2:2, 7 Prayer of deliverance to YHWH | 1:14 Prayer of deliverance to YHWH |
| 2:6b Deliverance from drowning | 1:15b Deliverance from the storm |
| 2:9 Sacrifice & vows offered to Elohim | 1:16 Sacrifice & vows offered to Elohim |

Again, chapter two lines up beautifully with the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Figuratively or literally there is (1) a near death experience on/in the sea, (2) a prayer of deliverance, (3) deliverance from drowning, (4) sacrifice and thanksgivings offered to Elohim! Messiah Yahshua is ‘called’ upon by the Father for deliverance and ‘rises up’ to do the will of the Father causing salvation! What an awesome picture!

**Hebrews 10:4-7** For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. (Psalms 40:6-8)

**Hebrews 10:8-10** Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein;* which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (Messiah Yahshua) once *for all.*

There is much to say concerning Jonah’s prayer in chapter two. Can you see Messiah praying a very similar prayer to our Heavenly Father while in the belly of the earth?

Pay particular attention to Jonah’s prayer in verse five when he says “…the weeds were wrapped around my head.” Can we not draw a thematic connection towards Yahshua having a crown of thorns wrapped around his head?!

Another thematic connection (potential) of Jonah’s prayer can be found in Psalms 69. Pay particular attention to the following verses and see if you can draw any connections.

**Psalm 69:1-3** Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto *my* soul. I sink in deep mire, where *there is* no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

**Psalm 69:14-15** Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

Do you see any connections with these verses and Jonah chapter two? Read all of Psalm 69 (of David) and see if there are verses that connect thematically to Yahshua… There are verses within Psalm 69 that not only point to the writer of the Psalm (David), but point to Jonah AND Messiah Yahshua! And did you see what the last two verses say in the Psalm? It is in regards to the deliverance and salvation of Elohim’s people!

What is written in Jonah 2:9b? “…salvation (deliverance) *is* of Yahweh (YHWH).”

In the Hebrew this part of the verse is written like this:

יְשׁוּעָתָה לַיהוָה

[of YHWH] [salvation]

We see Messiah’s name within the word יְשׁוּעָתָה , meaning salvation!

In Jonah 2:10, YHWH spoke to the great fish and on the third day it ‘gave up’ Jonah.

In the Gospels it is recorded that Messiah was resurrected from the grave on the third day! The earth ‘gave up’ Messiah on the third day. I believe this is part of the good news message that ‘HE (Messiah) IS RISEN’!

**1Corinthians 15:55-57** O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law (law defines what sin is- 1 John 3:4). But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (emphasis mine)

**1Peter 1:21** Who by him do believe in God, that raised him (Messiah) up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. (emphasis mine)

**Symbolisms**

Jonah in the fish (Pit) = Messiah in the grave

Belly of the fish = Pit = Grave

Fish vomits him up/out = resurrection

Weeds wrapped around head = crown of thorns around Messiah’s head

3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the fish = 3 days and 3 nights in the tomb

**OVERALL THEMES**

**CHAPTER ONE**

We see an overall theme/connection with the Prophet Jonah being sent by YHWH to call the people of Nineveh to repentance and with Messiah Yahshua being sent by our Heavenly Father to preach repentance and the good news!

**CHAPTER TWO**

[Death, burial, resurrection] Part of the ‘Good News’ message !

ואני בקול תודה אזבחה־לך אשׁר נדרתי אשׁלמה ישׁועתה ליהוה

Jonah 2:9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation (Yeshua/Yahshua) *is* of the LORD (YHWH).

Chapter one and two also has a common theme of repentance. This is also tied into what Messiah Yahshua said many times in the Gospels. **“Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!”.**

**CLOSING COMMENT**

There are many parallels and thematic connections relating to Jonah the Prophet and Messiah Yahshua. This really brings home the point of what Messiah said to the two men on the road to Emmaus… “…as He (Yahshua) expounded unto them in all the scriptures (Tanakh) the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27). There is a very good possibility that Messiah talked with them about the story of Jonah on the boat and of himself with His disciples on the boat on lake Kinneret.

Lastly, remember thematic connection number three that was made earlier concerning the ‘deep sleep’ that was upon Jonah and Yahshua? What does it say in the following scripture?

Isa 29:10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

Isa 29:18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

Just as we read before, the Hebrew word used in Isaiah 29:10 for ‘deep sleep’ is H8639 תַּרְדֵּמָה (tar-day-maw) which comes from the primitive root word רָדַם (ra-dam). Just as the ‘deep sleep’ (for a short time) fell over Adam, Abraham, Jonah and Yahshua; so has a ‘deep sleep’ fallen on the exiles (Diaspora) of the house of Israel until HE (Heavenly Father) awakens us… are we not starting to see this awakening?!

**Ephesians 5:14 “Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest (רָדַם), and arise from the dead, and Messiah shall give thee light.”**

IT IS TIME FOR US TO AWAKEN !!!