

## Jonah's prayer: Chapter 2:1-10

*Inclusio* - 1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying,

Introductory Unit<sup>1</sup> (A) (2)

"I called out, out of my distress,<sup>2</sup>  
[to the Lord<sup>3</sup>] and he answered me;//  
  
out of the belly of Sheol I cried,  
and you heard my voice.//

Chiastic parallelism formed between first halves of each line of the couplet

First Stanza (B) (3-4)

Begins with

3 For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas,  
and the flood surrounded me;//  
  
all your waves and your billows/  
passed over me.//

Regular parallelism

Ends with

4 Then I said,  
'I am driven away from your sight;//  
  
yet I shall again look<sup>4</sup>/  
upon your holy temple.'//

Second Stanza (B') (5-7)

5 closed in over me [The waters<sup>5</sup>] to take my life; / the deep surrounded me;//

Chiastic parallelism - elaborates on the elements introduced in v5a

weeds were wrapped about my head/  
6 at the roots of the mountains.//  
  
I went down to the land/  
whose bars closed upon me forever.//

Begins with

■ Image of being surrounded and trapped

■ Sinking to the ultimate resting place of death

yet you brought up my life from the pit, / O Lord my God.//

7 When my life was fainting away,  
I remembered the Lord,/  
  
and my prayer came to you,  
into your holy temple.//

Ends with

Concluding unit (A') (8-9)

8 Those who pay regard to vain idols / their hope of steadfast love [forsake<sup>6</sup>].//

9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving/  
will sacrifice to you;//  
  
what I have vowed I will pay.  
Salvation belongs to the Lord!""//

Chiastic parallelism

*Inclusio* - 10 And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

<sup>1</sup> ..... each couplet is surrounded by the dotted line  
<sup>2</sup> a single / indicates half a line of Hebrew; a double // comes at the end of the completed line  
<sup>3</sup> God's name comes in the second part of the line.  
<sup>4</sup> RSV 'how shall I again look upon thy holy temple?'  
<sup>5</sup> YLT has 'Compassed me have waters unto the soul,' showing the more accurate word order.  
<sup>6</sup> the verb 'forsake' comes after 'mercy' in the original