

NT 615 EXEGETICAL PROCESS NOTEBOOK¹

NAME: John Steinthal
PASSAGE: Book of Jonah

Instructions: Use this template for your research. Answer the questions thoroughly and give your reasons from the Scripture passages you are investigating. Include scriptural references for easy referral later when you begin to write your projects. There are no page limits for any of the steps. This “Exegetical Process Notebook” is the work product that you will use for your final project at the end of this course.

STEP 1. SURVEY THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT IN GENERAL

1.1 Read the entire document in English in one sitting: **YES**

1.1.1 AUTHOR.

- a) What **do you observe** about the identity of the author and his circumstances from your reading of the biblical book you are investigating?

The Book of Jonah is anonymous.

The book of Jonah, written primarily in the third person, does not explicitly name the prophet as the author of his own account, but we have no reason to doubt either the inspiration or the historical veracity of the book.²

The author knew the story well, he told it with a sense of humor, it's like a satire. The story seems large, exaggerated, like a fable. Maybe that's why it's been adopted as a common children's story. But actually, Jonah's story reveal deep dark emotions and a determination to refuse God's direction.

- b) What more do you learn about the life of the author and his situation at the time of writing from the **secondary literature** (New Testament and Old Testament Introductions, Critical Commentaries, Critical Bible Dictionaries, etc.)?
- ✓ *Be sure to include a working bibliography of the authors you use so you can cite them properly in your final project.*
 - ✓ See Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, pp. 120-134 for a working bibliography of useful secondary resources.

We do not learn anything about the author.

¹ Adapted from Dr. William Barclay, Gordon Conwell <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/charlotte/current/documents/chareg-nt502-barclay-su12.pdf> Accessed Sept. 1, 2016. Also, Gordon Fee, *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. 3rd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002) and, J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2001, 2020).

² © 2023 Insight for Living Ministries. <https://insight.org/resources/bible/the-minor-prophets/jonah>

We do learn a lot about Jonah, the prophet the story is about. Jonah is the only prophet on the biblical record to have run away from God. Jonah was a prophet of the northern kingdom of Israel.

He was; Disobedient, 1:3, Fearful, 1:9, Prayerful in urgency, 2:1, Critical, 4:1, Bitter and resentful, 4:3,8

Christ views the book as historical, Mt 12:39-41; Lu 11:29-32. If we reject the book of Jonah as literal, we reject the authenticity of Christ's statement.³

God reserves the sovereign right to be compassionate, even when those acts work against an already issued prophetic warning. God delights in gracious acts of compassion in response to small steps in the right direction. Certainly, if God responded that way to Nineveh, the epitome of pagan wickedness, he would respond compassionately to his chosen people, Israel.⁴

Jonah found himself days and 3 nights in the belly, after running from God, his journey down led him to being captured by a horrible experience. At the place of complete trouble and isolation, Jonah cried out from his sorry and troubles, as if he was in the place of the dead. It's not hard to imagine that the belly of the fish was a disgusting place which was slowly eating at Jonah. God answered Jonah from the belly and restored him.

1.1.2. RECIPIENTS:

*Base your answers on what you see in the text itself. You should make educated guesses about the answers to these questions from your observations. Only **after you do your work** should you consult secondary literature.*

- a) What do **you observe** about the identity of the recipients?
- b) What is the relationship between the author and the recipients?
- c) Where do the recipients live?
- d) What are their present circumstances?
- e) What historical situation occasioned this writing?

Jonah prophesied to Nineveh but he wasn't happy about it (Jonah 4:1). Herein we find another touchstone for our lives: aligning our desires with God's is always a process.

Jonah carries a deep disdain for the Ninevites.

NINEVEH (Heb. נִינְוָה; Akk. Ninua, Ninâ; in Mari Ninuwa; Ar. Ninawa), the capital of the Assyrian empire from Sennacherib's time on, situated about 1 mi. (about 1½ km.) E. of the Tigris, opposite modern Mosul. Since the cuneiform for Nineveh (Ninâ) is a fish within a house, it has been suggested that the name of the city was derived from that of a goddess associated with fish, but it seems that it is of Hurrian origin. From the Akkadian period on, the city was dedicated to the "Ishtar of Nineveh."⁵

³ <https://versebyversecommentary.com/books/introduction-to-jonah/>

⁴ Hill, Andrew E.; Walton, John H.. A Survey of the Old Testament (p. 629). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

⁵ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/nineveh>

According to the Table of the Nations, Nineveh was established – together with other principal centers in Mesopotamia – in the days of *Nimrod (Gen. 10:10–12). In the Book of Jonah (3:3) it is referred to as "an exceedingly great city, three days' journey" (from one end to the other). A subsequent verse (4:11) tells that its infant population alone numbered "more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons." Even if this is somewhat exaggerated, it is probable that the number of Nineveh's inhabitants at the pinnacle of its greatness in the seventh century B.C.E. was indeed extremely large (see *Jonah).

In II Kings 19:36–37 (and in the parallel passage in Isa. 37:37–38), Nineveh is mentioned as the city to which Sennacherib returned after his failure to capture Jerusalem, and in which he was murdered by his sons.

Two contemporary prophets, *Zephaniah (2:13ff.) and *Nahum, prophesied the destruction of Nineveh.

Nineveh was one of the oldest and greatest cities in antiquity. Texts from the [Hellenistic](#) period later offered an [eponymous Ninus](#) as the founder of Νίνου πόλις (Ninopolis), although there is no historical basis for this. [Book of Genesis](#) 10:11 says "Nimrod" or [Ashur](#), depending on the version, built Nineveh. The context of Nineveh was as one of many centers within the regional development of [Upper Mesopotamia](#)⁶. This area is defined as the plains which can support rain-fed agriculture. It exists as a narrow band from the [Syrian coast](#) to the [Zagros mountains](#). It is bordered by deserts to the south and mountains to the north. The cultural practices, technology, and economy in this region were shared and they followed a similar trajectory out of the neolithic.

People living in Nineveh lived in a big and powerful city.

1.1.3 PURPOSE:

- a) What is the author's purpose for writing (explicit and implied)?
- b) What is the overall theme or concern?
- c) Does the argument or narrative have an easily discerned outline or storyline?

The author is revealing to the reader the nature and person of Jonah. The person of Jonah, a prophet, is exposed by the author as hateful, runner from God, he didn't fear God, ungrateful, disobedient.

One of the major themes is the relationship between God and Jonah. God's extraordinary capacity to forgive upon true repentance is also fundamental to our understanding.

The book exemplifies the miraculous power and supremacy of God over His entire creation.

God's servants must obey Him even when the circumstances are contrary to their expectations and hopes.

Despite human weaknesses in those God selects, He is still able to use them in His service. The narrative

⁶ [Nineveh - Wikipedia](#)

presents a noticeable contrast between God's mercy and forgiveness and the shortcomings of His servant. The Bible mentions imperfections in other renowned individuals, such as Noah, Abraham, Jacob, David, the apostle Peter and so on.

God's willingness to forgive upon heartfelt repentance is striking and an encouragement to those who seek to please their Creator but at times succumb to human weaknesses. Upon genuine repentance God is willing to forgive and will continue to work with us.

God's plan of salvation extends to all people on the earth. As the apostle Paul states, God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).⁷

One of the overarching messages from the Book of Jonah is compassion. Jonah was a prophet, and even though he had let God down in numerous ways, he was still forgiven because God showed him unlimited love and compassion. God also modeled forgiveness and mercy for Jonah in how God dealt with other people.

Incredibly, seemingly after just one day of Jonah's travel into the city, "the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them" (Jonah 3:5). The king himself put on sackcloth and sat in ashes. He commanded a fast, declaring that even the animals should not eat or drink. He called on the people to "call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish" (Jonah 3:8-9). God did relent from the disaster He had threatened. The people turned to God, and He responded with mercy and grace.⁸

***You want to acquire a working knowledge of the following before writing your papers or doing your projects. You will need to add the research found in commentaries, dictionaries, etc.:**

- Who was the author, and what was his background? (If there are different views, which is the stronger position and why?)
- When did he write, and what was happening at the time the book was written? (Often there are different views. Consider all the different views and ask yourself, how does my answer affect the interpretation?)
- What was the nature of his ministry?
- Who was the biblical audience who heard this text, and what were their circumstances?
- What kind of relationship did the author have with the audience?
- Why was he writing?
- What kind of relationship did the biblical audience have with God? With each other?
- Are there any other historical-cultural factors that might shed light on the book?

Jonah or Jonas, son of Amittai, is a prophet in the Hebrew Bible and the Quran, from Gath-hepher of the northern kingdom of Israel in about the 8th century BCE. Jonah is the central figure of the Book of Jonah, which details his reluctance in delivering God's judgement on the city of Nineveh.

⁷ <https://lifehopeandtruth.com/bible/holy-bible/old-testament/the-prophets/minor-prophets/jonah/>

⁸ [Who was Jonah in the Bible? \(compellingtruth.org\)](http://compellingtruth.org/Who-was-Jonah-in-the-Bible/)

Jonah is identified as a prophet and servant of God during the reign of King Jeroboam II of Israel (2 Kings 14:24-25)—between 792 and 753 B.C. (Nelson’s NKJV Study Bible). The name Jonah means “dove.” His commission, as recorded in the book of Jonah (the fifth of the Minor Prophets), was to convey a message from God to the Assyrian capital of Nineveh.⁹

Jonah was a prophet of the northern kingdom of Israel in about the 8th century BC. The name Jonah means “dove.” His father was Amittai. Jonah is identified as a native of Gath-hepher (2 Kings 14:25). The period in which he prophesied was one of great national distress (2 Kings 14:26, 27) but he predicted prosperity for the nation of Israel which was realized in the days of Jeroboam II (approximately 793–753 BC).

Jonah is one of the twelve minor prophets and his book is written in a narrative form. God commanded Jonah to go preach to the wicked inhabitants of Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) the message of repentance or they would be destroyed by fire (ch. 1:1-2). But Jonah, instead of obeying God’s command, ran away to Tarshish, a city in southern Spain, which is more than 2,500 miles in the opposite direction from Nineveh.¹⁰

STEP 2. CONFIRM THE LIMITS OF YOUR PASSAGE.

2.1. Decide where your self-contained passage begins and ends. Compare the paragraphing of seven modern translations (e.g., NRSV, NIV, NET, ASV, NASB, NKJV, etc. See Duvall and Hayes, *Grasping God’s Word*, p. 17).

-- Built a spreadsheet for review

- a) Where do the translation differ?
- b) Decide for yourself what the basic unit is. Provide clear reasons based on your observations. *The final decision will be part of the whole exegetical process.*
- c) **“I intend to focus on the following passage from Jonah chapter 1**

Jonah Chapter 1

Jonah’s Disobedience - NASB

1 The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ² “Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry out against it, because their wickedness has come up before Me.” ³ But Jonah got up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship that was going to Tarshish, paid the fare, and ^[a]boarded it to go with them to Tarshish away from the presence of the LORD.

⁹ <https://lifehopeandtruth.com/bible/holy-bible/old-testament/the-prophets/minor-prophets/jonah/>

¹⁰ <https://bibleask.org/who-was-jonah/>

⁴ However, the LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea, so that the ship was about to ^(b)break up. ⁵ Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried out to his ^(c)god, and they hurled the ^(d)cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten *it* ^(e)for them. But Jonah had gone below into the stern of the ship, had lain down, and fallen sound asleep. ⁶ So the captain approached him and said, “How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps *your* god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish.”

⁷ And each man said to his mate, “Come, let’s cast lots so that we may ^(f)find out on whose account this catastrophe *has struck* us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸ Then they said to him, “Tell us, now! On whose account *has* this catastrophe *struck* us? What is your occupation, and where do you come from? What is your country, and from what people are you?” ⁹ So he said to them, “I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.”

¹⁰ Then the men became extremely afraid, and they said to him, “^(g)How could you do this?” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. ¹¹ So they said to him, “What should we do to you so that the sea will become calm ^(h)for us?”—for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy. ¹² And he said to them, “Pick me up and hurl me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm ⁽ⁱ⁾for you, because I know that on account of me this great storm *has come* upon you.” ¹³ However, the men ^(j)rowed *desperately* to return to land, but they could not, because the sea was becoming *even* stormier against them. ¹⁴ Then they cried out to the LORD and said, “We earnestly pray, O LORD, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life, and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, LORD, have done as You pleased.”

¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men became extremely afraid of the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

¹⁷ ^(k)And the LORD designated a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights.

Asleep at the wheel¹¹

The predicament¹²

STEP 3. BECOME THOROUGHLY ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR PARAGRAPH.

¹¹ [\(4\) 2. Asleep at the Wheel - Amazing Jonah - Tim Mackie \(The Bible Project\) - YouTube](#)

¹² [\(4\) The Jonah Series \(Part 1\) "The Predicament" Pastor John K. Jenkins Sr. - YouTube](#)

3.1. Read the paragraph through in 5-7 translations (at least 2 from the more formal side of the spectrum, 2 from the middle, and 1 from the more functional side of the spectrum, *see chart on p. 12*).

- a) Copy these translations and mark well the differences among these translations (I like using colored highlighters).
- b) Make a list (or chart) of the differences.

KJV 1-2 Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

NASB 1-2 The word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry out against it, because their wickedness has come up before Me.”

RSV 1-2 Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness has come up before me.”

NET 1-2 The Lord’s message came[a] to Jonah son of Amittai,[b] 2 “Go immediately[c] to Nineveh, [d] that[e] large capital[f] city,[g] and announce judgment against[h] its people[i] because their wickedness[j] has come to my attention.”

NAB 1-2 The word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amittai:[a] 2 Set out for the great city[b] of Nineveh, and preach against it; for their wickedness has come before me.

NIV 1-2 The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: 2 “Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”

NJB 1-2 The word of Yahweh was addressed to Jonah son of Amittai:

NCV 1-2 The Lord spoke his word to Jonah son of Amittai: 2 “Get up, go to the great city of Nineveh, and preach against it, because I see the evil things they do.”

GNB 1-2 One day the Lord spoke to Jonah son of Amittai. 2 He said, “Go to Nineveh, that great city, and speak out against it; I am aware of how wicked its people are.”

The Message 1-2 One day long ago, God’s Word came to Jonah, Amittai’s son: “Up on your feet and on your way to the big city of Nineveh! Preach to them. They’re in a bad way and I can’t ignore it any longer.”

No Major differences

KJV 3 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.

NASB 3 But Jonah got up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship that was going to Tarshish, paid the fare, and [a]boarded it to go with them to Tarshish away from the presence of the Lord.

RSV 3 But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

NET 3 Instead, Jonah immediately[l] headed off to Tarshish[m] to escape[n] from the commission of the Lord.[o] He traveled[p] to Joppa[q] and found a merchant ship heading[r] to Tarshish.[s] So he paid the fare[t] and went aboard[u] it to go with them[v] to Tarshish,[w] far away from the Lord.[x]

NAB 3 But Jonah made ready to flee to Tarshish,[c] away from the Lord. He went down to Joppa, found a ship going to Tarshish, paid the fare, and went down in it to go with them to Tarshish, away from the Lord.

NIV 3 But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

NJB 3 Jonah set about running away from Yahweh, and going to Tarshish. He went down to Jaffa and found a ship bound for Tarshish; he paid his fare and boarded it, to go with them to Tarshish, to get away from Yahweh.

NCV 3 But Jonah got up to run away from the Lord by going to Tarshish. He went to the city of Joppa, where he found a ship that was going to the city of Tarshish. Jonah paid for the trip and went aboard, planning to go to Tarshish to run away from the Lord.

GNB 3 Jonah, however, set out in the opposite direction in order to get away from the Lord. He went to Joppa, where he found a ship about to go to Spain. He paid his fare and went aboard with the crew to sail to Spain, where he would be away from the Lord.

The Message 3 But Jonah got up and went the other direction to Tarshish, running away from God. He went down to the port of Joppa and found a ship headed for Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board, joining those going to Tarshish—as far away from God as he could get.

went in the opposite direction (GNB)

KJV 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.

NASB 4 However, the Lord hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea, so that the ship was about to [b]break up.

RSV 4 But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up.

NET 4 But[y] the Lord hurled[z] a powerful[aa] wind on the sea. Such a violent[ab] tempest arose on the sea that[ac] the ship threatened to break up![ad]

NAB 4 The Lord, however, hurled a great wind upon the sea, and the storm was so great that the ship was about to break up.

NIV 4 Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up.

NJB 4 But Yahweh threw a hurricane at the sea, and there was such a great storm at sea that the ship threatened to break up.

NCV 4 But the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, which made the sea so stormy that the ship was in danger of breaking apart.

GNB 4 But the Lord sent a strong wind on the sea, and the storm was so violent that the ship was in danger of breaking up.

The Message 4 But God sent a huge storm at sea, the waves towering. The ship was about to break into pieces.

KJV 5 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.

NASB 5 Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried out to his [c]god, and they hurled the [d]cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it [e]for them. But Jonah had gone below into the stern of the ship, had lain down, and fallen sound asleep.

RSV 5 Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god; and they threw the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. 6 So the captain came and said to him, "What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call upon your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we do not perish."

NET 5 The sailors were so afraid that each cried out[ae] to his own god[af] and they flung[ag] the ship's cargo[ah] overboard[ai] to make the ship lighter.[aj] Jonah, meanwhile,[ak] had gone down into the hold[al] below deck,[am] had lain down, and was sound asleep.[an]

NAB 5 Then the sailors were afraid and each one cried to his god. To lighten the ship for themselves, they threw its cargo into the sea. Meanwhile, Jonah had gone down into the hold of the ship, and lay there fast asleep.

NIV 5 All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep.

NJB 5 The sailors took fright, and each of them called on his own god, and to lighten the ship they threw the cargo overboard. Jonah, however, had gone below, had lain down in the hold and was fast asleep,

NCV 5 The sailors were afraid, and each man cried to his own god. They began throwing the cargo from the ship into the sea to make the ship lighter.

GNB 5 The sailors were terrified and cried out for help, each one to his own god. Then, in order to lessen the danger,[a] they threw the cargo[b] overboard. Meanwhile, Jonah had gone below and was lying in the ship's hold, sound asleep.

The Message 5 The sailors were terrified. They called out in desperation to their gods. They threw everything they were carrying overboard to lighten the ship.

KJV 6 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.

NASB 6 So the captain approached him and said, "How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish."

RSV 6 So the captain came and said to him, "What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call upon your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we do not perish."

NET 6 The ship's captain approached him and said, "What are you doing asleep?[ao] Get up! Cry out[ap] to your god! Perhaps your god[aq] might take notice of us[ar] so that we might not die!"

NAB 6 The captain approached him and said, "What are you doing asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps this god will be mindful of us so that we will not perish."

NIV 6 The captain went to him and said, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish."

NJB 6 when the boatswain went up to him and said, 'What do you mean by sleeping? Get up! Call on your god! Perhaps he will spare us a thought and not leave us to die.'

NCV 6 The captain of the ship came and said, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray to your god! Maybe your god will pay attention to us, and we won't die!" But Jonah had gone down far inside the ship to lie down, and he fell fast asleep.

GNB 6 The captain found him there and said to him, "What are you doing asleep? Get up and pray to your god for help. Maybe he will feel sorry for us and spare our lives."

The Message 6 Meanwhile, Jonah had gone down into the hold of the ship to take a nap. He was sound asleep. The captain came to him and said, "What's this? Sleeping! Get up! Pray to your god! Maybe your god will see we're in trouble and rescue us."

KJV 7 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.

NASB 7 And each man said to his mate, "Come, let's cast lots so that we may [f]find out on whose account this catastrophe has struck us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.

RSV 7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

NET 7 The sailors said to one another,[as] "Come on, let's cast lots[at] to find out[au] whose fault it is that this disaster has overtaken us."[av] So they cast lots, and Jonah was singled out.[aw]

NAB 7 Then they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots to discover on whose account this evil has come to us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.

NIV 7 Then the sailors said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.

NJB 7 Then they said to each other, 'Come on, let us draw lots to find out who is to blame for bringing us this bad luck.' So they cast lots, and the lot pointed to Jonah.

NCV 7 Then the men said to each other, "Let's throw lots to see who caused these troubles to happen to us." When they threw lots, the lot showed that the trouble had happened because of Jonah.

GNB 7 The sailors said to each other, "Let's draw lots and find out who is to blame for getting us into this danger." They did so, and Jonah's name was drawn.

The Message 7 Then the sailors said to one another, "Let's get to the bottom of this. Let's draw straws to identify the culprit on this ship who's responsible for this disaster." So they drew straws. Jonah got the short straw.

KJV 8 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?

NASB 8 Then they said to him, "Tell us, now! On whose account has this catastrophe struck us? What is your occupation, and where do you come from? What is your country, and from what people are you?"

RSV 8 Then they said to him, "Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And whence do you come? What is your country? And of what people are you?"

NET 8 They said to him, "Tell us, whose fault[ax] is it that this disaster has overtaken us?[ay] What's your occupation? Where do you come from? What's your country? And who are your people?"[az]

NAB 8 Then they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots to discover on whose account this evil has come to us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.

NIV 8 So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?"

NJB 8 Then they said to him, 'Tell us, what is your business? Where do you come from? What is your country? What is your nationality?'

NCV 8 They said to him, "Tell us why this evil has come to us! What is your business? Where do you come from? What is your country, and to what people do you belong?"

GNB 8 So they said to him, "Now, then, tell us! Who is to blame for this? What are you doing here? What country do you come from? What is your nationality?"

The Message 8 Then they grilled him: "Confess. Why this disaster? What is your work? Where do you come from? What country? What family?"

KJV 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.

NASB 9 So he said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land."

RSV 9 And he said to them, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

NET 9 He said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I worship[ba] the Lord,[bb] the God of heaven,[bc] who made the sea and the dry land."

NAB 9 "I am a Hebrew," he replied; "I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

NIV 9 He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

NJB 9 He replied, 'I am a Hebrew, and I worship Yahweh, God of Heaven, who made both sea and dry land.'

NCV 9 "I am a Hebrew," he replied; "I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

GNB 9 "I am a Hebrew," Jonah answered. "I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made land and sea."

The Message 9 He told them, "I'm a Hebrew. I worship God, the God of heaven who made sea and land."

KJV 10 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.

NASB 10 Then the men became extremely afraid, and they said to him, "[g]How could you do this?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

RSV 10 Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "What is this that you have done!" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

NET 10 Hearing this,[bd] the men became even more afraid[be] and said to him, "What have you done?" (The men said this because they knew that he was trying to escape[bf] from the Lord, [bg] because he had previously told them.[bh])

NAB 10 Now the men were seized with great fear and said to him, "How could you do such a thing!"—They knew that he was fleeing from the Lord, because he had told them.

NIV 10 This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the Lord, because he had already told them so.)

NJB 10 The sailors were seized with terror at this and said, 'Why ever did you do this?' since they knew that he was trying to escape from Yahweh, because he had told them so.

NCV 10 The men were very afraid, and they asked Jonah, "What terrible thing did you do?" (They knew he was running away from the Lord because he had told them.)

GNB 10 Jonah went on to tell them that he was running away from the Lord. The sailors were terrified, and said to him, "That was an awful thing to do!"[c]

The Message 10 At that, the men were frightened, really frightened, and said, "What on earth have you done!" As Jonah talked, the sailors realized that he was running away from God.

KJV 11 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.

NASB 11 So they said to him, "What should we do to you so that the sea will become calm [h]for us?"—for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy.

RSV 11 Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea grew more and more tempestuous.

NET 11 Because the storm was growing worse and worse,[bi] they said to him, "What should we do to you so that the sea will calm down[bj] for us?"

NAB 11 They asked, "What shall we do with you, that the sea may calm down for us?" For the sea was growing more and more stormy.

NIV 11 The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

NJB 11 They then said, 'What are we to do with you, to make the sea calm down for us?' For the sea was growing rougher and rougher.

NCV 11 Since the wind and the waves of the sea were becoming much stronger, they said to him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

GNB 11 The storm was getting worse all the time, so the sailors asked him, "What should we do to you to stop the storm?"

The Message 11 They said to him, "What are we going to do with you—to get rid of this storm?" By this time the sea was wild, totally out of control.

KJV 12 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.

NASB 12 And he said to them, "Pick me up and hurl me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm [i]for you, because I know that on account of me this great storm has come upon you."

RSV 12 He said to them, "Take me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you."

NET 12 He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea so that the sea will calm down for you,[bk] because I know it's my fault[bl] you are in this severe storm."

NAB 12 Jonah responded, "Pick me up and hurl me into the sea and then the sea will calm down for you. For I know that this great storm has come upon you because of me."

NIV 12 "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you."

NJB 12 He replied, 'Take me and throw me into the sea, and then it will calm down for you. I know it is my fault that this great storm has struck you.'

NCV 12 Jonah said to them, "Pick me up, and throw me into the sea, and then it will calm down. I know it is my fault that this great storm has come on you."

GNB 12 Jonah answered, "Throw me into the sea, and it will calm down. I know it is my fault that you are caught in this violent storm."

The Message 12 Jonah said, "Throw me overboard, into the sea. Then the storm will stop. It's all my fault. I'm the cause of the storm. Get rid of me and you'll get rid of the storm."

KJV 13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

NASB 13 However, the men [j]rowed desperately to return to land, but they could not, because the sea was becoming even stormier against them.

RSV 13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them.

NET 13 Instead, they tried to row[bm] back to land,[bn] but they were not able to do so[bo] because the storm kept growing worse and worse.[bp]

NAB 13 Still the men rowed hard to return to dry land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more stormy.

NIV 13 Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before.

NJB 13 The sailors rowed hard in an effort to reach the shore, but in vain, since the sea was growing rougher and rougher.

NCV 13 Instead, the men tried to row the ship back to the land, but they could not, because the sea was becoming more stormy.

GNB 13 Instead, the sailors tried to get the ship to shore, rowing with all their might. But the storm was becoming worse and worse, and they got nowhere.

The Message 13 But no. The men tried rowing back to shore. They made no headway. The storm only got worse and worse, wild and raging.

KJV 14 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.

NASB 14 Then they cried out to the Lord and said, "We earnestly pray, O Lord, do not let us perish on account of this man's life, and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, Lord, have done as You pleased."

RSV 14 Therefore they cried to the Lord, "We beseech thee, O Lord, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee."

NET 14 So they cried out to the Lord, "Oh, please, Lord, don't let us die on account of this man! Don't hold us guilty of shedding innocent blood.[bq] After all, you, Lord, have done just as you pleased." [br]

NAB 14 Then they cried to the Lord: "Please, O Lord, do not let us perish for taking this man's life; do not charge us with shedding innocent blood, for you, Lord, have accomplished what you desired." [d]

NIV 14 Then they cried out to the Lord, "Please, Lord, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, Lord, have done as you pleased."

NJB 14 So at last they called on Yahweh and said, 'O, Yahweh, do not let us perish for the sake of this man's life, and do not hold us responsible for causing an innocent man's death; for you, Yahweh, have acted as you saw fit.'

NCV 14 So the men cried to the Lord, "Lord, please don't let us die because of this man's life; please don't think we are guilty of killing an innocent person. Lord, you have caused all this to happen; you wanted it this way."

GNB 14 So they cried out to the Lord, "O Lord, we pray, don't punish us with death for taking this man's life! You, O Lord, are responsible for all this; it is your doing."

The Message 14 Then they prayed to God, "O God! Don't let us drown because of this man's life, and don't blame us for his death. You are God. Do what you think is best."

KJV 15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

NASB 15 So they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging.

RSV 15 So they took up Jonah and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging.

NET 15 So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped raging.

NAB 15 Then they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea stopped raging.

NIV 15 Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm.

NJB 15 And taking hold of Jonah they threw him into the sea; and the sea stopped raging.

NCV 15 So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea became calm.

GNB 15 Then they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea, and it calmed down at once.

The Message 15 They took Jonah and threw him overboard. Immediately the sea was quieted down.

KJV 16 Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

NASB 16 Then the men became extremely afraid of the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

RSV 16 Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

NET 16 The men feared the Lord [bs] greatly [bt] and earnestly vowed [bu] to offer lavish sacrifices [bv] to the Lord. [bw]

NAB 16 Seized with great fear of the Lord, the men offered sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

NIV 16 At this the men greatly feared the Lord, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows to him.
NJB 16 At this, the men were seized with dread of Yahweh; they offered a sacrifice to Yahweh and made vows to him.
NCV 16 Then they began to fear the Lord very much; they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made promises to him.
GNB 16 This made the sailors so afraid of the Lord that they offered a sacrifice and promised to serve him.
The Message 16 The sailors were impressed, no longer terrified by the sea, but in awe of God. They worshiped God, offered a sacrifice, and made vows.

KJV 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.
NASB 17 [k]And the Lord designated a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights.
RSV 17 [a] And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
NET 17 The LORD sent a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.
NAB 17 But the LORD sent a great fish to swallow Jonah, and he remained in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
NIV 17 Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.
NJB 2:1 Now Yahweh ordained that a great fish should swallow Jonah; and Jonah remained in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.
NCV 17 The Lord caused a big fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.
GNB 17 At the Lord's command a large fish swallowed Jonah, and he was inside the fish for three days and three nights.
The Message 17 Then God assigned a huge fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the fish's belly three days and nights.

See excel spreadsheet for comparison.

3.2 Determine which of these differences are exegetically significant (i.e., how do these differences affect the meaning?).

- a) Are the differences a matter of the translators using different words (synonyms)?
- b) Are the differences a matter of grammar?
- c) Are the differences stylistic or reflect a theological preference?
- d) Are the differences due to variations in the manuscript evidence (i.e., textual criticism)?
Pay particular attention to marginal notes since they usually refer to matters of textual criticism (differences among Greek and Hebrew manuscripts that have survived).

STEP 4: OVERVIEW OF LITERARY CONTEXT

4.1 Describe the literary character of the document (i.e., identify what kind of literature your passage reflects such as narrative [extended story form], a psalm, law, prophecy, epistle, or apocalypse). Remember, some biblical literature contains mixed forms such as the Book of Revelation, which consists of letters, prophecy, extended narrative, and hymns.

- ✓ If you choose to investigate a **narrative**, determine if your self-contained paragraph is mainly descriptive, a parable, a prophetic or poetic utterance, etc. Does it employ metaphor, overstatement, irony, etc.? (See Duvall and Hayes, chap. 18, "Old Testament Narrative," pp. 355-378).

The book of Jonah includes several literary forms. Chapters 1, 3 and 4 are primarily a narrative while chapter 2 is a Psalm. This narrative style – of mentioning information afterwards – is found in all narrative parts of the Book of Jonah.

The story in Jonah 1, 3 and 4 could have been written as a further explanation of the Psalm of Jonah. In other words: To provide this psalm with a topical explanation – topical that is for the times of the author – he has composed the story of Jonah 1, 3 and 4 around it. In that case the story could be a midrash on the Psalm of Jonah and this psalm could be considered the heart of the book. I'll find some arguments indeed for this point of view, and consequently this may put the question of the literary unity in a quite different light.¹³

The Book of Jonah is not easy to interpret. It's been suggested that it's an allegory, and this is perhaps the most widespread interpretation now (most commentators reject the idea that the events of the book have their roots in historical fact). In the allegorical reading, Jonah the prophet represents the whole of the Jewish people, who were destined to prophesy among other nations.¹⁴

4.2 All literary works have a structure in the mind of the human author. Biblical writers have a purpose in writing that guides their choices, whether to write a letter or produce a narrative or even the very words they use. Cast the interpretive net widely before looking at the individual pieces that make up the message.

- ✓ Give an original, detailed outline of the whole book and note the placement of your text within the outline.

The Book of Jonah can be seen as two parts which carry similar ideas and themes. The first part chapters 1 and 2 and the second part being chapters 3 and 4.

- Each part begins the same way with a call from God, 1:1-2 and 3:1-2, the Word of the Lord came to Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh.
- Each part includes a response from Jonah. Jonah 1:3 and 3:3
- In each part, 1:4-16 and 3:4-10, Jonah encounters people who turn their hearts to his God.
- In each part God confronts Jonah over his poor attitudes, 1:12-17 and 4:1-9.

¹³ A Dove to the Land of War by Peter van 't Riet

¹⁴ <https://interestingliterature.com/2021/06/book-of-jonah-whale-summary-analysis/>

- In each part God shows His compassion, 2:1-9 and 4:10-12.

4.3 Start to make informed observations. Remember, you are not referring to commentaries right now, otherwise, you will become commentary-dependent and not able to bring in fresh insight. You do not want to simply recycle other people's ideas!

- ✓ **(Narrative)** Where does your passage fit into the overall structure of the book? What is the point of the narrative or speech? How is it related to what just went immediately ahead and how does it prepare for what follows? Are there any peculiarities in the narrative or speech? *Be careful of over exegesis and making the section say more than it does. You simply want to gain a perspective of the whole first before working out the details.*

Chapter 1 sets the stage and structure for the overall book. The point of the narrative is God's mercy and compassion for all people. We see this when the sailors ask God to not judge them when they throw Jonah overboard, when God ends the storm. God also shows mercy for Jonah by rescuing him from the sea via a large fish, despite his direct disobedience. Jonah depicts the common element in human nature to do one's own thing rather than follow God's direction. In addition, we see that the Gentiles (the sailors) fear God more than Jonah does. Another theme is that it's impossible to escape God's presence. The chapter reveals the needs for a savior, Jonah's distress inside the fish is beyond his control and he needs God's help. The distress in the sailor's hearts and then Jonah's heart causes them to reach out in prayer to the Lord.

These themes set-up the rest of the story as we see them again in the second half of the book.

Using biblical software, cut and paste the entire text of Jonah **break down your chosen book into pericopes** (self-contained units of thought) giving each a title with their Scriptural references (e.g., *Jonah's Prayer of Contrition*, Jon. 2:1-10).

The Call from God: 1:1-2 - Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me."

Jonah's reaction, running from God brings us down and has a cost 1:3 - But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD.

God creates situations that reveal our hearts 1:4-5 - But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up. Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried out to his god. And they hurled the cargo that was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone down into the inner part of the ship and had lain down and was fast asleep.

Man's reactions to the situation 1:6-10 - So the captain came and said to him, "What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call out to your god! Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we may not perish."

And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know on whose account this evil has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. Then they said to him, "Tell us on whose account this evil has come upon us. What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?"

And he said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." Then the men were exceedingly afraid and said to him, "What is this that you have done!" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

Jonah persists in his selfishness, God's compassion - 1:11-15 Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. He said to them, "Pick me up and hurl me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you, for I know it is because of me that this great tempest has come upon you." Therefore, they called out to the LORD, "O LORD, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not on us innocent blood, for you, O LORD, have done as it pleased you." So, they picked up Jonah and hurled him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging.

The men fear the Lord and make sacrifices - 1:16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

God's faithfulness persists in the circumstances to reach Jonah 1:17 - And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Psalms of Jonah: Acknowledgement 2:1-5 - Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, saying, "I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. 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. Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.' The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head

Psalms of Jonah: Remembrance 2:6 - at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.

Psalms of Jonah: Thanksgiving - Recommitment 2:7-9 - When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love. But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!"

Psalms of Jonah: Deliverance and Salvation 2:10 And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

The Call from God: "Take 2" 3:1-2 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you.

Jonah's reaction: "Take 2" 3:3-4 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

Man's reactions: "Take 2" 3:5-9 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish."

God's mercy and compassion: "Take 2" 3:10 - When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Jonah's response to God's mercy to our enemies says a lot his heart (and us). 4:1-4 - But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. And he prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the LORD said, "Do you do well to be angry?"

God's meets us where we sit in the state, we are in 4:5-6 - Jonah went out of the city and sat to the east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, till he should see what would become of the city. Now the LORD God appointed a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort. So Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the plant.

God does not intend for us to stay sitting in a sulk 4:7-8 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the plant, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint. And he asked that he might die and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

God loves everyone even our enemies 4:9-11 - But God said to Jonah, "Do you do well to be angry for the plant?" And he said, "Yes, I do well to be angry, angry enough to die." And the LORD said, "You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"

STEP 5: DETAILED LITERARY ANALYSIS, STRUCTURE and SYNTAX, ARGUMENT, LANGUAGE FEATURES, GRAMMAR, AND WORD STUDY.

5.1 STRUCTURE, SYNTAX, AND LOGIC OF ARGUMENT.

5.1.1. Analyze the structure of your paragraph by starting with a close reading of sentences (cf. Duvall and Hayes, chap. 4, pp. 37-51.). Try using a “sentence flow” method to help clarify the flow of the human author’s argument or story.

Simple “sentence-flow” method:

- 1) **Look at your passage as comprised of sentences that are made up of a series of phrases (chunks) designed to make sense.** For non-English speakers, this step can be challenging. I suggest you work in both your birth language and English translation. See if awareness of the chunks that comprise your sentences makes sense to you.
- 2) On a pad (or using your tech software) **write out your passage line by line in its smallest sensible units, that is phrases or thought units.** Phrases are a group of words that communicate an idea within the sentence and come together to make the sentence meaningful. Example: “I saw a cat **under my bed.**” If I were to write this out in its smallest units, I would lay it out something like this:
I saw (gives me subject and action)
a cat (gives me the object of what was seen by me)
under my bed (tells me where I saw the cat)

This method will help reveal the structure of the sentence and will suggest good questions for you to try and answer. Do NOT worry if you are doing it right. The point is to begin observing the relationship among the phrases (how they fit together and build on one another). Do NOT become preoccupied with the minutiae of this method. Just start doing this in a way that makes sense to you!

- 3) Now focus on making connections by **playing around with the text.** Use colored highlighters, circles, asterisks, etc. to note the relationships and special features: repeated words or concepts, syntactical relationships (how the words relate to one another as to cause and effect, contrasts, comparison, figures of speech, and organizing structures like lists. See Duvall and Hayes, p. 51 review.)

Example:

For God → the one doing the action, “for” connects with the previous verse to explain why God wasn’t condemning the world right now

So loved → Why “so loved” and not just loved?

The world → the whole world as it is now?

That He gave → He = God, “loved” and “gave” (past act with ongoing results). 2 actions brought together.

His only begotten son → What does “only begotten” mean?

So that → expresses purpose or result? Gives reason.

Whoever **believes in Him** → whoever = anyone

Believes = present ongoing action

“in Him = Son” → object of belief, cannot believe in just anything or anyone

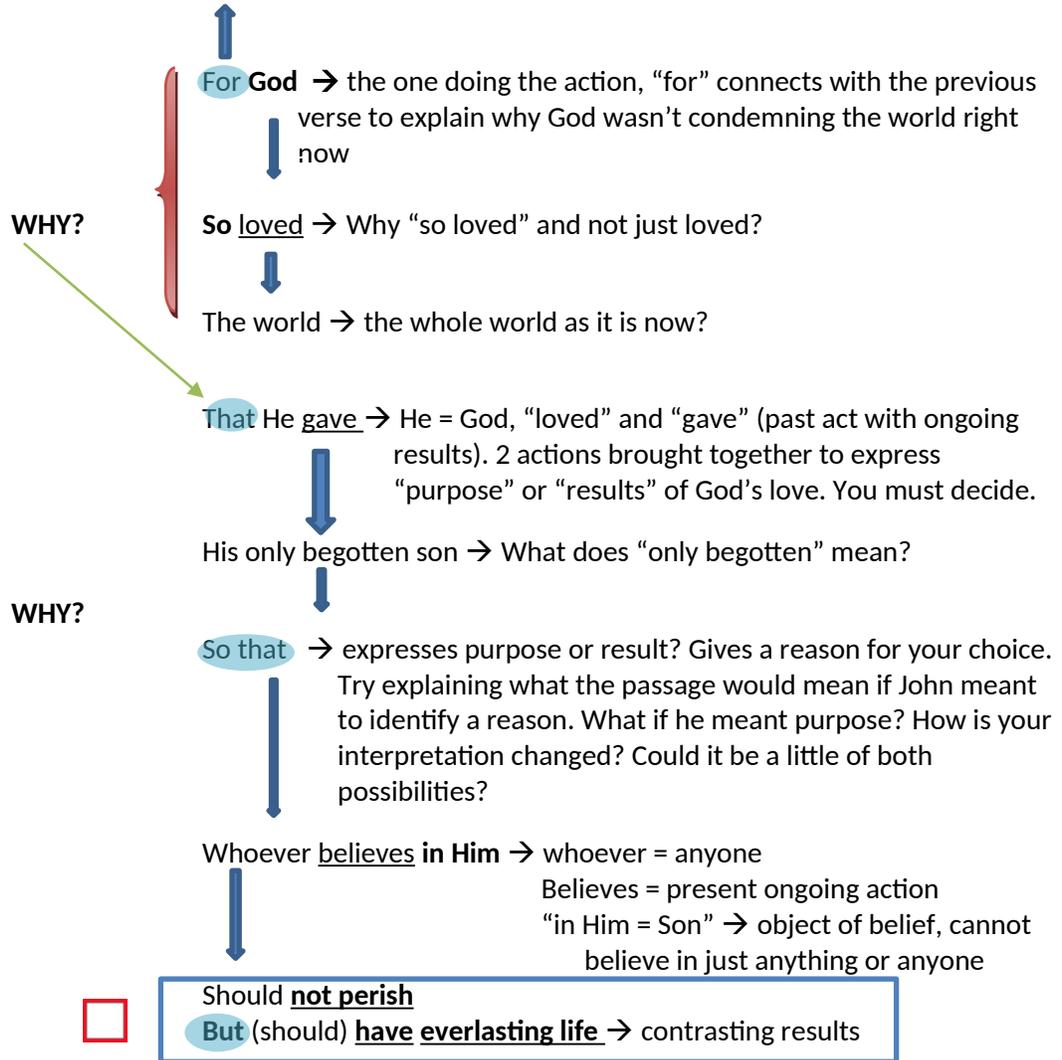
Should not perish

But (should) have everlasting life → contrasting results

- 4) Use arrows to note the flow of the argument to the main idea. Use an asterisk to identify what you think is the main idea.

Example:

Previous verse John 3:15. Your job is to observe the interconnections.



MAIN IDEA (?)

5.1.2 Write a summary of the information you can derive from your structure above. What words, relationships, or other structural indicators are important and why? (See Duvall and Hayes, chap. 4 “How to Read a Paragraph,” pp. 57-80 for further help).

5.1.3 Set out briefly the logic and content of your text (how does the author weigh each step in his argument, etc.) and show the significance of your paragraph in the overall argument/ exhortation/story, etc.? (See Duvall and Hayes, chap. 5, “How to Read the Book—Discourses,” pp. 81-106).

*For OT narratives, analyze your passage within the narrative context (who are the main characters, what are they doing now, how do you know what you know about them, what is being said, what is the role of the narrator, etc.). Are there any persons, places, or names that need further investigation in a Bible dictionary? (See Duvall and Hayes, chap. 16, pp. 355-381).

5.2 RHETORIC. What “rhetorical features” (hyperbole, questions, commands, irony, parable, allegory, allusion, etc.) does your passage display? Rhetoric is a term we use for persuasion. Certain literary techniques will drive home a point you are trying to make. You must determine how any rhetorical features the human author uses to drive home his point. (It helps to remember that these writing were meant to be heard, so they are written for performance. Most people were illiterate and depended on others to read these biblical texts). How do these rhetorical features help with understanding the passage?

5.3 GRAMMAR.

For Advanced or Tech astute Students: (You may wish to use a Bible software program that identifies Greek and Hebrew words and grammar behind the English. Then you can look up the grammatical terms in the helpful resources, *Biblical Hebrew Companion* or *Biblical Greek Companion for Bible Software Users*).

Go verse by verse and identify the conjunctions, subjects, verbs, and direct and indirect objects. Then note their specific grammatical form (e.g., verbs can be different moods and different tenses. The software will identify this form for you). Then ask yourself, what insight does this grammatic form give you (in other words, the author could have chosen to use a present tense that implies ongoing action, but he chose a perfect tense which implies past completed action with results that continue into the present). *This section is best done in the original languages; however, if you compare translations, you will begin to recognize some unusual grammar.*

For all students: Make a chart and identify the parts of speech (conjunctions, subjects, verbs, direct and indirect objects. If you have time, note the adjectives and adverbs that give more description)

5.3.2 List here any difficult or unusual grammatical features of your text

Verse #	Conjunction	Subject (noun or noun clause)	Verb (action)	Direct Object	Indirect Object
---------	-------------	-------------------------------	---------------	---------------	-----------------

5.3.3 Determine which of the grammatical features above are important for you to investigate further and give your reasons why. Make a list and check with a good exegetical commentary to see if they discuss the grammatical feature. You will want to include the most important features for your paper.

5.4 **WORD STUDIES.** (Note well Duvall and Hayes' discussion and warnings regarding word studies, chap. 9, pp. 165-192.)

5.4.1 Note here any words which are crucial to the passage, repeated, figures of speech, or that are unclear, puzzling, or difficult.

5.4.2 For this notebook choose **one of the words** listed in 5.4.1 and determine the possible meanings of the word in the original Greek or Hebrew using The S.T.E.P. program (Scripture for Every Person) available for free at www.stepbible.org.

Begin by identifying the Greek or Hebrew word (Duvall and Hayes, pp. 176-178 show you how to use S.T.E.P. for this task).

5.4.3. Determine how the word is used in different contexts (the rest of the Testament you are working in) and by whom.

Check all the occurrences of the Greek or Hebrew word using the “search for this word” feature in S.T.E.P. (See Duvall and Hayes explanation, pp. 178-180). *This step will take time, but it is essential for faithful interpretation.*

5.4.4 What are the ranges of meanings for this word in the author’s own usage elsewhere? Are any of these usages unique to the OT or NT?

Louw & Nida’s lexicon on semantic ranges of words is quite helpful for NT work. Try using the interactive online lexicon at <https://www.laparola.net/greco/louwnida.php> (Type in the English word and the Greek will pop up. Since you know your Greek word, click on the right one and you will be given a range of possible meanings.)

5.4.5 Which meaning is most likely here and why? (Use the questions suggested by Duvall and Hayes, pp. 181-183 to help you determine the best meaning for your passage).

STEP 6. CULTURAL CONTEXT

6.1 List features of your text that you suspect might be clarified by a greater knowledge of Jewish or Greco-Roman history and culture.

6.2 Choose one of these and, using the bibliography in Duvall and Hayes (pp. 120-134), explore the cultural background a little further and explain how this study may aid in an understanding of the cultural milieu of the author.

6.3 Evaluate the significance of this background data for the understanding of your passage.

STEP 7. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONTEXTS

7.1 How does your passage compare to other passages in Scripture which address similar issues?

7.2 What would be lost or how would the message of the Bible be less complete if your passage did not exist?

7.3 What is the theological importance of your passage?

STEP 8. ACCUMULATE A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES AND READ WIDELY.

8.1 Find a combination of at least 6 commentaries, books, or academic or pastoral journal articles which deal with your passage and read the contributions of other scholars. List the sources here using the correct Turabian style).

8.2 What are some of the most significant differences (presuppositional, theological, hermeneutical, etc.) between your approach and that of some authors you have read?

8.3 State a few places where you will use other scholars' work to SUPPORT your conclusions, indicating some quotations from them worthy of citing in your paper. *"Be careful not to let them dictate what you conclude about the passage. Be critical of your sources and do not be afraid to disagree with commentators. As always, cite your sources so as not to plagiarize,"* (Duvall and Hayes, *Grasping God's Word*, p. 506).

8.4 State a few places where significant differences between you and some scholar(s) demand that you deal with their views in your paper and show why they are wrong. *You need not write your full refutation here.*

8.5 Hypothesize what the passage of Scripture you chose to investigate means. Then write out a well-crafted preliminary thesis statement that either explains how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter or question under discussion, what to expect from the rest of the project/paper, and/or makes a claim that others might dispute. *A thesis statement is an essential part of any graduate project/paper, so you need to identify enough resources to support the claims being made. A thesis is often revised once you have gathered enough supporting evidence to begin your Final Project/Paper. The more quality attention is given here, the better your final project will be.*

Sermons may not use this written thesis, but they should reflect the preparation that went into the sermon and a thesis statement (reflected in the Big Idea) is an important part.

YOU ARE NOW READY TO WRITE/PRODUCE YOUR PROJECT (PAPER, SERMON, ETC.)!