



*Quaker Universalist Voice*

Joana 1–4

Translated for Children

by J.M. Spears

**Chapter 1:**

1. The word of Yahweh came to Joana child of truth\* and faithfulness, saying 2. “Get up. Go to that great city, Nineveh, because their terrible wickedness has come up before me.”
3. Joana got up to run away from Yahweh to Tarshish. After going down to Joffa, Joana found a ship sailing to Tarshish. Joanne paid the fare and went down into the ship to go with them to Tarshish and away from Yahweh.
4. Yahweh hurled a great wind toward the sea. A huge storm was raging on the sea. The ship was about to break up.
5. The sailors were afraid. Each one called on their own god for help. The sailors hurled their equipment and cargo from the ship into the sea to lighten their load. Joana went down as far as possible into the bottom of the ship, lay down and went sound asleep.
6. The captain of the sailors went to Joana and shouted, “What’s with you, sleeper? Get up! Call to your god! Maybe that God will notice us and we will not die.”
7. The sailors said to one another, “Come on. Let’s drop the deciding stones\*. Let’s find out who is to blame for this terrible trouble.” They dropped the stones and the stone fell to Joana. 8. They said to Joana, “Now, speak up! Who is to blame for this terrible trouble? Your business, please? Where are you coming from? What land are you from? Who are your people?”
9. Joana said to them, “I am a Hebrew\*. I fear Yahweh, God of the sky, who made the sea and the dry land.”
10. The sailors were terrified. They said to Joana, “Now look what you have done!” They knew Joana was running away from Yahweh because Joana had told them.
11. Because the sea continued to rage, they asked Joana, “What shall we do to you so that the sea will quiet down?”
12. Joana answered them, “Lift me up and hurl me into the sea. Then the sea will be still. I know that it is because of me that this storm is raging over you.
13. Instead, the sailors rowed hard to get back to dry land. They were not able to reach dry land because the sea continued to rage over them. 14. So they cried to Yahweh, “Please, Yahweh, oh please, don’t let us die because of this person. Don’t blame us for killing an innocent person. You, Yahweh, have done what you wanted to do.”

15. They lifted Joana up and hurled Joana to the sea. The sea stood still from its raging. 16. The sailors were terrified of Yahweh. They gave offerings and made promises to Yahweh.

### **Chapter 2:**

1. Yahweh assigned a fish to swallow Joana. Joana was inside the fish three days and three nights....

11. Yahweh spoke to the fish and the fish vomited Joana onto the dry land.

### **Chapter 3:**

1. The word of Yahweh came to Joana for the second time, saying, 2. "Get up. Go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it whatever I tell you." 3. Joana got up and went to Nineveh just as Yahweh said.

Even to the gods, Nineveh was a big city. It was so big that it took three days to walk across it.

4. Joana began to enter the city. On the first day of walking, Joana cried out, "After forty days, Nineveh will be wiped out!"

5. The people of Nineveh trusted God and declared a fast\* for everyone from the oldest to the youngest. They all dressed in sack cloth\*.

6. The word reached the king of Nineveh. He got up from his throne. He took the royal robes from upon himself. He covered himself with sack cloth. He sat in dust. 7. He called out, declaring throughout Nineveh, "The king and his high officers decree that the people and cattle, the herds and the flocks will not taste anything. They will not eat food nor drink water. 8. People and animals will cover themselves with sack cloth. They will call loudly to God and turn away from the violence that is in the hands of each one.

9. Who knows? God may feel sorry, turn back, and have pity. God may turn from burning anger and we will not perish."

10. God saw that they turned back from their terrible and wicked way. God felt sorry about the terrible punishment that had been planned for them. And God did not do it.

### **Chapter 4:**

1. For Joana, that was terrible! Joana was very angry. 2. Joana prayed to Yahweh, "Listen here Yahweh, isn't that what I said while I was still on my own home ground? That is why I hurried to run away to Tarshish, because I knew that 'You are a mighty God. You are gracious and merciful\*', having motherly love. You are slow to anger. You are abounding in loyalty. And you are one who turns away from sending terrible punishment.' 3. So now, Yahweh, please take my life away from me, for death is better than life for me."

4. Yahweh asked, "Is it doing any good for you to be angry?"

5. Joana went out east of the city and built a shelter there. Joana stayed under the shelter in the shade waiting to see what would happen in the city.

6. Yahweh God assigned a plant that grew up over Joana to be a protection over Joana's head and to be a shade from terrible discomfort. Joana was overjoyed by the plant.

7. God assigned a worm to go up at dawn the next morning and strike the plant. The plant withered and dried up.

8. When the sun was coming up, God assigned a hot, dry east wind and the sun to strike upon the head of Joana who became faint. Joana asked to die, saying, "Death is better than life for me."

9. God asked Joana, "Is it doing any good for you to be angry because of the plant?"

Joana replied, "It is good for me to be angry enough to die!"

10. Then Yahweh asked, "You care for the plant for which you have not worked, nor have you made it grow. It came to be in one night and died in one night. 11.

Am I not to care for Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between right and left, and many animals too?"