

A Time to Laugh

Humor in the Bible





**Where's the
humor?**

Humor in Hebrew Scriptures

PUNS



How does the man on the moon cut his hair?

'Eclipse it!

Genesis 2:7

...then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Adam = man

Adamah = ground

Amos 8:1-4

[the Lord God] said, “Amos, what do you see?”
And I said, “A basket of summer fruit.” Then the
Lord said to me, “The end has come upon my
people Israel; I will spare them no longer.

The songs of the temple shall become wailings on
that day,” says the Lord God;

“the dead bodies shall be many,
cast out in every place.”

Kytis = summer fruit

Kets = the end

Gen 18:20-33

Abraham and God debate
about the destruction of
Sodom & Gomorrah

Num 11:4-33

The Hebrews complain to
Moses about the food.

Jonah

Humor as Parody

Parody

Of the Prophets' Call

Isaiah 6:5

And I said, “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”

Jeremiah 1:6

Then I said, “Ah, Lord God!
Truly I do not know how to
speak, for I am only a boy.”

Jonah 1:3

But Jonah set out 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 his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

Parody

Of the Prophecy itself

Hosea 4:1-2

Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel,
for the Lord has an indictment against the inhabitants of the
land.

There is no faithfulness or loyalty
and no knowledge of God in the land.

Swearing, lying, and murder,
and stealing and adultery break out;
bloodshed follows bloodshed.

Amos 1:9-10

Thus says the Lord:

For three transgressions of Tyre,

and for four, I will not revoke the punishment,

because they delivered entire communities over to Edom

and did not remember the covenant of kinship.

So I will send a fire on the wall of Tyre,

and it shall devour its strongholds.

Jonah 1:3

Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

Parody

Of the Prophets' dispair

Jeremiah 20:7,14 & 18

O Lord, you have enticed me, and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me, and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone
mocks me.

Cursed be the day on which I was born!

Why did I come forth from the womb to see toil and
sorrow and spend my days in shame?

Elijah 19:4

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors."

Jonah 4:1-3

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

Psalm 2

⁴He who sits in the heavens
laughs;

the Lord has them in
derision.