WHY ME? UNDERSTANDING SUFFERING?

Background

We learned in Shmuz #81 that HASHEM sent Yonah to tell Nineveh to do *teshuva* because HASHEM wanted people to be the ones to exile the Jewish nation. Since the people of Nineveh themselves were so wicked that they deserved to be destroyed, HASHEM asked Yonah to go there and tell them to do *teshuva* so that they could survive and carry out HASHEM's plan of being the people who would exile the Jewish nation.

Yonah understood this and said, "I can't be a part of the exile of my people." He risked his life, stood up to HASHEM, and was willing to part with his World to Come, rather than violate his principle of helping his people and not hurting them.

Questions

We are dealing with an extremely principled, idealistic individual, one who was willing to die death for his beliefs. He saw miracle after miracle — and didn't change his mind. He lived through life-threatening, harrowing events — and didn't change his mind. He was swallowed alive by a living creature — and didn't change his mind. How is it possible that such a principled man could suddenly change because it was "uncomfortable" inside the female fish?

ספר יונה פרק ב

א) וַיְמַן יְדֹוָד דָּג גָּדוֹל לִבְלֹעַ אֶת יוֹנָה וַיְהִי יוֹנָה בִּמְעֵי הַדָּג שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה לֵילוֹת

ב) וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל יוֹנָה אֶל יְדֹוָד אֱלֹהָיו מִמְּעֵי הַדָּגָה

HASHEM made a (male) fish appear to swallow up Yonah. And Yonah was in the midst of this fish for three days and three nights. And Yonah prayed to HASHEM from the midst of the (female) fish.

רש"י יונה פרק ב פסוק א

א) דג גדול - זכר היה והיה עומד ברויח ולא נתן לב להתפלל רמז הקב"ה לדג והקיאו לתוך פיה של נקבה שהיתה מלאה עוברי' והיה שם בדוחק ויתפלל שם שנאמר ממעי הדגה

A large fish: It was originally a male fish, and Yonah stayed within it in comfort and didn't pay attention to pray to HASHEM. So HASHEM made the male fish spit Yonah into the mouth of a female fish. Since the female fish was filled with embryos, Yonah was now in discomfort, so he prayed.