

# Jonah 1:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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"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." Casting lots was common ancient practice for discerning divine will. Proverbs 16:33 states: "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD." God sovereignly controlled the lots to identify Jonah. This demonstrates God's providential control over seemingly random events. There are no accidents in God's universe—He governs all things, even lot-casting, to accomplish His purposes (Ephesians 1:11). The sailors' method was pagan, but God used it to reveal truth. This teaches that God can communicate through various means, though Scripture is His primary and authoritative revelation.

## Historical Context

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Lots involved objects (stones, sticks, dice) cast or drawn to determine outcomes. Israel used Urim and Thummim (priestly lots—Exodus 28:30, Numbers 27:21) and cast lots to divide Canaan (Joshua 18:10), choose Saul (1 Samuel 10:20-21), and select Matthias (Acts 1:26). The New Testament church stopped this practice after Pentecost—the Spirit's indwelling provides direct guidance. The sailors' lots functioned as God intended, proving His sovereignty transcends human methods.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does God's sovereignty over "random" events shape understanding of providence?
2. What role do circumstances play in discerning God's will, and how do we avoid superstition?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמְרוּ	אֵל	רֵעֵהוּ	לָכֹ	וַיִּפֹּל	הַגּוֹךְ ל
And they said	every one	to his fellow		and let us cast	and the lot
H559	H376	H413 H7453	H1980	H5307	H1486
וְנִדְעָה	בְּשִׁלְמִי	הַרְעָה	הִזְאת	לָנוּ	וַיִּפֹּל
that we may know	for whose cause	this evil			and let us cast
H3045	H7945	H7451	H2063	H0	H5307
הַגּוֹךְ ל	וַיִּפֹּל	הַגּוֹךְ ל	עַל	יוֹנָה:	
and the lot	and let us cast	and the lot		upon Jonah	
H1486	H5307	H1486	H5921	H3124	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Proverbs 16:33** (Parallel theme): The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.

**Joshua 7:10** (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?

**Numbers 32:23** (Parallel theme): But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.

**Acts 13:19** (Parallel theme): And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

**Psalms 22:18** (Parallel theme): They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

**Matthew 27:35** (Parallel theme): And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

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