

Jonah 2:1-10

Jonah 2:1-10 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly. (2) And he said: "I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, and He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice. (3) For You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the floods surrounded me; all Your billows and Your waves passed over me. (4) Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.' (5) The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; the deep closed around me; weeds were wrapped around my head. (6) I went down to the moorings of the mountains; the earth with its bars closed behind me forever; yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God. (7) When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD; and my prayer went up to You, into Your holy temple. (8) Those who regard worthless idols forsake their own Mercy. (9) But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD." (10) So the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Questions On The Text

What did Jonah do in the fish's belly?

Verse 1-2: Jonah prayed to Yahweh. Even though he was disobedient, he understood that God is merciful and might still be compassionate towards him. His prayer is full of confidence in Yahweh as he bemoans his self-inflicted predicament and yet affirms that even there God hears him.

What was Jonah's confidence?

Verses 3-4: Jonah was in the depths of the Mediterranean and yet protected from drowning by God's provision of a great fish. But in all this, he was confident that he would once more see the holy temple.

What was the prophet's experience?

Verses 5-6: Since in Jonah 1:13 the sailors attempted to row to shore, it is likely that at the time of throwing Johan overboard, they weren't too great a distance from land so that the seabed may not have been too far below. Nevertheless, the prophet is in the process of drowning and sinks to the bottom, his head getting tangled in seaweed. The language used indicates how certain he is that he is about to die. Yet Yahweh intervenes and spares his life.

How did Jonah deal with despair?

Verse 7: When all seemed lost, Jonah remembered Yahweh and turned to Him in prayer. it would have been easy to give up altogether, but no doubt God Himself intervened by reminding the prophet of His presence.

What conclusion did the prophet come to?

Verses 8-9: Jonah concluded that salvation belongs to Yahweh. It is pointless to have faith in worthless idols (including modern ones like money, leisure or entertainment) because they are powerless to save. The person who puts their trust in such things forsakes their own mercy. The word translated "mercy" means "lovingkindness, steadfast love, mercy" and describes Yahweh's covenant love for His people. The person involved in idolatry forsakes that covenant love.

How did Jonah get out of the fish?

Verse 10: He was vomited onto dry land. Ironically, the prophet went to a lot of trouble and expense to escape from Palestine and avoid doing God's will. Now he finds himself back where he started minus a considerable sum of money and a large part of his dignity. Nonetheless, he has gained in faith, has a new willingness for

obedience to God's will, and has a greater understanding of God's mercy and power since he has experienced both.

Further Questions For Discussion:

How quickly do you turn to God in prayer during tough times?

Why do you think Jonah was able to be confident in God even though he was being disobedient?

What sorts of idols do people put their trust in today? How can you ensure that you don't have any idols?

Why did God cause the fish to deposit Jonah on the land in such an undignified manner?

Have you been through an experience where God has taken you through a trial because of your own disobedience?