

# **Jonah: The Praying Prophet**

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## I. Prayer.

A. Is it any coincidence that the area of your spiritual life that gets shot down in flames the most is your prayer life?

B. Satan does not want you to pray, but he does not mind if you study God's word without prayer or get overly involved with the church without prayer.

C. Learn to pray by studying the prayers in the Bible.

## II. Overview of Jonah 2.

A. Jonah 2:1 – the setting.

B. Jonah 2:2-9 – the substance.

1. Confession

2. Praise

3. Repentance

C. Jonah 2:10 – the sequel.

## III. The setting. (Jonah 2:1)

A. Jonah prays to the Lord from the stomach of the fish.

B. Three questions about the setting:

1. Could this really happen? Is there a fish large enough to swallow a man? The issue is not the size of the fish, but the size of its throat. In the Mediterranean, the sperm whale has an expandable throat that can swallow items as long as sixteen feet.

2. Could a man survive in a fish for three days? The Encyclopedia Britannica issued a paper that chronicled a number of people who were swallowed by fish and survive.

3. The major question is whether there is a big enough God. The size of your God determines the size of your faith. When God says it, the believing heart accepts it.

C. Jonah was desperate after three days in the fish. There was no one else he could turn to except for God.

D. God brings us to the bottom so that we will be completely dependent on Him.

E. Count it all joy when you are tested because your faith is being made complete. (James 1:2-4)

IV. The substance of Jonah's prayer. (Jonah 2:2-9)

- A. Jonah confesses his sins – not the sins of someone else.
- B. He is very honest, very realistic, and very specific.
- C. Jonah's confession has been called the I John 1:9 of the Old Testament. Jonah is agreeing with God that he has sinned.
- D. It is our responsibility to take the initiative whether we have been wronged or we have wronged someone else.
- E. Jonah recognizes that God cast him into the deep and that the sailors were simply instruments to get His message across to Jonah.
- F. Our sovereign God uses a number of means to accomplish His will.
- G. Jonah praises God for saving his life from the pit.
- H. Try to pray for five minutes without asking God for anything. Most of us simply come to God with requests.
- I. When you are feeling down, begin praising God.
- J. Jonah repents in 2:9. Repentance means to change your mind and behavior. Repentance requires a 180-degree turn in direction.

V. The sequel. (Jonah 2:10)

- A. The chapter closes with the sequel in which the fish spews Jonah back onto the land.

VI. The power of prayer.

- A. Where prayer focuses, power falls thereon.
- B. The early church prays for Peter's release from prison and is then shocked when Peter is at the door. We don't understand the full power of prayer. (Acts 12:2-5, 12-16)
- C. We have not because we ask not. (James 4:2-3)