

POWER HOUR

11/3/2024

Lesson Text:
Jonah 2:1-10

Background Scripture:
1 Kings 8:27-30 & Isaiah 45:20-22

Devotional Reading:
Psalms 39:7-13; 88:3-9

“JONAH REPENTS”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: *As my life was slipping away, I remembered the Lord. And my earnest prayer went out to you in your holy Temple. Jonah 2:7 NLT*

Time: 780 B.C.

Place: Mediterranean Sea

Jonah 2:1-10 NLT

1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from inside the fish. **2** He said, “I cried out to the Lord in my great trouble, and he answered me. I called to you from the land of the dead, and Lord, you heard me! **3** You threw me into the ocean depths, and I sank down to the heart of the sea. The mighty waters engulfed me; I was buried beneath your wild and stormy waves. **4** Then I said, ‘O Lord, you have driven me from your presence. Yet I will look once more toward your holy Temple.’ **5** “I sank beneath the waves, and the waters closed over me. Seaweed wrapped itself around my head. **6** I sank down to the very roots of the mountains. I was imprisoned in the earth, whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O Lord my God, snatched me from the jaws of death! **7** As my life was slipping away, I remembered the Lord. And my earnest prayer went out to you in your holy Temple. **8** Those who worship false gods turn their backs on all God’s mercies. **9** But I will offer sacrifices to you with songs of praise, and I will fulfill all my vows. For my salvation comes from the Lord alone.” **10** Then the Lord ordered the fish to spit Jonah out onto the beach.

INTRODUCTION

There have likely been times when you doubted that God could hear you. You may have been so overwhelmed and burdened by darkness and depression that you struggled to cry out to God in prayer. You may have struggled to find any glimmer of

hope or some lesson that God was teaching you so that perhaps you could see that your trial was for a purpose.

The prophet Jonah had a similar experience. He spent three days and three nights in the dark, smelly stomach of a fish. His only resort was to cry out to God for mercy. The Lord responded by protecting Jonah and watching over him until He eventually ordered the fish to vomit the prophet onto dry land. As we examine Jonah's prayer and ultimate deliverance, we will better understand our God and His sovereignty over nature and life's circumstances.

1. Jonah's repentance (Jonah 2:1-2a). God disciplined His wayward prophet in love by putting him in the belly of a great fish for three days and three nights. God's purpose in discipline was to bring Jonah to a place of obedience.

While Jonah was in the great fish, God protected him both physically and spiritually. He protected him spiritually by keeping Jonah from becoming bitter toward Him and suffering the consequences for it.

We are not told a lot about Jonah's repentance, but we know he did repent. First, Jonah prayed. "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me"(Jonah 2:2) The way Jonah introduces his prayer indicates that he probably did not pray during the events of chapter 1. His prayer here shows a change of heart. Second, Jonah changed his thinking and was willing to go to Nineveh after the great fish spit him out on dry land. In love, God had preserved the life and ministry of His prophet even while disciplining him.

2. Jonah's prayer (Jonah 2:2b-9). Jonah's prayer recounts the Lord's physical and spiritual protection. Jonah used many phrases and statements to describe his location and physical sufferings: "belly of hell," "the deep," "the midst of the seas," "they billows and thy waves passed over me," "I am cast out of thy sight," "the depth closed me round about," "the weeds were wrapped about my head," "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains," "the earth with her bars was about me forever," and "brought up my life from corruption" (Jonah 2:2-7).

All these expressions are ways of saying that Jonah suffered great physical affliction while in the sea and the fish. Some of these expressions have led a few commentators to think Jonah died but Jonah's prayer from the belly of the fish seems to indicate otherwise (Jonah 2:1)

While under God's discipline, Jonah also enjoyed God's spiritual protection, God kept Jonah from bitterness and turned his heart back to Him. We see this change of heart in the expressions he used; "I remembered the Lord," "My prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple," "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving," "I will pay that that I have vowed," "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:7, 9).

Though Jonah would later display some of his original sinful thinking (Jonah 4), God had changed his heart and protected him from further disobedience.

3. Jonah's deliverance (Jonah 2:10). This chapter concludes with Jonah describing what God did for him: "The Lord spake unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land" (Jonah 2:10). After Jonah had spent three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, God spoke to the fish (showing His control over His creation), and the fish vomited Jonah onto dry land. Jonah was now ready to do what God had commissioned him to do.

In love, God disciplined Jonah for his disobedience, protected him, and readied him to complete his assignment.

POINTS TO PONDER

1. God's grace is evident as He helps us through the consequences of disobedience (Jonah 2:1).
2. There is no place too distant and no trouble so severe that our prayers cannot reach the ears of God (Jonah 2:2).
3. Believers benefit from God's discipline as they acknowledge their guilt and submit to God (Jonah 2:3).
4. God's ultimate goal in discipline is to bring our hearts back to Him (Jonah 2:4-6).
5. When life is difficult, we should reach out to God, who always hears us (Jonah 2:4).
6. As you go through difficulties, remember that God has already prepared your deliverance (Jonah 2:8-10).

CONCLUSION

We all should be thankful for the Lord's protection of us physically. Many of us can recount times when His intervention spared us from danger and harm. Let us think more about God's spiritual protection. What are the sources of spiritual danger in our lives?

What means does the Lord use to protect us from spiritual dangers? Let us thank the Lord for His spiritual protection every day, especially when we are more vulnerable during times of discipline. Let us avail ourselves of God's means of protection when we face spiritual dangers.

QUESTION(S)

- What makes it unusual that this is the first time we read of Jonah praying?
- What had Jonah been doing that was about to change?
- What was this prayer of Jonah about, and what was it not about?
- In what ways did Jonah describe the surroundings he was in?
- Who did Jonah say had put him in the sea and in his present situation?
- How did Jonah express hope for the future?
- What were some of the things Jonah described that he was experiencing during his ordeal?
- How did things change when Jonah started remembering God?
- What did Jonah mean by "lying vanities," and what was his opinion of the (Jonah 2:8)?
- What did Jonah decide to do, and how did God respond to him?

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is "*Nineveh Repents*" We shall continue the theme of God's love in the book of Jonah by noting His great love for the lost people of Nineveh.

Lesson Text: *Jonah 3:1-10*

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