

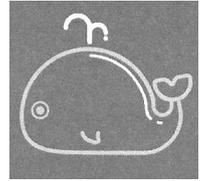


Jonah

October 2023

Jonah 2 Grace Experienced

(sermons: Oct 1)



Introduction

This chapter is the turning-point in the story of Jonah. If we didn't know what happens, we might expect Jonah being thrown overboard to be the end of him. Instead, it leads to a time of prayer and reflection for Jonah, who is then ready to listen to God – to some extent. God's mercy is shown in providing the large fish, protecting Jonah both from the sea and from his rebellion, and restoring him to new life and service.

Jonah 1:17-2:1 Inside the Fish

1. God rescued Jonah from the immediate danger of drowning but made him wait in an unfamiliar place before returning him to land? Why did Jonah need this time of waiting?
Have we ever experienced times of waiting? Have they been difficult times? How has God used them to prepare us for the next stage in our lives?

Jonah 2: 2-9 Jonah's Prayer

- v.2 deep in the realm of the dead – Sheol, the place where spirits were thought to go after leaving the body; the Old Testament picture of life beyond death is incomplete. It was sometime seen as the place from which no-one could escape but God shows Jonah that his rule extends to death itself. In a way this prefigures Jesus' descent into death and victory over it in his resurrection.*
- v.9 Salvation comes from the LORD – Jonah now realizes that God is the source of all grace and can show his mercy as he decides; he has shown grace to Jonah, who must now be prepared for God to show grace even to Nineveh, and for Jonah himself to be ready to play his part.*
2. For what does Jonah thank God in this prayer? What dangers had he faced, physical and spiritual? What had he learnt from his experience? How was Jonah prepared to change as a result?
 3. Can we look back on times of physical or spiritual danger and see how God has rescued us? What brought us to turn to God in prayer? Is it sometimes hard to admit that we need God's help? Do we stop to thank God? Do we take time to reflect on these experiences?

Jonah 2: 10 God Restores Jonah

4. How did Jesus compare himself to Jonah in *Matthew 12:38-41* ?
What lessons did he draw from the story of Jonah?

Matthew 12:38-41

³⁸ Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him (*Jesus*), 'Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.'

³⁹ He answered, 'A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here.'