

- A. Jonah expresses concern for idolators **[Jonah 2:8]**
 - 1. Those who worship idols cannot be considered worshipers of God **[2 Kings 17:33-36]**
 - 2. To worship God and anything else is to forsake God altogether **[Isaiah 45:5-7]**
 - 3. The steadfast love of God is experienced by those who are committed to Yahweh because He preserves them for Himself **[Lamentations 3:22-23; Romans 8:23-39]**
- B. Jonah responds to God's grace and mercy and love with praise and obedience **[Jonah 2:9]**
- C. Jonah attributes his salvation to God **[2 Timothy 1:8-10; Titus 3:4-7]**

JONAH 1:17-2:10

And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying,

"I called out to the Lord, out of my distress,

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 flood surrounded me;

all your waves and your billows

passed over me.

4 Then I said, 'I am driven away

from your sight;

yet I shall again look

upon your holy temple.'

5 The waters closed in over me to take my life;

the deep surrounded me;

weeds were wrapped about my head

6 at the roots of the mountains.

I went down to the land

whose bars closed upon me forever;

yet you brought up my life from the pit,

O Lord my God.

7 When my life was fainting away,

I remembered the Lord,

and my prayer came to you,

into your holy temple.

8 Those who pay regard to vain idols

forsake their hope of steadfast love.

9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving

will sacrifice to you;

what I have vowed I will pay.

Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

10 And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it

vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

SERMON REFLECTIONS

1. What did Jesus say about the book of Jonah? Have you been reading and thinking about the book of Jonah the same way Jesus did?
2. God "appointed" a great fish to swallow Jonah (**Jonah 1:17**). Why is it important to remember that Jonah being swallowed by a fish was a providential act of God?
3. How did Jonah react to being swallowed by the great fish? What can we learn from Jonah in regards to prayer?
4. How had God been gracious to Jonah in sending the great fish? Have you ever had an experience where it was difficult to recognize the grace of God?
5. How does the judgment of God actually display His love for us? Where has God shown this to us most clearly?



Jonah

WEEK 3

**GOD'S ACT OF
PROVIDENTIAL MERCY**

JONAH 1:17–2:10

READING THE STORY

Making observations is the first step in becoming familiar with a passage and to help understand what is being said. In a notebook (or separate piece of paper), make the following observations about this passage...

- List any **People/Places**—
- List any important **verbs** (actions), **repeated words/phrases**, or other **theological/special terms**—

OBSERVATIONS

- 1 As you read through chapter 2, what other books or passages from the Bible come to mind?
- 2 Make a note of the directional language and word pictures that Jonah uses. How do they help us understand the story of Jonah better?
- 3 In what verse or verses do you begin to see Jonah's tone of speech, and potentially his heart, change?

SUMMARY SENTENCE

In your own words, summarize this passage in 1–2 sentences—

JONAH'S WORLD

Great Fish [2:1, 10] This is a general term for a large aquatic beast, while it could mean a whale, we don't know for sure. But don't let the fish distract you or hold your imagination too long. He is not the subject of Jonah 1:17, Yahweh is.

Sheol [2:2] This term is used many times in the Old Testament, speaking of a place of darkness and death. A place of separation from God, but not out of His grasp or remembrance.

Your Holy Temple [2:4, 7] The temple is where Yahweh's presence is known. It's the very place where God met with man. It is in the temple where the mercy seat resides, where sacrifices for sins were offered, and God's forgiving grace is extended **[Exod. 25:22]**. Jonah is turning his eyes from a place that symbolizes separation from God to where God resides. His holy temple.

God's Providence: God's wise and purposeful sovereignty. While not explicitly stated, God's providential hand is displayed and referred to throughout this passage from the Lord appointing the great fish to the fish vomiting Jonah up and every verse in between.

WORLDS COLLIDE

SALVATION BELONGS TO THE LORD

It's always easier to see God's sovereign hand when we have the privilege of looking back over a situation, a season, or even a lifetime. We can, in hindsight, see the way God has guided, disciplined, and protected us. But it is not always as easy to see His workings when we are in the middle of our day to day lives. Sometimes it takes a big, life-altering event to shift our focus, to help us recognize that God is the living sovereign over the world. When we have experienced one of these events, or sit with all the unknowns, we are reminded of how little we control. It's not God that changed, just our awareness of His sovereignty.

Recognizing God's will and control is not repeating the platitude "Let go and let God" every time we come up against something we can't change. It's humbly acknowledging that all things, the good and the bad, come from the Lord. Just like Jonah did when he recognized that while the sailors were the ones to send him overboard, it was Yahweh that "cast me into the deep." Are we willing to receive with thankfulness, both the blessing and suffering, trusting God's providential hand when we don't understand what He is doing?

God's will for our lives is to make us more like His son (and our savior) Jesus Christ. When our desires begin to align with His, we begin to see the events happening around us and in us differently—our perspective in struggles, disorder, and discipline changes. We know we can trust Him when things around us seem chaotic because we know our Savior paid the highest price to reconcile us to God. So, amid trial or discipline, we can confidently say "Salvation belongs to Yahweh," knowing that whatever is happening around us, we have seen His salvation in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

GOING TO NINEVEH

Jonah's prayer gives us a beautiful view of a man, aware of his sin and its consequences, praising Yahweh for the gift of salvation. Take some time this week to write a prayer to the Lord, acknowledging His providential hand and salvation in your life.

RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 1 In what ways are you like Jonah when it comes to acknowledging God's sovereignty? Do you wait until you are in distress, or feel like life is out of control?

JONAH 1:17-2:10 *GOD'S ACT OF PROVIDENTIAL MERCY*

RESPONDING QUESTIONS

- 2 In what ways can our trust in the providential/sovereign, saving hand of God equip us to love and serve our community?