

## **Jonah 2: 1-10 How to deal with Times of Distress**

There are 4 chapters and a total of 48 verses in this book. According to II Kings 14: 25, Jonah was the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gat-he-pher and during the reign of Jeroboam II. This book has been under attack by liberals who simply cannot believe it's content. But, this Book is literally and historically true. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself has confirmed the events of this book!

*Matt 12:39-41 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*

It is not a myth, a fairytale. It is not some made up story, allegory or parable, but, it is true! God said it and that settles it whether you believe it or not. Stick with the Bible, let science and education catch up later.

This is an inspired, infallible, indestructible book!

*Matt 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*

I don't correct it, challenge it, change it or delete it. If God said a whale swallowed Jonah, I would believe it because God does not lie!

Jonah in our text was in a time of distress. **DISTRESS:** Extreme pain; anguish of body or mind; misery; A state of danger.

We have all been there at times in our lives, when we just want to scream and pull our hair out!

### **Vs. 1-2, Jonah is in distress begging and CRYING out to God**

Lord hear me! Lord fix this situation! Get me out of this place, this thing, help me out of this predicament! You can almost hear him crying out, God, I'm in trouble. I've got to have you. I've got to have your help or I will perish!

Christian, can I say this, God isn't confined to a church, or a building. Anywhere you are God can and will hear you.

*Ps 139:1-8 O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. 2 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. 3 Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. 5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. 7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? 8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.*

Lifeguards ears are tuned-in to voices in distress amongst the waves crashing, people laughing, and music playing.

Just like moms being in tune with the cries of their children, our Heavenly Father is in tune to our pleas for help. I'm glad he hears our cries!

### **Vs. 3-5, Jonah brings his CAUSE to the Lord.**

We should know as Jonah did that the only way out of the tough situations that we find ourselves in is through the power, the presence and the person of God.

*Matt 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

*Jer 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

LORD... I NEED YOUR HELP!

Jonah's prayer was brief and to the point. Some of the greatest prayers recorded in the Bible for help, and for salvation were brief and to the point.

1. The Pharisee and the Publican: *Luke 18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*
2. Peter walking on the water *Matt 14:30 ...was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.*
3. How about the thief on the cross? *Luke 23:42-43 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

Jonah's prayer was full of intent, not... "good food, good meat, it's late, lets eat!" or "God bless us four and no more."

He wasn't saying, "Hail Mary's" or the "Our father."

*Ps 40:1-3 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.*

### **Vs. 6-8, Jonah's CONFESSION.**

Jonah was at the point the death and corruption. But the Lord healed him and raised him up again.

When we confess, He will hear us, help us, and heal whatever is wrong in our lives.

*1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

The Lord will save you from corruption and destruction!

I remember after getting saved as a nineteen-year-old young man, going to bed, lying my head down on my pillow, hearing or sensing God saying to me, everything is going to be OK now!

We are all unworthy of His attention, His love, His mercy in our lives.

I think of an esteemed Scottish minister named George Matheson, who was reminded at his sisters wedding of the rejection and the great disappointment he had experienced just before he was to marry his college fiancée. George Matheson was going blind. When told of his impending total blindness, she is said to have informed him, "I do not wish to be the wife of a blind preacher. I love you, but I will have to let you go!"

When reminded of this again at his sisters wedding, he penned the words of a song entitled, "Oh love that will not let me go." I'm glad today, that God doesn't say, "I love you, but I will have to let you go" to you and me!

### **Vs. 9-10, Jonah's CONFIDENCE.**

He is still in the belly of that whale, when this is spoken! It is easy to shout and praise God when your have those mountain top experiences in your life. But how about praising Him when you get a flat tire, or the toilet backs up and overflows?

Our God helps, and heals and gives us hope!

There are some people in this church, that I weep, cry, fast and pray for... but I can't help or heal them. Only God can!

Years ago, I was hurt bad. My heart was broken. I didn't want to go to church, much less pastor one. I didn't want to preach anymore. I wanted only to be left alone on a deserted island, with my wife. I called a travel agency and found one that would suffice. During this time, I met a young married man in his twenties, Alexander, who invited me to his church.

I went to his Spanish church, where I heard the hymns of the faith sung in a different language. I saw people singing with joy and gladness, with smiles on their faces, who really wanted to be there and weren't just playing church. I heard testimonies of how God was moving and working in their lives. For the next several days, I saw men, with a holy zeal and a desire to win people to Christ come to my room and ask me to lay my hands upon them and pray for them.

These men would tell you today, if they were here that I was an encouragement to them, but the fact of the matter was, they were a great encouragement to me as they knocked on my door each morning introducing me to someone they had led to Christ the previous day and asking me to pray with them and for them. They were as the Balm of Gilead to me! (Jer. 46:11)

There is a God who can hear you, who can help you and who will heal you and give you hope!  
Are you in a fix? Are you in a predicament that seems hopeless? Trust Him, look to Him and believe Him at His Word.

Heavenly Father, in times of distress may we Cry out and bring our Causes to you. May we Confess our sins to you and have the Confidence in your Word that you will hear, help, heal, and give us hope. Move us to be obedient children today.

**Invitation Song: pg. #356 "I Must Tell Jesus"**