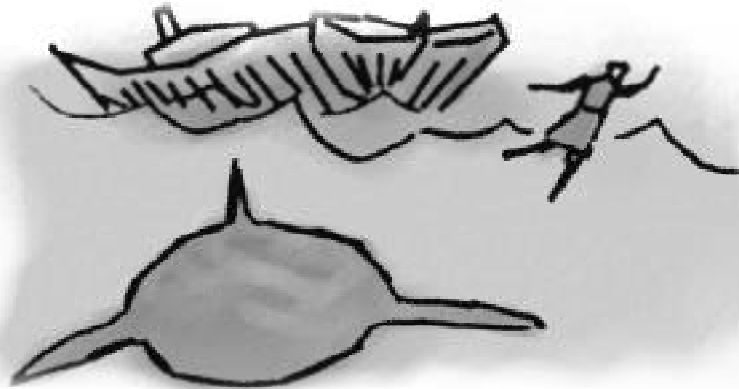


# Salvation Is of the Lord



**SAB  
PM**

**THE DRAMA CONTINUES TO BUILD IN JONAH 1.** A prophet tries to avoid his mission. But he finds himself facing death in a storm. Yet in all this trouble, it is the heathen<sup>1</sup> sailors, not the prophet Jonah, who pray to God:

“So they [the sailors] cried out to the Lord, ‘O Lord, we pray, don’t [do not] punish us with death for taking this man’s [Jonah’s] life! You, O Lord, are responsible for all this; it is your [the Lord’s] doing’ ” (Jonah 1:14, TEV).

How odd: Non-Israelites<sup>2</sup> standing face-to-face with a disobedient<sup>3</sup> prophet of God. They pray that they will not receive guilt through his (the prophet’s) death. We do not often see in the Bible heathen people praying to God while one of God’s servants is silent. The heathen people were doing what Jonah should have been doing all along.

The sailors pray to God with the special covenant<sup>4</sup> name God gave to Israel. They accepted Jonah’s testimony<sup>5</sup> in Jonah 1:9. They might be acting under pressure. But sometimes pressure is a good way to get someone’s attention.

Let us follow the story to see what happens next.

**THE WEEK AT A GLANCE: What did the sailors do after the storm ended? What finally caused Jonah to pray? What did Jonah pray for? What does this story teach us about the uselessness<sup>6</sup> of having religion without good works? What does this story teach about God’s grace for people whose good works do not equal their profession<sup>7</sup> of faith in God?**

<sup>1</sup>heathen—not believing in God.

<sup>2</sup>non-Israelites—people who are not from Israel.

<sup>3</sup>disobedient—not obeying.

<sup>4</sup>covenant—a covenant is an agreement between God and His people. His covenant name is Yahweh.

<sup>5</sup>testimony—a statement about your belief in God.

<sup>6</sup>uselessness—having no use.

<sup>7</sup>profession—to say you believe in God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “But I [Jonah] will sing praises to you [God]; I will offer you a sacrifice and do what I have promised. Salvation comes from the Lord” (Jonah 2:9, TEV).

\*Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, November 8.

## **SUN THE FEAR<sup>8</sup> OF THE LORD.**

Last week, we left Jonah telling the sailors to throw him out of the ship to save themselves. The frightened sailors did what Jonah told them to do. Only then “the sea ceased [stopped] from her raging [boiling]” (Jonah 1:15). Again, we find the God who created the sea clearly in control of the sea.



**How did the sailors feel after the storm stopped? Jonah 1:15, 16.**

The sailors did not think that the storm just happened to stop. They knew God stopped the storm. Earlier, the sailors feared (were afraid of) the storm. But now they feared the God of the storm

more than they feared the storm. Experienced sailors who earlier worshiped many false gods came to worship the true God and to make vows (promises) to Him. They learned that He is the One who created and controls the sea.

**The sailors honored God, because God saved the sailors through a miracle. How does this show the plan of salvation through the life and ministry (work) of Jesus? Read, for example, John 9.**

We are saved from death by Jesus. As a result, we worship and obey Him. That is what happened with these sailors. Honoring God, worshiping Him, and obeying Him never can save us. Honoring God, worshiping Him, and obeying Him are the results of being saved. They come from the miracle of salvation. And salvation is ours by faith alone. Read Galatians 2:19, 20.

**In Jonah 1:9, Jonah, the Hebrew prophet, claims to “fear the Lord.” But he does not act as if he fears the Lord. The sailors, too, claimed to “fear the Lord.” But they acted as if they feared the Lord. The sailors did not know as much about the Lord as**

<sup>8</sup>fear—to fear God is to worship and serve Him. Read Monday’s lesson for Lesson 5.

**Jonah did. What does this tell us about the difference knowledge of the Lord can make in a person's life?**

### **MON** IN THE BELLY (STOMACH) OF THE FISH.

**“Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights” (Jonah 1:17).**



All the sailors expect that Jonah has drowned. They think he is a victim of the storm. However, we again see God's complete control over nature. We already have seen God causing the great wind of a storm (Jonah 1:4); controlling the lots (Jonah 1:7); and then suddenly causing the storm to stop (Jonah 1:15).

**How is God's power as Ruler shown next? Jonah 1:17.**

A man being swallowed alive and living for three full days in the belly of a fish is a wonderful event<sup>9</sup> in any historical period. But the Bible does not try to explain how a fish could swallow a person or how a person could live inside a fish. The author treats this story as true, because he knows God could make these things happen.

The Bible says God “had prepared” (KJV) a great fish to swallow up Jonah. This verse could also be translated “had appointed [chosen]” a fish. The Hebrew word points to God's rule over His creation to serve His purpose. The author will use this same word with God's commands three more times in the book of Jonah to focus on God's power. Read Jonah 4:6-8.

**What word describes what the fish did to Jonah? Jonah 1:17.**

The words “to swallow” appear in different forms in the Old Testament (Psalm 21:9; Psalm 35:25 [KJV]; Jeremiah 51:34). The words are often used to explain Israel's captivity.<sup>10</sup> They are words sometimes used to describe God's judgment<sup>11</sup> upon His people. See how well the words fit what happened to Jonah. So many of God's judgments upon His people were nothing more than ways to turn them away from evil. The judgments showed God's plans to save His people. God must have wanted to

<sup>9</sup>event—something that happens.

<sup>10</sup>captivity—when the Babylonian army took Israel as prisoners to Babylon.

<sup>11</sup>judgment—to declare guilty or not guilty of sin.

save Jonah too. If God had not wanted to save Jonah, the fish would have chewed Jonah up instead of swallowing him whole.

**Think about some of the miracles in the Bible. What do these miracles tell us about God's power? What kind of hope do these miracles give us?**

## **TUE** JONAH'S UNDERSEA PRAYER.

**How long did Jonah survive in his new way of traveling the Mediterranean Sea? Jonah 1:17.**

**Where else in the Old Testament do we find the time period of three days? 1 Samuel 30:11, 12; 2 Kings 20:4, 5, 8; Hosea 6:2.**

**Note how the time period of three days is also shown in the New Testament. Matthew 12:39, 40; Luke 11:30.**

Jesus said that Jonah's miraculous rescue from death was a sign of His own death and resurrection.<sup>12</sup> Hosea spoke about a general time period when Jonah's experience would still be talked about. He took the timing of Jonah's experience and put it within Jesus' resurrection (Hosea 6:2). Jesus compared<sup>13</sup> His death and resurrection to Jonah's

experience inside the fish. Jesus is connecting His death and resurrection to something in the Old Testament we already understand.

Jonah could not have known at first that a fish had swallowed him. It took some time for Jonah to understand that total blackness was not that of *Sheol* (Jonah 2:2, KJV). *Sheol* is the Hebrew word for the "grave." But when Jonah understood that he was alive, he accepted this as God's promise that he would be rescued.

**What does Jonah finally do? Jonah 2:1.**

Jonah's prayer puts into words how he felt as he was drowning. He describes his feelings as he was close to death. His prayer also describes his experience and thoughts within the "great fish." He borrows many words from the book of Psalms as he prays. Many Christians use words from the book of Psalms. Even today, Christians often take parts of their prayers from the different psalms. We also use the psalms for the opening and closing prayers of church worship services.

**Why do we so often wait to pray until we are in trouble or have a problem? God is *always* there for us! Perhaps if Jonah had prayed all the time, he would have saved himself from all these troubles.**

<sup>12</sup>resurrection—being raised back to life from the dead.

<sup>13</sup>compared—to have shown how things are the same.

## **WED** THE EARTH AND ITS BARS (PRISON).

**Read Jonah 2:2-9. These verses are Jonah's prayer in the belly (stomach) of the fish. Write a summary of what you think is the message of his prayer.**

Compare the beginning of Jonah's prayer to Psalm 18:6 and Psalm 120:1. Some experts think of Jonah's prayer as a psalm of thanksgiving to God for rescuing him from a terrible situation.

A fish swallowed Jonah alive. But Jonah praises God for rescuing him and for God's salvation. Once Jonah understood what had happened, he must have seen God's hand and known that God was going to save him. Jonah rebelled against God. He tried to run away from God. But God was not finished with Jonah. God was still going to give him another chance.

**What difference do you find between Jonah 2:4 and Jonah 1:3, 4.**

**Jonah's prayer began with a helpless<sup>14</sup> cry to God. How does his prayer end? Jonah 2:9.**

Many people think Jonah 2:9 is the main point of the book of Jonah. Jonah

praises God's saving mercy.<sup>15</sup> In Jonah 1:9 Jonah announces his plan to do what the heathen sailors had already done!

Jonah 1 and 2 end with the theme of sacrifice and vows (promises). Jonah 1 and 2 contrast<sup>16</sup> Jonah's experience with the experience of the sailors. Jonah and the sailors faced danger. Jonah and the sailors cried to Yahweh (God) and admitted He was Ruler of the world and nature. Both Jonah and the sailors were physically saved. Both Jonah and the sailors worshiped God. Jonah comes at last to the point the sailors already had reached. But it took a bit more encouragement from God to get him there.

**What we see in the story of Jonah is an example of God's mercy to people who do not deserve His mercy. In what ways have you experienced mercy from God or other people? How have you shown mercy to other people?**

## **THU** PRAYING WHEN YOU ARE IN GREAT DANGER.

Jonah ended his prayer by saying "Salvation is of the Lord" (KJV). The Hebrew word for "salvation" means both physical salvation and salvation from sin. (The word for "salvation" comes from the same root letters that make up the name Jesus.)

<sup>14</sup>helpless—without help.

<sup>15</sup>mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

<sup>16</sup>contrast—show how things are different.

Jonah had rebelled against God, even though he believed in God. For Jonah to say that salvation comes from God means nothing in and of itself. Jonah is one of the best examples of what it means to have faith without works (James 2:18-20). But God was still willing to work with Jonah.

**What other examples can you find in the Bible of faith without works?**

**Compare Jonah's prayer to David's prayer in Psalm 51.**

Jonah's prayer teaches us that we can pray when we fail. We can still pray when disobeying<sup>17</sup> God has caused problems. This is a very important lesson to learn. When we fail and when our sins cause problems, we feel we have no right to pray. Even if we wanted to pray, we feel we surely do not deserve God's help. We really do not deserve God's help. But the meaning of grace is getting something we do not deserve.

**“When Satan comes to tell you that you are a great sinner, look up to your Savior, and talk about what He has done for us. Looking to Jesus will help you. Admit your sin. But tell Satan that ‘Christ Jesus<sup>18</sup>**

**came into the world to save sinners and that you may be saved by His limitless<sup>19</sup> love.’ 1 Timothy 1:15.”**  
—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ (Jesus)*, pp. 35, 36. **Make this wonderful promise your own. You are sure to need it.**



**Look to Jesus, and tell other people what He has done for you.**

**FRI** **ADDITIONAL STUDY:** Read Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, “Bible Biographies,”<sup>20</sup> vol. 4, pp. 9–15; *Steps to Christ (Jesus)*, “The Privilege<sup>21</sup> of Prayer,” pp. 93–104.

<sup>17</sup>disobeying—not obeying.

<sup>18</sup>Christ Jesus—another name for Jesus.

<sup>19</sup>limitless—having no limit.

<sup>20</sup>biographies—stories about the lives of other people.

<sup>21</sup>privilege—a special benefit. Prayer is a special benefit we have as Christians.

“After you have confessed<sup>22</sup> your sins, believe that the promise of God cannot fail. Believe also that He is faithful to His promises. Your duty is to confess your sins, and to believe that God will keep His promise to forgive your sins. You must show faith in God that He will do exactly as He has promised in the Bible, and forgive all your sins.”  
—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *This Day With God*, p. 89.



**Believe that God’s promises cannot fail.**

“Are you a person who makes mistakes? Go to Jesus, and ask Him to forgive you, and then believe that He does forgive you. If we confess our sins, He [Jesus] is faithful and just [fair] to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from unrighteousness<sup>23</sup> (1 John 1:9). Ask God to forgive your errors. Then be happy in Him.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look*, p. 132.

“It will not help you to keep on being sad about your weaknesses. Say, ‘Lord, I cast [throw] my helpless soul on You, and You alone. I will not worry, because You have said, “Ask and you shall receive.” Believe that you do receive. Believe that your Savior is full of love and mercy. Do not let your mistakes trouble you. Small mistakes may be planned by God to save you from making larger mistakes.’”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look*, p. 132.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What would you say to someone who does not believe the Jonah story because they cannot believe a human could survive inside a fish for three days?
2. Two times in Jonah’s prayer he talks about the temple (Jonah 2:4, 7). Why would Jonah think about the temple during this time of trouble? (Think of what the temple symbolizes. This will help you with your answer.) What do Jonah’s words suggest about the temple?

**SUMMARY:** Swallowed alive by a big fish, Jonah was being forced to learn the hard way what he should have known a long time earlier. He learns the lesson that faith without works is dead.

<sup>22</sup>confessed—admitted to God that you have sinned.

<sup>23</sup>unrighteousness—not being holy.