



The Power of God's Redeeming Discipline

May 14, 2017

Jonah 2:1-10

"But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, 'Salvation comes from the LORD'" (Jonah 2:9).

When Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, he felt banished from God's sight, but God was in the process of saving Jonah by leading him to change his life, return to faith, and begin serving Him once again as He commanded. In the fish, Jonah felt so low that he compared his experience to being at the very bars of the pit (Sheol, Hades, or Hell). But Jonah prayed to the LORD, and the LORD saved him. God raised Jonah from near death and the eternal destruction that Jonah knew he deserved for having rebelled against God. Therefore, Jonah could not help but respond with shouts of grateful praise to God. No one should be surprised that Jonah promised to make sacrifices and fulfill his vows to God. He began by sacrificing his comfort, prophetic prestige, and reputation in Israel by travelling immediately to Nineveh to preach the word of God to those known to God, Israel, and Jonah for their wickedness. He went to Nineveh to preach God's judgment upon the city for their evil behavior, but as he told them his experiences he could not help but add the truth: "Salvation comes from the LORD." God can work everything out for good, and Jonah's near death experience in the great fish prepared him to preach convincingly to the Ninevites. Using Jonah's success, Jesus warned: "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" (Matthew 12:41).

Thinking Further

1. If you had been Jonah, when would you have started praying to the LORD and when would you have stopped praying about your experiences inside the fish?

2. If you had been Jonah, what vows to the LORD would you have made?

3. How might Jonah's three days and three nights in the belly of the fish have expanded his knowledge of the true God?

4. Remembering what you have learned about Jonah's experiences so far, when did Jonah have opportunities to repent for running away from doing God's will? When do you think he should have repented?

5. In what verses did Jonah say he prayed toward the LORD's holy temple? From those verses, what might have prompted Jonah to pray toward the LORD's holy temple? Why do you think he mentioned these prayers with the added fact that he had prayed toward the LORD's holy temple?

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