

Desperate Prayers from a Desperate Place

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Discussion Questions

- 1) What do you think Jonah was doing in the fish for three days and nights? Why do you think he was in there for that length of time?
- 2) As well as symbolising life, water is often seen as being like trouble or death in the Bible. Can you think of any verses which illustrate this? (Hint: Psalm 69:1).
- 3) Read Jonah 1:3. Jonah says that God threw Jonah overboard, using the sailors to do it. What does this tell us about the nature of God?
- 4) Can you think of any examples in the Bible where people were in a desperate place and prayed desperate prayers? (Hint 1 Samuel 1).
- 5) Read this quote from Leonard Ravenhill, an English evangelist: *God doesn't answer prayer. He answers desperate prayer! Your prayer life denotes how much you depend on your own ability, and how much you really believe in your heart when you sing, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling...." The more self-confidence you have, the less you pray. The less self-confidence you have, the more you have to pray.* Why do you think God tends to answer such desperate prayers? Why do they have such freedom and power?
- 6) Jonah 'remembered' God, indicating that he had forgotten Him. Read Psalm 77:11. What did God do to ensure the Israelites remembered Him? What did Jesus do? What are some of the 'wonders of old' that God has done in your life? Do you often recall them?
- 7) What revelation did Jonah receive in his prayer? (Hint: verses 8-9). Why is this such a tough message for our Western society to hear today?
- 8) When was Jesus in a desperate place? How did God answer His prayers? (Hint: Luke 22:39-46).
- 9) What might help you to remember the Lord when you are in a desperate place?