

Jonah 2.1-10: The Prayer of Jonah
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Jonah 2.1-10: Jonah has run in his free will, and God has got him in a corner out of God's disciplining love for Jonah's good. **And so Jonah cries out to God in prayer. He should have prayed about it in 1.2!**

So we are looking at the prayer of Jonah (**but not v8-10**). I want to encourage us to be praying because **we should pray without ceasing (1 Th 5), not only when things go wrong.**

Prayer is a way that we walk with God. We were made to know and walk with God (Gen 3.8). God created us to know, love and walk with Him. Adam hid from God out of fear and shame at his sin. And our sin continues to separate ourselves from God. Like with Jonah, and often the only time we ever return to God is when we have totally exhausted all our options.

It's ironic that our sin pushes us away from the only one that can save us!!

But in **1 Peter 3.17:** '**he might bring us back to God**'. We are going to look at Jonah's prayer and see what we can apply.

1. Who did Jonah pray to? "the Lord his God?" (Verse 1)

This is Jehovah. Not their God. This is the transcendent God! It was said to be so sacred the Jews never even used it fully, and only used abbreviations. This is the pre existent one, the one who is before us, a god who has revealed himself, not one we have made up! The one who is all together not like us! Who you gonna call out? **A greek God** with all their weaknesses? This one, that one?! Not a cosmic deity of hope. Not a sowing reaping God, not a God to pacify.

He reveals himself as a **Father** to the fatherless. **Abba. Prodigal! When you are in the depths, you don't call out to a God you must earn his favour.**

Personal - It's our God. This is his personal prayer. It's HIS God. Applied to his life.

2. He prays the scriptures

What's not immediately obvious is that he prays the scriptures. **It's a composition of Psalms.**

Praying through scripture is good because we get God's heart and **we pray his will.** **John 15.7:** 'If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will ...'

When we pray scripture we are dwelling on God's character! This is powerful! **Repentance is adjusting our thinking, prayer realigns our hearts. Like when you pray for something and then stop praying for it!**

Example of Psalms 102:

Just because he is praying scripture, **doesn't mean he's religious.** In fact he's brutally honest!

3. His prayer is brutally honest (vs 1-7)

We come honest, not pious. **Luke 18.10: Pharisee and tax collector.**

Hannah, Habakkuk and David's hardship in the Psalms: (4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 22)

Why should our prayers be so honest? 1) God knows anyway, 2) He desires truth in our inward parts, 3) He's not overly impressed by us 4) He loves turning weakness into strength!

“The gospel, God’s free gift of grace in Jesus, only works when we realize we don’t have it all together. The same is true for prayer. The very thing we are allergic to, our helplessness, is what makes prayer work. It works because we are helpless. We can’t do it on our own.” Paul Miller

“When my life was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, **and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple**’. It doesn’t matter how bad your situation, it’s never too late to remember! Remember Manasseh! (2 Chron 33)

Even when it seems your life is fainting, call out to the Lord! It’s not too late! He hears it!

4. Answered me, “yet you brought my life up from the pit”

God hears our prayers. He is a Father. Luke 18.7: “will not God give justice to His elect, who cry out to Him day and night?” **The mother who hears her children at night.**

‘out of the pit’ The miraculous answer from God. Dungeon to throne. Ps 40 King David, Joseph!

This morning I dare you to make big bold requests of God. Come to him as a son or daughter.

Concluding Comments:

It’s remarkable to see the upwards trajectory of his prayer. He starts down, in despair, but by the end of it, he is delighting in God. This is what true prayer does. It lifts our eyes, and we end off:

- a) Giving thanks to God
- b) Declaring Him Good
- c) Committing ourselves and making vows to Him