



21 DAYS OF PRAYER

09

DAY 09

JANUARY 17, 2023

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KEY SCRIPTURES

Jonah 2:1-2 (NLT)

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from inside the fish. ²He said, “I cried out to the LORD in my great trouble, and he answered me. I called to you from the land of the dead, and LORD, you heard me!
Jonah 2:1-2 (NLT)

The runaway prophet’s desperate prayer reminds us of the God who loves to rescue. Jonah’s prayer is in fact a compilation of various Psalms, like the ones that King David penned when he experienced life-threatening situations and cried out to God for help.

This is the same God who is willing to save and rescue not only individuals but whole nations... just like the one Jonah had been sent to. However, Jonah had been unwilling to travel to Assyria, Israel’s sworn enemy. Later in chapter 4:2 we find out that the prophet knew that God’s posture has always been to show compassion towards anyone who repents... anyone... regardless of how Jonah felt towards his despised “Ninevites.”

Jonah was blinded by his own self-righteousness. As one notable pastor wrote, “Unless Jonah can see his own sin, and see himself as living wholly by the mercy of God, he will never understand how God can be merciful to evil people and still be just and faithful.” (Tim Keller, *The Prodigal Prophet*).

Jesus saw himself as a greater Jonah (Matthew 12:40-41). For three days and three nights he too was found in the “land of the dead.” Unlike the former prophet, Jesus was characterized by his obedience to God to the point of death. He willingly embodied God’s message of forgiveness on the cross so that his “enemies” could be reconciled back to God (Romans 5:10).

Jonah prayed (v. 6) “... I was imprisoned in the earth, whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O LORD my God, snatched me from the jaws of death!” Jesus would not remain buried in a tomb, but God would raise him up, verifying all he had said and done. Through Jesus we too can experience God’s love fully and extend it to those around us.

