

Study Guide | Jonah 2

I. Bible Study

1. Consider these passages: Psalm 32:6, Psalm 42:7, Psalm 88:7, and Isaiah 43:1-2. Why all this water imagery?

What other Bible stories involve deliverance in/through/around water?

In what ways might baptism correspond to this theme?

2. In what sense did God cast Jonah into the deep (v. 3)? Didn't the sailors do that?
3. What's a "billow" (v. 3)? How might this little detail authenticate Jonah's account?
4. Jonah warns against turning to idols in times of distress (v. 8). Consider Habakkuk 1:11, 1 Samuel 15:23, and Colossians 3:5. In view of these passages, how might we define "idolatry"? What might it look like to turn to this kind of idolatry in times of distress?
5. Verse 8 speaks of the hope of God's "steadfast love." Look this phrase up in other translations. How else is "steadfast love" translated? What does this concept say about our God and about our hope?

II. Application

(Pick a couple questions to consider and answer.)

6. We might say that Jonah was stuck in a three-day “holding pattern.” Have you ever found yourself in a holding pattern? How does God use those times? Can you think of any other examples in the Bible where God intentionally, mercifully puts someone in a holding pattern?
7. Why does it take storms to get our attention? What is it about us that needs a storm? Why do we often forget the Lord in times of abundance and peace? How do we set the Lord before us in any season of life?
8. Why does distress drive some people *to* God and others *away from God*? What’s the key difference? How do we ensure in our own lives that distress drives us *to* God?
9. What trial(s), in hindsight, do you now thank God for? How did the Lord use it in your life?
10. One writer defines an idol like this: “It is anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.”¹ By this definition, is there any idol in your own distress that you are tempted to call upon/look to more often than to God?
11. Try to make five applications to your life from this truth:

If “Salvation belongs to the Lord,” then...
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If “Salvation belongs to the Lord,” then...
If “Salvation belongs to the Lord,” then...
(Examples: Then I know he can deliver me from this problem; Then I can stop worrying about ____.)

¹ Keller, 2009. *Counterfeit Gods*. p. xvii.