

# OVERBOARD

Sermon-Based Study Guide  
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Jonah 2 | February 2, 2020

Prepared by Rev. Curtis A. Bronzan  
curtis@gspc.org | 562/493.2553 x115

## I. Introduction to this Study

We continue in our study of Jonah, a series we're calling Overboard. If we're honest, we've all felt like running from God, like everything was going better for everyone else, or like life had tossed us overboard.

We pick up the story this week with Jonah, God's beloved, the "dove of truth," in the belly of the fish at rock bottom – quite literally!

## II. Connecting with One Another

Have you ever felt like life had "swallowed you up"? What happened?

How did you respond? Did God teach you anything in particular during that season?

## III. Study the Text

- a. Before engaging Jonah 2, reread **Jonah 1**. How do you read this first chapter differently after the past four weeks of engaging it in sermon and study?

How would you summarize this first chapter in just one sentence to someone who's never heard the story before?

Where do you sympathize with Jonah? Why?

- b. Read **Jonah 2.1-10**.

In Jonah 1.6, the captain of boat pleaded with Jonah to pray, but we're never told that he did so. In Jonah 2, he finally does.

Remember, Jonah's profession is prophecy! Why do you think it took so long for him to pray to God? Why doesn't he pray until now?

- c. How do you pray when you're in trouble?

What stands out to you about Jonah's prayer?

- d. While we might expect a psalm of lament or a prayer for deliverance, Jonah's prayer is one of thanksgiving. Why do you think that is?

- e. In **Jonah 2.4**, he prays, "I have been banished from your sight."

Is that what happened?

Can you recall a time when you felt far from God? Did he abandon you? Or, perhaps, did you avoid him?

- f. Jonah's prayer seems to have been inspired by a number of Psalms (see Digging Deeper for examples).



If he was indeed inspired by the Psalms, what does that tell us about Jonah's prayer life? Is it "okay" that these Psalms inspired his prayer? Why or why not?

Are there any Scriptures that inspire your prayer life? If so, which ones?

- g. In **Jonah 2.7**, the prodigal prophet "remembers the Lord" as he feels he is nearing death. What aspect of God do you think he recalled? Why?
- h. Jonah declares in **2.9**, "Salvation comes from the Lord."  
Has he done so previously in the story? Considering his original commission in 1.1-2, what should saying this look like as the story continues?  
Do you think this experience will change him? Why or why not?
- i. Let's jump ahead little bit. Read **Jonah 4.2**, after the Ninevites repent.  
How is Jonah's response to grace different when someone else is its recipient?  
Why do you think that is?
- j. After God speaks to the fish in **2.10**, it spits Jonah onto dry land. How does the fish respond to God's word? How does that compare with Jonah?  
Where are you on a continuum between the fish and Jonah?

#### IV. Pray

- a. Reflect on the times you have felt caught "in the belly of a fish" and ask God to help you see His providence within those seasons (recall **Jonah 1.17** and **Romans 8.28**),
- b. Thank God for His salvation, freely given through Jesus, who spent three days in the belly of the earth, for you (see **Matthew 12.38-42**),
- c. Lift up those you know who are in a difficult season, praying that God's grace and peace would meet them in a powerful way.

#### V. Digging Deeper

- a. In my distress I called to the Lord – **Psalm 18.6; 30.2; 34.4; 120.1**  
From deep in the realm of the dead – **Psalm 18.4-5, 16**  
All your waves and breakers swept over me – **Psalm 42.7**  
I will look again toward your holy temple – **Psalm 5.7**  
The engulfing waters threatened me – **Psalm 69.1-2, 14-15**  
But you, Lord my God, brought my life up from the pit – **Psalm 30.3; 86.13**  
When my life was ebbing away – **Psalm 142.3**  
I will say, 'Salvation comes from the Lord' – **Psalm 3.8**
- b. Read **Psalm 77.11-15** and **143.5-6**. Why is it important to remember what God has done in the past? How are you encouraged by remembering how He has provided for you?
- c. Read **Joshua 4.1-7**. What is the purpose of the stones? Have you done anything specific to remind yourself of God's provision and faithfulness?

