



Saved by a Fish?

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“In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help, and you listened to my cry. You hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, ‘I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit. “When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. “Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God’s love for them. But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the LORD.’” Jonah 2:2-9

God uses surprising things to save us. Have you noticed that? When a shepherd boy named David had to fight against a giant named Goliath, God used a stone and a sling to give David the victory. Not a sword. A stone and a sling! God uses surprising things to save us.

Like a big fish. The prophet Jonah wasn’t facing a giant. He was facing a huge storm on a big sea. Jonah had been thrown from his ship and was sinking down, down, down into the waves. He was sure he was going to die, until God saved him. With what? A big fish! That fish swallowed Jonah, but he didn’t die. Jonah lived inside that big fish’s belly for three days and three nights. Jonah was saved by a fish! All of that led Jonah to say, “Salvation comes from the Lord” (Jonah 2:9).

Here’s the most surprising part: Do you know why Jonah was sailing across the sea in the first place? He was running away from God. Is that a good idea? No! God had told Jonah to do something he didn’t want to do. Instead of listening to God, Jonah ran away from God. That’s how Jonah got in trouble. He had sinned against God. He didn’t deserve to be saved.

But God still sent that big fish to rescue Jonah. Why? Because God still loved him, even though he didn’t deserve it. God forgave Jonah, even though he didn’t deserve it. God used those three days and three nights in the belly of a fish to save Jonah’s life.

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Just like God used three days and three nights in something else to save you. Someone else spent three days and three nights in a dark place. Do you know who? Jesus did! After he died on the cross for our sins, Jesus was in the dark tomb for three days and three nights. Just like God used that big fish to save Jonah, God used Jesus' death and resurrection to save us.

God uses surprising things to save us, doesn't he? Like a fish. Like a tomb. Thank you, Jesus!

Questions to Consider

- What surprising creature did God use to save Jonah's life?
- How long did Jonah spend inside that creature?
- Why was Jonah running away from God?
- Give an example of how you have tried to run away from God in your life too.
- Look up Matthew 12:40. How did Jesus compare himself with Jonah?
- In addition to Jonah's fish and Jesus' tomb, describe another surprising thing that God has used to save his people.