

READING PLAN WEEK 6 for **The Epic of Eden – Jonah**

Word from the Author: “We are still in chapter 2 of Jonah. As the chapter opens, let me emphasize that getting swallowed by this oceanic creature is not some sort of further punishment directed at Jonah for disobedience. The great fish is not the villain here. Rather, the great fish is Jonah’s deliverance. This is clear from the fact that Jonah responds to being swallowed with a hymn of praise! Jonah’s testimony of that deliverance is going to be a major focus of this week’s study.”

Day #1: Read Jonah 2:2-9 and Psalm 18:1-6. As a prophet of Israel, this ancient Psalm may have been quite familiar to Jonah. Do you feel his own “psalm” here in chapter 2 echoes that which may have long dwelt in his heart? Make a comparison of all Jonah’s quotations or near-quotations of Psalm 18:1-6. Does Jonah’s disposition in the midst of the peril of the great fish surprise you? **Read Philippians 4:4-6.** Scripture often directs us to unexpected responses. For example, we are told to respond to stress with prayer, to find hope in despair, to let “peace that passes understanding” be in our hearts and minds at all times. In this chapter of Jonah, we see that encouragement is not only a New Testament concept, but an attribute of all who are in the care of God.

Day #2: Today we are going to compare several of the passages from Jonah’s psalm to echoes from other Psalms. Compare any number of the following with an eye to the personal aspect of the relationship between each psalmist and his God:

Jonah	Psalm	Jonah	Psalm
2:2a	120:1	2:5a	69:1-2
2:2b	30:3	2:6b	103:4
2:3a	88:6-7	2:7a	142:3
2:3b	42:7	2:8a	31:6
2:4a	31:22a	2:9a	50:14
2:4b	5:7	2:9c	3:8

Day #3: Read Jonah 3:1-3 and Acts 9:10-20. Consider these two examples of what we might call “do-overs” in the life of those who were sent by God. First, consider the reasons both men described (Jonah and Ananias) didn’t want to go where God directed them. Were they legitimate on the face of it? Do you see anything in either passage that communicates the men repented or God forgave their resistance? How does each “second chance” play out?

This week’s reflection question: *What we learn of these stories is that sometimes God’s call doesn’t appear to make sense. But in each case God had spoken and each of the men were expected to respond. After their initial responses, what they needed was a do-over. And God gave them one. Do you need a do-over today? Did you say no when you should have said yes? Or did you say yes when you should have said no? Either way, this God we are talking about is, indeed, a God of second chances. Failure is only the first chapter, not the last.*

