

Jonah's Prayer by Rev. Martin Doering

When I was in trouble, I called out to the LORD. And he answered me. When I was deep in the place of the dead, I called out for help. And you listened to my cry. —Jonah 2:2 NIV

Michael was talking with Susan about the Bible story of Jonah. "I can't imagine a fish so big it could swallow a man!" said Michael. "Are you sure that's what the Bible says?" "Yep, that's what it says," answered Susan. "I like the story. God will do whatever it takes to keep us safe. That's what I learn from the story." But Michael still had questions. "What did Jonah do for three days inside a fish?" "The Bible says Jonah prayed to God," Susan said. "If you were in that situation, you would be praying too, wouldn't you?" **(Reread the Bible verse.)**

- Have you ever been in trouble or really scared?
- If so, did you ask anyone for help? Did they help you?
- Have you ever helped anyone who was in trouble or really scared?
- If so, did you pray together?

Michael admitted, "Sometimes I cry when I feel lonely or afraid or really stressed out. If I had to be inside a big fish for that long, I'd wonder if I was going to die." "I'm sure that's what Jonah was feeling," Susan replied. "I'm so thankful I can pray to God wherever I am and however I am feeling."

When Jonah's life was in danger, he prayed to God...and prayed to God and prayed to God! Jonah prayed for three days and three nights! God heard Jonah, even when no one else could hear him. Jonah did not die inside that fish because God rescued him.

- Have you ever felt as if you were going to die? If so, what happened?
- Have you ever prayed to God over and over for help?
- Did God help you or is it something you are still praying about?

The Bible story says God brought Jonah up from the bottom of the sea. God gave the fish a command and the fish spit Jonah out on the shore. Even though he was wet and probably stinky, Jonah was alive!

Prayer is a very powerful thing. When we pray, we are not only talking to God, but He is listening to us! When we pray, we are telling God we believe He is the One who can save us. We are telling Him we believe He is the One who can forgive us and give us strength. The more we pray, the closer we can feel to God. Even though God is always with us, when we pray it helps us remember that He is close to us and loves us all the time.

- Do you pray to God? If so, do you do it every day?
- When is your favorite time to pray?
- Do you pray for others? (Take prayer requests and add them to the prayer below.)

Prayer

Dear God,

Help us listen to You and remember You are with us all the time.

Thank You for loving us.

Help us remember to pray for others.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

