

Read: Jonah 2:2-9

Easter Rescue

Jonah 2:2

In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Drowning. It is a powerful word with no happy ending. Children may feel like they are drowning in homework or chores. Parents may not see the end of laundry, job responsibilities, or bills to pay. When things start to pile up, it's too easy to feel overwhelmed. "Help! I'm drowning!" we cry out.

Jonah, an Old Testament prophet, felt like he was drowning because he was. It all started when God called him to go somewhere and do something he didn't want to do. He had a hard choice to make: He could follow God's will or not. He chose poorly. We have been there, yes? Suffering because we made poor choices. But most of us have not paid so dearly. Jonah's poor choices led to the actual belly of a big fish, where he spent three dark and dreadful days. He describes it like this, "The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head." Terrifying. But worse than being in the belly of the big fish, Jonah was drowning in his own bad decisions.

In his deep distress, Jonah had another choice to make. Where would he turn for help? Jonah 2:2 tells us, "I called to the LORD, and the LORD answered me." He turned to the only One who could save him from sin and death. God heard and answered Jonah's cry for help.

Have you ever had a moment you felt like you were drowning? Does hearing all the bad news of this broken world overwhelm you? Have bad choices led you to a place where it is hard to breathe, hard to see daylight? Where will you turn for help?

Child of God, turn to the One who has the power and love to save you. Like Jonah, our Savior, Jesus, spent three dark and dreadful days, not in the belly of the big fish, but in the darkness of a grave. He conquered that grave and lives today to rescue you.

What comfort to know we cannot flee from God's presence! Wherever we go, no matter how dark it seems, Jesus lives to bring his light to you! (Psalm 139:7-11)

Jonah's God is our God, the true, living, and powerful God. Cry to him in your distress, and he will answer you.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Remember the last time you needed help. What was it for?
- Who can you ask for help?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What situation in your life especially make you feel like you are “drowning”?
- What can you do when you feel like there is no way out?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Describe the scariest thing that could happen to you.
- How does Jesus make even the scariest things okay?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, forgive me for the times I do not follow you. This world and my sin are dark, and they scare me. Thank you for bringing your light to these dark places and rescuing me. Amen.