**Jonah 1:17 Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.**

**Jonah 2 - Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish’s belly. 2And he said: “I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, And He answered me. “Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, *And* You heard my voice. 3For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me.  
4Then I said, ‘I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.’ 5The waters surrounded me, *even* to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. 6I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars *closed* behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God. 7“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went *up* to You, Into Your holy temple. 8“Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. 9But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the Lord.” 10So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry *land.***

We’re back with Jonah tonight. God has prepared the great fish, some say whale, the new Testament uses the Greek word kaytos, meaning great fish or whale – literally meaning a fish with a great yawning mouth. Jonah has been thrown overboard into the sea and the sea became calm. Let me tell you what didn’t go overboard with Jonah – oxygen tanks, floatation devices, a wet suit to keep him warm – Jonah went into the sea. Look at verse 17 there - *Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.* God prepared the fish. No matter how the men rowed, no matter how the wind blew, no matter how the sea tossed… God had the fish in perfect position to swallow Jonah. The sea the ship was on would have been the Mediterranean, 965,000 square miles of sea. One man – one ship - one great fish – 965,000 sq miles – one Great God, able to pinpoint a 5 ft 4 inch man into a fishes yawning mouth during a raging storm. What deliverance is He preparing for you?

Verse 1 in Jonah 2 says *Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish’s belly.*No where is out of reach of God’s ear. As a child, I never thought of the fact that the belly had stomach acid, the belly is actively digesting food, the belly doesn’t have light, the belly would be oxygen starved. God is a God of details. Like in the Wednesday message this week – God not only stopped the Jordan for Joshua, He stopped all the tributaries. When God makes the way, it’s a complete way. When God gives an answer, He has the whole answer.

Verse 2 *And he said: “I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, And He answered me. “Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice.*Jonah cries out to the only One he knows can help him. He cries out to the very God that he ran from. Jonah gets an answer – literally, God sees him and heeds his cry. From a certain death, God heard his voice, heard his cry. The word heard has the idea of hearing intelligently – understanding. How often we find ourselves crying to God from our affliction when we forgot Him in our prosperity. God uses affliction to grab attention. He will allow catastrophe when change is required. Job 36:13 says *But the hypocrites in heart store up wrath; They do not cry for help when He binds them.* Job was no hypocrite, Jonah was no hypocrite, we must be no hypocrite, but cry out in the time of our affliction.

Verse 3 *For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me.* Jonah acknowledges who cast him into the sea. Men may have done the deed, but God ordained the task. We may find ourselves in God ordained affliction, but make no mistake the method by which it comes – usually by our own hand. It’s for our edification that God allows our affliction. Hebrews 12:6 *For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.*

Verse 4 *Then I said, ‘I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.*’ This is Faith! In the belly of a fish, darkness all around, water threatening to overcome him. I will look again to Your holy temple. Psalm 31:22 says - *For I said in my haste,  
“I am cut off from before Your eyes”; Nevertheless You heard the voice of my supplications  
When I cried out to You.*

Verse 5-6 *The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head.*Psalm 69:1 says *Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck*. That word neck is translated soul in the King James Version. Jonah has the right idea. The waters have surrounded him. Like David, he is crying out Save me, O God! This is Hope! We had Faith in verse 4, now Hope here. *I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord, my God.* He was pitched into the sea with every thought that he had rebelled against God and the sea would be his final resting place. The moorings of the mountains – the bottom on the seabed would be his destination. Then God scooped him up and gave him a second chance. This is hope.

Verses 7-9*“When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple. 8“Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. 9But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.”* Salvation is of the Lord. We saw Faith, we saw Hope, now we see Salvation. Romans 12:1 says *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* Presenting ourselves a living sacrifice isn’t a generous gift to God. It isn’t a service God can’t do without. We’re not the prize trophy that God will put in the center of His display case. It is a reasonable service… the Greek words literally mean our logical worship. Presenting ourselves a living sacrifice is the only worship that makes any logical sense. Jonah is saying – those who forsake God forsake their own mercy, their own source of salvation. That makes no logical sense. The only logical thing to do, the only worship that makes any sense is to pay what I have vowed. When we call Jesus Master, we have vowed to follow in obedience. Are we paying what we vowed?

Let’s finish it. Verse 10*So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.* 965,000 square miles of sea. 3 days, 3 nights. Jonah realizes, repents, and redirects his life. God speaks to the fish and it vomits Jonah onto dry land. We heard Faith, we heard Hope, we heard Salvation, and now we see Deliverance. Not in the middle of the dangerous sea, but in the safety of dry land. A great fish… maybe a whale… sets Jonah free on dry land. Jonah is delivered to do the work God has called him to do.

Tonight, let’s remember the Faith, hope, salvation, and deliverance that came from the affliction Jonah suffered. By his own actions, he brought his affliction. By God’s great hand, relief was offered. By repentance of his heart, Jonah sought forgiveness. By the love of a gracious God, Jonah was given a second chance – thoroughly chastened but still completely capable to do the work God had planned all along. And so it is in our lives. *But the hypocrites in heart store up wrath; They do not cry for help when God binds them.* May we always cry for help when God binds us and seek to be a servant in logical worship to our all loving God.