

“Salvation Belongs to the LORD”

Jonah 1:17-2:10

Intro

Good morning! As Pastor Mike said my name is Pri and I want to extend greetings to you from The Summit Church. **We thank God for you all.** I was sitting down talking with Mike and Aaron last night - and I was overwhelmed with how good God has been to both of them. I found myself thanking God for their desire to stay faithful to God’s Word as they labors in shepherding God’s church. **I’m really thankful to be here,** and to see them, and to meet you all - and especially glad we get to spend some time together in God’s holy Word.

Today we are going to be in Jonah chapter 2. Before we read the chapter together, **let me quickly recap what’s happened in Ch 1,** for those who are unfamiliar with the story or missed last week and need a refresher:

Summary of Ch 1

In Chapter 1 of the book, The LORD God tells the prophet Jonah to arise, leave his home, and go to Nineveh to call out against the Ninevites. Now These ninevites were the enemies of Israel. **So, did Jonah get up and obey the Lord?** Not so much. He flees from the presence of the Lord, and goes the exact opposite direction to Tarshish. He gets in a boat to catch a ride to Tarshish. The LORD sends a great storm, so now the boat that Jonah is in, is in big trouble. **The sailors are trying to save the ship by throwing cargo overboard, they are all crying out to their gods.** Meanwhile, Jonah was asleep. The sailors wake him up, and say - Arise, pray to your god. There is no record of Jonah praying - so I assume he didn’t pray. Jonah eventually

ends up telling the sailors, “It’s because of me that this is happening, I am a hebrew and I am running away from YHWH” - he told them to throw him overboard, and the storm would stop. **They don’t want his blood on their hands, so they keep rowing, but eventually realize - Jonah has to go.** Then the pagan sailors pray to YHWH now and ask for forgiveness for throwing Jonah overboard, and throw him into the sea - IMMEDIATELY the sea stops raging. Then the men feared YHWH, and began to worship him - offering sacrifice and making vows to YHWH the true God. And at the end of that chapter, we are left wondering - what in the world is going to happen to Jonah? So in today’s chapter we find out what happens to Jonah - does he just drown to death? Let’s read and see.

Scripture Reading - Jonah 2

If you have your Bibles with you - and I hope you do - would you all please turn to the book of Jonah. It’s a little hard to find, as it is only about 3 pages long. It’s about ⅔ of the way in to the Bible. It’s right after obadiah and it’s right before Micah. If you are already there- We will start at Jonah 1:17, because that is actually chapter 2 verse 1 in the Hebrew Bible. **You’ll see why as the 1:17 and 2:10 together give the chapter a real nice symmetry.** 1:17 is the LORD telling a fish to swallow Jonah and 2:10 is the Lord telling the fish to vomit up Jonah. Okay, if everyone is there let’s read together. And let’s all stand up as we Honor the hearing of the Word of the Lord. Would you all mind standing as we hear the the Word?

(ESV)

¹⁷ And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2:1 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish,

² saying, "I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the depth of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice.

³ For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me.

⁴ Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.'

⁵ The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head

⁶ at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.

⁷ When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

⁸ Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love.

⁹ But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!"

¹⁰ And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.

PRAYER: *Let's go the Lord in prayer.*

Father in Heaven, we thank you for your Word. Please come now and open our eyes to see wonderful things in your Word. Show us your glory through Your Word. Entice our hearts to trust you and call on You. Hear our prayers and have mercy, and forgive us. Keep my mouth from error, and grant us all your Holy Spirit. We pray in Christ Name. Amen.

YOU MAY BE SEATED.

Intro (deux)

Have you ever been a situation where everything seemed hopeless? Like things were going so wrong that you felt there was no way out? Everything looked dark and grim. There was no end in sight to the terrible things going on. **Life was closing in on you, and you felt hemmed in?** Maybe you are in that kind of place right now?

Now, have you ever had **someone try to cheer you up in these dark and depressing times by saying something to give you hope?** They were well meaning, but whatever they were saying wasn't really true or they had no way of knowing if it was true.

- Like when you or a close family member has a **life-threatening illness**, and someone says "I am sure it will work out fine"... "im sure it will get cured - don't worry" - like how do they know that?
- Or, I saw this happen a lot in college. if you've just been **through a break up and you're bummed out over this relationship not working out**, and a person who wants you to cheer up says, "God is going to provide someone better for you." - like for real? How do they know that? I know lots of faithful Christians who God never gave a spouse to?

So while these comforters are well-meaning, they are sadly giving out **false hopes**. They see you feeling terrible and awful, and they want to make you feel better - but what they isn't true.

What if in the midst of awful terrible circumstances - you could have **real hope?** What if you had not just things that people were saying to you, but God was speaking to you? Things that aren't "maybe trues" but 100% true? **That is what this passage has for us.**

This passage has God's true words that are here to give you *real* hope. This morning we are going to look at 3 truths about God from Jonah 2 that I pray turn your eyes to Him.

I want to make 1 quick observation about Jonah 2 before we get to the first point. **This prayer is not a prayer of Jonah crying out for rescue but a prayer of thanksgiving.** If you look at **Ch. 1:17** - you see the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah and He was in the belly of the fish for 3 days and 3 nights. And then it says, Jonah prayed from where? From the Belly of the fish - so this prayer is after Jonah is rescued from drowning by God's fish. **We know that because he says in v 2:2** - "i called out and you answered me" - so in this prayer he is thanking God for His salvation.

So if you want the main thrust of this Chapter - you will find it in **Chapter 2:9 - Salvation belongs to the Lord.** That is basically the main message here. And really the main message of this book. Salvation belongs to the Lord. **But here is the problem** - oftentimes we are confused about 2 important parts of this sentence. First, Salvation - we don't know what we need salvation from? And Second, we don't really know This LORD really well. I hope we get clarity on both of those things by the time we are done today.

Okay, now I think we are ready to get to the first truth about God in this passage. The first truth we see very clearly here is that The LORD God is a prayer-hearing God.

BODY

1)The LORD God is a prayer-hearing God

Where do we see this? Look down in your Bibles at **Chapter 2, verse 2** -

- Jonah said, "I called out of my distress to the LORD and what?" **HE ANSWERED ME!**
- Look again at the end of the verse - I cried from the depth of sheol and **"He heard my voice"**
- **Look at verse 7:** "When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD and my prayer - came to your you, into your temple" - this is astounding!

God heard Jonah's prayer. And he will hear our prayers too! Do we realize what a privilege this is? God-Almighty, the one who is the maker of heaven and earth and the sea - He bends his ear to listen to our prayers! Isn't that amazing?!

Listen to this word from John Newton concerning prayer:

- "O the blessed privilege of prayer! O the wonderful love, care, attention, and power of our great Shepherd! His eye is always upon us. When our spirits are almost overwhelmed within us, He knoweth our path. His ear is always open to us: let who will overlook and disappoint us, He will not.
- When means and hope fail, when every thing looks dark upon us, when we seem shut up on every side, when we are brought to the lowest ebb, still our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth."

This should give you great hope - to call out on Him at all times, to pour out your heart to Him. He hears our prayers!

But maybe you are thinking...wait wait wait, not so fast. I've got an objection here. That's okay - this chapter tackles some important objections. What if you are thinking:

God won't hear MY prayers, because I have sinned against Him.

Well, here is the thing. It is true - you have sinned against God. But guess what? Jonah had sinned against God, and that didn't stop him from crying out to the prayer hearing GOD for salvation.

Jonah had clearly sinned against God, and that - very blatantly. God told Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh, and Jonah went the exact opposite way. **The writer really highlights in this book how terribly disobedient Jonah is, by showing how everything else obeys the Lord God.**

If you read through the book of Jonah, **you will see that EVERYTHING in this story obeys God.** The sea - it does what God says. The pagan sailors, they obey God. The great fish, it does what YHWH says - he says swallow, it swallows, he says vomit - it vomits. The Ninevites - they obey God. Even the cattle of the ninevites are in sackcloth and repent. The plant in ch. 4- obeys God. The worm, yup obeys God. The east wind - obeys God. Jonah - nope, he does the exact opposite. Jonah is blatantly disobedient in this book. **This is really clear in the story and this is also true of us. This story is a mirror for all of us.** It's like when we read it, we are supposed to be like - ugh Jonah, no he's a terrible dude...and the author is like - that's you reader!

- It's like when **Nathan came to King David** and told him that story and David gets all mad at the guy in the story, and Nathan is like - David, bro that guy in the story is

YOU. That's what the narrator is doing to us through Jonah's story.

Like Jonah, we've all forsaken God. If you read **Romans chapter 1** in the new testament, it says that God created us to love and honor Him above all things, **but we have chosen to worship the creation more than the Creator. Each one of us has done this.** We've known what God has commanded, and we've done the exact opposite. This makes us all guilty. But Look - But even though Jonah had sinned and he was guilty, it says God heard His prayer!!

So if you are here this morning, and you feel guilty for your sinning against God, and your running to Tarshish to flee from God - be encouraged. **Your sin isn't a reason for you to not call on God, it's the perfect reason for you to run to God and ask for forgiveness.**

Now, if you are here this morning and **you don't feel like you've sinned against God**, and this doesn't distress you at all - **ask yourself why that is?** Can you really say you are perfect? Just because we don't feel the guilt of our sin, doesn't make us any less guilty - it actually makes us more guilty. There is a God, and the Bible says we've all preferred other things over Him - whether it be money, sex, comfort, other people's opinions, etc. Can you honestly say that you haven't preferred other things over God and His Glory? We all have. And for this we are all guilty. **This book is here to give hope to those that admit they are sinners.**

Now here is a another objection that might crop up in your mind. Objection 2 - I don't know what to pray?! This chapter has something very special for you. You know what's amazing

about Jonah's prayer in this chapter? That almost every verse here is from the Psalms - he is just quoting the Bible left and right as He prays. So, those moments where you don't know what to pray, it's okay. Just open up the Psalms and just start praying to God. Better yet, **memorize some Psalms** - so when you don't know what to pray, you can just freestyle some psalms in your prayers!

Martin Luther, the German reformer - loved to pray the Psalms. Luther would post verses from the psalms all over his wall. **You know what Luther did** the day the news of His father's death reached him? He grabbed his copy of the Psalms, and went into his room - no one saw him come out the rest of the day. He just prayed through the psalms pouring His heart out to the Lord.

The psalms are there for you to read and pray God's word back to Him - just like Jonah is doing here. **Surely God will listen to His own promises He has made in the psalms!** Spurgeon used to say that praying Scripture is like pleading God's own handwriting back to Him - we are essentially saying, "You said I should ask you for this - and you promised!!"

If you are here and are burdened with a sin that you just can't defeat - or if you're in any hopeless situation like Jonah's - go to the Lord, He is a prayer hearing God. Psalm 56 says He sees all your tears. Psalm 38 says your groanings are not hidden from Him - even when it feels like they are. **Jonah says, I called out to the LORD, out of my distress and He answered me. I cried from the depth of Sheol and He heard my voice!**

Okay, let's go to truth number 2 about God that we see in this passage:

2) The LORD God is abounding in steadfast love.

THE LORD GOD is abounding in steadfast love. Where do we see this?

- **Look down at chapter 2, verse 8** - "it says, those who pay regard to vain idols, forsake their hope of steadfast love"
- This attribute of God is the exact word Jonah brings up in his prayer to God in **Ch. 4:2**, where he says, "I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster." This steadfast love is the same word as it is here in chapter 2.
- And it's a direct quote from Exodus 34 where God reveals His character.

What it is referring to is God's abounding love that he bestows on whoever He wishes. This love is the foundation of the covenants God made with Moses and the people of Israel.

There is only one way to forsake this hope of steadfast love. You know what it is? It is if you don't turn from trusting idols - then you have no hope of this love. **That is what verse 8 is saying - those who cling to their idols, they forsake this steadfast love of God.**

Now there are probably some objections that are coming up in your mind, let's let the Bible deal with them. Maybe as you hear about God's steadfast love, you are thinking:

God won't show me steadfast love, all He owes me is judgment.

This is a very serious objection, because it is grounded in truth. If we have sinned against God, then God if He is a good judge, rightly owes us punishment. **No Judge is a good judge who doesn't punish those who sin, right?** Imagine a judge who

sits in the highest court in Atlanta. What if he says this to someone who has murdered several people - what if the judge said, "I know you killed a bunch of people but I forgive you" - do you think the family of those people he killed would say that Judge is just and good? NO!

If you think this is a strange situation - consider that **King David sinfully stole Uriah's wife and had him killed...**and you know what God says to him? Your sins are forgiven! This is a serious objection - how can God do this?

So how can we hope in God's steadfast love, when we know that we are sinners and God owes us nothing but judgment?

We see the same happening in Jonah 2 if you look closely. Jonah, the prophet is under God's judgment. You see, All this distress and terror is not just a passive consequence of sin in Jonah's life. It's a picture of God's. Where do we see God's judgment in this passage?

- **Look down at chapter 2, verse 3** - "YOU cast me into the deep" Remember in chapter 1, it was the sailors who threw him overboard, but Jonah rightly says that ultimately it was God's doing.
- **Again look down at the end of verse 3**- "all YOUR waves and YOUR billows" passed over me. It was the flood of Yahweh's judgment that was catching up with Jonah.

The waters in Jonah are a picture of God's judgment - just like the waters in other books of the Bible. **Can you think of other times, where the waters are an instrument of justice?**

Remember the famous story of the flood in Genesis 6-8. It uses the same words we have here in this passage. **Look down at verse 5** - the words there for waters, and the deep - those are from the flood story in Genesis. When God judged all the earth

for its wickedness, it was similar words used to describe the waves and the deeps.

We see the waters being an instrument of judgment in other places too, we see it again when God used the sea to judge Pharaoh, when they pursued after God's people at the Red Sea. **It says in Exodus 15:1** - The horse and the rider, God has thrown into the sea" and then again it says "Pharaoh's chariots and his host God cast into the sea, his chosen officers were sunk" "The floods covered them...and they went DOWN into the depths like a stone"

So we can be sure that Jonah is experiencing God's displeasure as he is cast into the deep.

You know the ultimately worst part of being under God's judgment is? Is being cast out of His presence.

- **Look down at Chapter 2, verse 4** - What does Jonah say? I am driven away from your sight. Who is driving Him away? It is the Lord God - it is a passive verb.

This is the same word used in Genesis 3, when God drives Adam and Eve out of the garden - Genesis 3:24. God is pure, and they sin - he drives them out of His presence. **Like Adam and Eve, all of us are now separated from God, and outside of his presence. Driven out of his sight.**

So I still haven't answered the objection - I've only made it worse by proving that all of us are all under God's judgment.

How can God's being abounding in steadfast love give you hope, if you all you deserve is judgment from God? This is a really really weighty objection, because the character of God is at stake - if he doesn't judge you, he is not a righteous and good judge.

The only answer to this objection is the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, God can remain righteous if there was someone who was HOLY enough and innocent Himself, who could take the punishment that we deserve in our place. This is exactly what The God-man Jesus Christ did on the cross. This is why Jonah can be forgiven, and this is why we can be forgiven.

Listen to how Romans 3 explains the gospel:

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified (that just means righteousified) by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus..now pay close attention -

- verse 25 Jesus Christ ²⁵ **whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.** [Propitiation fancy word - meaning wrath-removal - **Wrath of God was removed by His blood it says**] Now this next part is CRUCIAL -
- **“This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had *passed over former sins*.[you see that. God passing over former sins, that is a threat to His righteousness. How can God just pass over sins? But now He shows the world that He is righteous by punishing sin in Jesus' flesh and blood].**
- He says it again Verse 26: ²⁶ **It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just {aka righteous} and the justifier {righteousifier} of the one who has faith in Jesus.**

So the reason why God can passover past sins in the Old testament and even your sins now is that He punished them in Jesus Christ. **This is why Jonah's sins are passed over. This is why when David sins' with Bathsheba, and has Uriah killed - God just passes over his sin by saying, “your sin is forgiven” -**

The way God can remain just in passing over sins is through Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

This is the glorious gospel. Those who are united by faith to Jesus Christ are made righteous in Christ.

- 1) Jesus takes all the wrath and punishment of God that they deserve
- 2) He credits them His righteousness.

This is why we must be united to Christ by faith.

So yes, the objection is a really serious one. We are under God's judgment, we deserve to drown in the waters of judgment. But Jesus took this baptism of judgment, and rose again. If you are here and you are in Christ...then God's steadfast love is for you, because all of his requirements for judgment are met in the death of Jesus.

If you are feeling the despair of God's judgment - **look at the yet in v. 4. Look at the YET in vs. 4 - I am driven away - YET I shall look again upon your holy temple.**

Yes, you are under God's judgment, but God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. If you turn to Him, He will bring you in to His holy temple and into His presence.

What if you are here and you're not a Christian, and you're not a part of God's covenant people. This passage is an invitation for you to turn to God. **Look at the sailors in Chapter 1.**

Remember they were praying to their gods when the storm came - they weren't worshipping the LORD God - the real God. But when they heard about YHWH the Lord God who made the sea and the dry land. And when they saw the storm stopped immediately after they threw jonaH overboard - what did they do? They forsook their idols and worshipped YHWH in 1:16. God saved even pagan sailors, when they turned from

idols. **Just like when Nineveh believed in God**, YHWH relenting from judging Nineveh because he abounds in steadfast love. **It doesn't matter who you are, if you turn away from whatever you love more than YHWH and believe in God through Christ - He will relent his judgment and show you steadfast love.**

This was Jonah's hope when he was drowning - not that He was perfect, he really isn't and won't be even at the end of the book. But YHWH is steadfast in his love to those who turn from idols and call on Him.

I want to take care of one more **objection** about God's steadfast love before we close with point 3.

if you are a Christian, there is another objection that causes you to doubt the steadfast love of God. I know I struggle with this one. You look around at your life, and think - God doesn't love me, because my life is a mess - I don't have a job, or a spouse. Or I've been wanting a baby for years, and we can't get pregnant. **We are all tempted to judge how the LORD God feels about us, by surveying our circumstances.** When there are good circumstances, we think - God must like me. When bad things happen, we are tempted to think - O He hates me. Listen to this truth from **Romans 5:8 to anchor your soul in those moments of trial.**

- **God Demonstrates his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

"God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Do you want to see an evidence of God's love? look to the Cross. He has already demonstrated His love for you. We don't need to look at how our life is going to see if

God loved us. Can you image the apostle Paul trying to judge how God felt about him by his circumstances.

Let me just read you a list of his sufferings from 2 Corinthians 11.

- Hard labors, imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. 5 times he received 39 lashes. 3 times beaten with rods. Once he was stoned. 3 times shipwrecked. Frequent journeys in danger from rivers, robbers, gentiles, jews, danger everywhere. Hardship, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, cold and in exposure.

That is a life of full of joyful suffering for the gospel, BUT Paul could confidently say, that God had showed Him that He loved him. How?? romans 5:8 - he demonstrated His love in giving Jesus Christ. So Christian, if you are here and your circumstances are causing you doubt the steadfast love of the Lord - **turn your eyes away from them and look to the cross. He has demonstrated His love to you. Very soon, He will come again and end our suffering and take us to glory.**

Okay, the third and last truth about God that's here to give us hope is this.

3) The Lord God is an all powerful God.

The Lord God is an all powerful God.

Where do we see this? Well, this is all over the place, but let's look at a few places.

- **Chapter 1, verse 4** - the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea!
- **1:9** - The LORD the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land - he made it all.

- **1:17** - the first verse we read - The LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. You know what? This word appointed - **it's used again in Ch.4** - 3 more times! where the Lord God appoints a plant to grow up. Then he appoints a worm and then he appoints a scorching east wind. **He controls EVERY thing**. Look again in the end of the chapter - The Lord spoke the fish and it did what it said. He tells fish what to do, swallow Jonah...alright vomit him out! He is sovereign!
- **Look at verse 6** - "You brought up my life from the Pit! - O LORD my God." The Lord, had cast Jonah into the sea, and the Lord is the one who rescued Him.

The Lord God who made the heaven and earth is OMNIPOTENT! You can run to Him because He is strong to help you when you are weak.

Even here, I know we have **objections** don't we. **Let me tackle one. Maybe some of us are thinking, "My circumstances are impossible- there is no way this can work out for good. It's too grim, too terrible"**

But think about how impossibly difficult Jonah's circumstances are.

- **Look at Verse 2** - I called out in my **distress!** Jonah is in distress. Again in v2 - Out of **the depth of Sheol** - which is the place of the dead. He is the very holds of death.
- **Look at v.3** - into the heart of the seas, the floods surrounded me...waves and billows passed over me.
- **Look at v. 5** - the waters closed in over me to take my life. The deep surrounded me. Sea weeds are wrapped about my head. He is the at the very bottom, at the roots of the mountains.

- **V. 6** speaks of how the bars of the land were closing upon him. **V7** - His life is fainting away.

That is how Jonah's situation is described. That's straight awful! I can't think of a more impossible situation! But Jonah prayed and asked the omnipotent God for help. It wasn't too impossible for the Lord.

Maybe you are thinking, but my terrible and impossible situation is **a consequence of my own sin**. Well, guess what - so was Jonah's situation.

- If you remember from Ch. 1 Jonah is here because he was running from God. **Remember the repetition of the verb - "go down" in v. 3** - Jonah went DOWN to Joppa. Then again in v. 3- literally it say "he went down into the ship" And again in 1:5 - "he went down in to the inner part of the ship."
- And now he has descended to the very bottom of the sea. **Look at chapter 2:6 - what does it say?** I went down to the land whose bars closed up on me forever. You see, where running away from the Lord has gotten Jonah?

This is what sin does to us, to walk in sin is a descent into the abyss. Sin always brings about a terrible end. Sin has landed Jonah in an impossible situation - but guess what. **YHWH's arm is NOT too short to save even here**. He lifted Jonah right up from the flood and depths of the earth through the means of a fish that spit him back up on dry land. It's nothing for YHWH to do something like this.

So if you're here and your sins have gotten you in a terrible situation -be encouraged. YHWH can reach you anywhere you are.

Are you still stuck in a sin that you can't defeat or overcome - even after you've experienced terrible consequences? Meditate

on this truth - God is not too weak to help you. He can save you from the dominion of that sin. Are you calling out to this OMNIPOTENT GOD?

Remember the words of Jesus - All things are possible for God.

Have you guys heard of the hymn **Praise to the Lord, the Almighty?** There is this one line that I want to quote here because I love it so much. Just listen to the logic of this hymn - it's so biblical.

It says:

- **Ponder anew what the ALMIGHTY can do**
- **If with His love He befriend thee.**

If the Almighty can befriend someone like us, He can do anything. He is an omnipotent God.

If you are here and **you're a follower of Christ** - just consider what a miracle it is that the OMNIPOTENT God of the Universe is FOR You and not against You.

If you are here and **you're not a follower of Christ** - consider this a call to repent and trust in Christ. Would you rather have an OMNIPOTENT friend or an OMNIPOTENT enemy?

He has made a way right now for enemies to be reconciled to Him. Jesus Christ came the first time as a Lamb of God = as a sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. When he comes a second time, **He will come not only as a Lamb that was slain, but as a Lion who devours His enemies.** The day of salvation is now - believe on Christ, run to Him.

Friends, consider the Ninevites as an example, they turned and believed in God. **As we close...listen to the lesson that Jesus**

draws from the book of Jonah: This is Matthew 12:39, Jesus says:

"An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; ⁴⁰ for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ "The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

What he is saying is? You he saying that we've had enough signs in the Bible. Even Jesus himself came from heaven, died and rose again - but we are still asking for signs. On the last day, He says that the people of Nineveh will show us up - because they repented at little old Jonah's preaching, and something greater than Jonah is here in Christ!

So church, if you are here and you find yourself in a situation like Jonah - a situation that seems terrible and impossible - Be encouraged by what you see in this Chapter.

- **Even though Jonah is a sinner here,**
 - God hears His prayer.
- **Even though jonah is under the deluge of God's judgment,**
 - God shows Him steadfast love.
- **Even though Jonah is in the midst of impossible circumstances - caused by His own sin**
 - God still shows Himself powerful to save!

The Lord God is a prayer-hearing God.

The Lord God is a God abounding in steadfast love.

The Lord God is an omnipotent God.

Let's pray. *Father in Heaven.*

- *We praise you for sending Christ Jesus, who is so much greater than Jonah. We thank you for all that Christ is for us.*
- *Father, please fill us with your Spirit. Grant us a heart that trusts in Your power and Your steadfast love. We pray in Christ's Name. Amen.*