

The Book of Jonah

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As Christians, we have the option to pray at anytime and in anyplace.

Jonah 2 NIV ¹ From _____ the fish Jonah _____ to the LORD his God.

In the water, Jonah was fighting for his life. As Jonah was being swallowed, he was squirming. He was not dead, but he realized that he could not help himself and that his end was near. However, Jonah was not hopeless. As he slid down the gullet of the fish, Jonah used the last option he could at that point – crying out to God. So Jonah prayed to the Lord – his God. If you remember, the sailors prayed to their own gods for help during the storm. And from those gods, they got nada – zilch – zippo. The psalmist expands on why they did not get an answer:

Psalm 115:1-11 GNT ⁴ Their _____ are made of silver and gold, formed by _____ hands. ⁵ They have mouths, but cannot _____, and eyes, but cannot _____. ⁶ They have ears, but cannot _____, and noses, but cannot _____. ⁷ They have hands, but cannot _____, and feet, but cannot _____; they cannot make a _____. ⁸ May all who made them and who _____ in them become like the idols they have made. ⁹ Trust in the Lord, you people of Israel. He _____ you and _____ you. ¹⁰ Trust in the Lord, you **priests** of God. He helps you and protects you. ¹¹ Trust in the Lord, _____ you that _____ him. He helps you and protects you.

Jeremiah gave this message from God about other gods – idols – to the people of Israel:

Jeremiah 10:1-16 NLT ⁸ People who _____ idols are stupid and foolish. The things they worship are made of _____! ⁹ They bring beaten sheets of _____ from Tarshish and _____ from Uphaz, and they give these materials to skillful craftsmen who _____ their idols. Then they _____ these gods in royal blue and purple robes made by expert tailors. ¹⁰ But the Lord is the only _____ God. He is the _____ God and the everlasting King! The whole earth trembles at his _____. The nations cannot stand up to his _____. ¹¹ Say this to those who worship other gods: “Your so-called gods, who did not make the heavens and earth, will _____ from the earth and from under the heavens.” ¹² But God _____ the earth by his power, and **he preserves it** by his wisdom. ¹³ When he speaks in the thunder, the heavens roar with _____. He causes the _____ to rise over the earth. He sends the _____ with the rain and releases the wind from his _____. ¹⁴ The whole human race is foolish and has no knowledge! The craftsmen are disgraced by the idols they make, for their carefully shaped works are a _____. These idols have no breath or _____. ¹⁵ Idols are _____; they are ridiculous _____. On the day of reckoning they will _____ be destroyed. ¹⁶ But the _____ of Israel is no idol! He is the _____ of everything that exists, including _____, his own _____ possession. The Lord of Heaven’s Armies is his _____!

Even when the people of Israel wanted to be like other nations and worship idols, God said:

[Ezekiel 20:26-38 NCV](#) ³² “What you _____ will not come true. You say, ‘We want to be like the other nations, like the people in other lands. We want to worship _____ made of wood and stone.’ ³³ As surely as I _____,” says the Lord God, “I will use my great power and strength and anger to _____ over you.”

? Are there idols in your life that has God working waste management?

Whatever your **idols** might be, you can be sure that God will be working to remove them from your life. He will not tolerate idol worship. The Israelites had tough times learning that truth, but Jonah, the prophet of God, did not worship idols made of wood or stone or metal. Jonah’s problem idol was Jonah. He wanted his own **selfish** way, so he **took a flyer**. After the sailors threw Jonah overboard, God could have used a **sailfish** to smack and stun or to slice and dice the gambling **Gath Hephheren**, but He sent a large fish to swallow him. It seems that God is always more interested in an internal change of heart than an external beating. The ingestion and impending doom forced Jonah to pray.

Simply put, prayer is communication with God. As Christians, we pray to the Father through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord by the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives within us. In 2001, *The Prayer of Jabez*, a book written by **Bruce Wilkinson**, was all the rage. Groups of people formed and believed that good things would happen to them if they just **repeated** the prayer. Here is the verse they repeated:

[1 Chronicles 4:10 NKJV](#) And Jabez _____ on the God of Israel saying, “Oh, that You would _____ me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be _____ me, and that You would keep *me* from _____, that I may not cause _____!” So God _____ him what he requested.

And it is a wonderful prayer to God — by Jabez. But you know what? I’m not Jabez – and neither are you. I want a relationship with God that’s personal – a dynamic, growing relationship where I learn to be in constant communication with my God. That’s not to say that the prayer of Jabez doesn’t contain some great elements of prayer:

➤ Oh, that you would bless me indeed.

I want God to bless me. Don’t you want God’s **blessing** in your life? Actually, it’s **promised!**

➤ and enlarge my territory.

I’d like God to enlarge my **sphere of influence** for His glory, wouldn’t you?

➤ that Your hand would be with me

I’d like God’s hand to **guide me**, to be with me, especially His **strong right hand**, wouldn’t you?

➤ and that You would keep *me* from evil

I’d like God to **keep me from evil** on both ends – receiving and giving – wouldn’t you?

➤ that I may not cause pain!

I don’t want to **hurt** or **be hurt** by anyone in any way, do you?

The same can be said of what the religious world calls *The Lord's Prayer*. Millions repeat it at worship services and funerals, even though they have no relationship with God.

*By rote they repeat the sacred writ,
not knowing by heart the Author of it.
The words they speak are from the Word – the Rock,
but the lives they lead show they trust Him not.*

It's become a tradition devoid of recognition. However, the words from Jesus were an answer to a direct request that came from one of His own:

Luke 11:1-4 NKJV ¹ Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His _____ said to Him, “Lord, _____ us to _____, as John also taught his disciples.”

And Jesus answered that request:

Luke 11:2-4 NKJV ² So He said to them, “When you pray, say: Our _____ in heaven, hallowed be Your _____. Your kingdom come. Your _____ be done on earth as *it is* in _____. ³ Give us day by day our _____ bread. ⁴ And forgive us our _____, for we also forgive _____ who is indebted to us. And do not _____ us into temptation, but _____ us from the _____ one.”

This prayer contains some great instructional elements, as well.

➤ Our Father in heaven,

Our is a plural, possessive pronoun. As Christians, God is yours and mine. He is our God, and our Father lives in heaven, where He is **seated** on His throne. He is our God because He made us His children through Christ. It is only through what Christ did for us that we can talk with God **our Father**.

➤ hallowed be Your name,

God's name is to be **hallowed**. To Him, we _____ or acknowledge that He is **venerable**, which means that He is **worthy of honor and respect by virtue of His character**. God is to be set apart for worship. The Greek word for hallow comes from the **root word** meaning a most _____ thing. It is the Greek word we use for _____, as well, and we know that we are saints, for we are addressed as such in the **epistles** of the New Testament. As saints we, too, are set apart – **made holy** – for God's purposes.

➤ Your kingdom come.

As Christians, we are looking for Jesus to **return** to earth and set up His **kingdom**. He is coming again, and He will rule righteously.

- Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

It takes but a brief glance at the shenanigans of the world to see that God's will is of no importance to sinners and too often neglected by the saints, as it was by Jonah initially. Yet, when we are swallowed into God's family and fully comprehend His plan, we long for His righteous rule.

- Give us day by day our daily bread.

This is a petition, a request for our daily care. We pray, as Jabez prayed, for God's blessings, and how we need them on a daily basis. He is [the God who provides](#).

- And forgive us our sins,

Every sinner must ask God for forgiveness. They must [confess](#) – [agree](#) with God – that they are sinners and deserve punishment for their wrongs against Him. As saints, we know that Christ forgave all our sins on the cross, but we still recognize that we do things that just aren't right, and that our actions often hurt other people. Knowing that God put away all of our sins by punishing Christ helps us to carry out the next element of this prayer.

- for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

Here's the hard part. I know God forgives me and that Christ has paid the penalty for all my sins – past, present and future. But it doesn't seem as easy for me to forgive, though I should, for I owe that good will to others. We all started in the same wayward boat, travelling away from God, but when we realize how much God did to forgive us, it helps us understand why we should forgive those who trespass against us.

- And do not lead us into temptation,

Keep me from evil Lord, which is what Jabez asked, as well. Keep us from the maddening trails of life that inflame our sinful natures and bring out angry, caustic reactions. Take us not that way, O God, but let us walk in Christ's way.

- but deliver us from the evil one.”

We're asking for protection from the evil one, for the Holy Spirit to lead us on [level ground](#), for our [Redeemer](#) to defend us from the attacks of the devil and his minions.

This teaching of the Lord answers the question HOW to pray, not WHAT to pray. Everyone has different needs and different blessings to be thankful for. Jonah could have repeated the prayer of Jabez, but Jonah prayed for his specific needs, recognizing his dependence upon God for life, liberty from the belly of the fish, and happiness in serving God in His way.

The important thing is that we recognize God for who He is. He is active in our lives. We are His children. His will is to have a growing relationship with us, and good relationships involve communication — prayer.

Let's continue in Luke 11, verse 5 and following:

Luke 11:5-8 NIV ⁵ Then Jesus said to them, “Suppose you have a _____, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶ a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no _____ to offer him.’ ⁷ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t _____ me. The **door** is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ ⁸ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless _____ he will surely get up and give you as much as you _____.

As **friends** of God, Christians can come to Him boldly and ask for anything in His Name:

Hebrews 4:16 NKJV Let us therefore come _____ to the throne of _____, that we may obtain _____ and find grace to help in time of need.

John 15:14-16 NCV ¹⁴ You are my _____ if you _____ what I command you. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I heard from my _____. ¹⁶ You did not _____ me; I chose you. And I gave you this _____: to go and produce _____, fruit that will last. Then the _____ will give you **anything** you _____ for in my name.

God will give us all we need – materially and spiritually – to make it through this life. However, He desires that we offer Jesus, the **bread of life**, to our family, friends and neighbors, for Jesus is the door that everyone must open on their journey through life. God is never too busy to hear our cries for help. He heard Jonah, and His door is always open to us, His children. God wants us to come to Him first, for Jesus says:

Luke 11:9-10 NIV ⁹ "So I say to you: _____ and it will be given to you; _____ and you will find; _____ and the _____ will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who _____ receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Christ says: **A**sk, **S**eek, **K**nock. **A•S•K** Ask, Seek, Knock!


Good parents want to help their children. When parents see a need, they do all they can to meet that need. Good people want to help others, and many go above and beyond to do just that. God, however, wants us to go **above** – to Him – first, and then He will meet our needs, often going **beyond** our wildest expectations in answer to our prayers.

Luke 11:11-13 NIV ¹¹ "Which of you fathers, if your son _____ for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, though you are **evil**, know how to give _____ gifts to your children, how much more will your _____ in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who _____ him!"

Prayer moves God to action, and it should move us, as well.

Let’s follow Jonah as he goes through his ordeal:

Jonah 2:2 NIV He said: “In my _____ I called to the Lord, and he _____ me. From deep in the realm of the _____ I called for _____, and you listened to my cry.

Going down **alimentary way** on a **peristaltic**  **peregrination**, Jonah swallowed his pride and called to the Lord. He knew he was in big trouble. The psalmist echoes his emotional plea:

Psalm 31:9 NKJV Have _____ on me, O LORD, for I am in _____;

This is when we usually call on God for help – when we’re in trouble. However, it’s best to call on God each morning before we start anything, before trouble just finds us.

Dear Lord: So far today, I've done fairly well. I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, haven't been grumpy, greedy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. I'm very thankful for that. But in a few minutes, Lord, I'm going to get out of bed. And from then on, I'm probably going to need a lot more help. Amen.

Remember, Jesus said that:

Matthew 6:34 NIV _____ has enough _____ of its own.

In Jeremiah, God said:

Jeremiah 33:3 NASB ‘ _____ to Me and I will _____ you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not _____.’

God says to call on Him, and He will answer. There’s no call block on prayers from His children, but He does have Caller ID. God knows the voice of each of His saints, and though we might think our situation is impossible to salvage, all things are possible with God.

From the depths of my watery grave is how the NOG translators wrote what the NIV translators have as *from deep in the realm of the dead*. The NKJV has it as *out of the belly of Sheol*, which was the Old Testament _____ of the dead. Normally, your body is not placed in the grave until you’re dead, and Jonah didn’t die in his easy chair while watching *The Weather Channel*. Jonah sank into a salivary sepulcher while still alive. I believe Jonah’s body died at some point in his watery ordeal. He sank to the bottom, and then the fish scooped him up, and that’s where he most likely **died**. Yet, his soul went to **Sheol** where he still communicated with God throughout it all, though some **believe** Jonah never died.

Scripture says that for us – Christians – to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Our body dies, but our spirit lives. Our body goes into the ground awaiting a future resurrection, but our spirit goes to heaven. Praise God for that! If Jonah’s body **died** at the bottom in the belly of the fish, his soul would have gone to **Sheol**, the OT abode of the dead.

Jonah 2:3 NIV _____ hurled me into the depths, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your _____ and breakers swept _____ me.

Even though the sailors threw Jonah into the sea, Jonah knew it was God’s plan, and he took a bath on his **fatuous** flyer. God, as we can see in Jonah’s predicament, was working behind the scenes to accomplish His purposes. **What God plans happens!**

As the Gentile sailors threw Jonah overboard, the Jewish religious leaders threw Christ into Pilate's pool of political injustice, and the fast moving currents of mob mentality called out for the death of Christ. However, Scripture tells us that God was at work fulfilling His plans for the [death of Christ](#), as well.

In verse three, Jonah acknowledges that God is the Creator, for he says "your waves and breakers swept over me."

I've never been in a life and death situation while boating or fishing offshore, but I've had a few moments body surfing off Siesta Key Beach. I don't usually go to the beach when the sun is shining and the place is packed. I go when a storm is passing by, and it's gray, windy and often raining. I go to body surf, and there's been a few times when an 8-footer has taken me to the bottom and tossed me around like a piece of seaweed. There have been times when the current swirling around me dragged me sideways underwater 50-60 feet before I could escape. So I've called out to the Lord a few times while underwater. And while diving near Boca Grande inlet, I came face to face with a 16' hammerhead shark that could have swallowed me whole. Fortunately, when I raised my 3-foot, French-made spear gun, he turned and fled out of raw fear. So, I know very little of what Jonah experienced, but God includes this harrowing episode in the annals of Scripture for [our learning](#).

[Jonah 2:4 NIV](#) I said, 'I have been _____ from your sight; yet I will look _____ toward your holy temple.'

Jonah was a chosen prophet, so his ordeal actually started with self-banishment. His escapade can be described by the name of the nation whose modern day leaders want Israel wiped off the face of the map — I•RAN. Because Jonah ran from God, he brought on his problem, yet he says he's been banished from God's sight. However, he knows his God will allow him to look again towards the holy temple in Jerusalem. Now, when you're inside the belly of a fish, that takes some faith.

Contrast Jonah's banishment to what Christ said when He was on the cross:

[Matthew 27:46 NKJV](#) And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You _____ Me?"

God the Father turned His back on Christ for a short time, but it was because of our sins. Christ was sinless! Jonah was not. But Jesus took our sins so that we could ultimately see Him face to face. And it's because of His death, burial and resurrection that we have become the [temple](#) of the living God.

[Jonah 2:5 NIV](#) The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded ____; seaweed was wrapped around my _____.

These verses imply that Jonah suffered a bit in the water before the fish swallowed him. You have engulfing waters, the surrounding deep, and seaweed wrapped around his head. I imagine Jonah, with seaweed wrapped around his head, uttering those famous words from the [guilty one](#) in the movie *The Usual Suspects* — **I am Keyser Sushi**.

After all, God would have made him taste good. It was the least He could do for the fish that made the journey to swallow this sourpuss prophet. Yet, God is at work, for this soured journey sweetened Jonah's need for his God.

Jonah 2:6 NIV To the _____ of the mountains I _____ down; the earth beneath barred me in _____. But you, Lord _____ God, brought my life _____ from the pit.

This verse adds to the notion that Jonah was in the water a while before he was swallowed. The roots of the mountains are at the bottom – the earth beneath is below the sea. But God delivers him, and it seems the fish must have scooped him up from or near the bottom. Once he checked into his waterfront room, Jonah spent three days and three nights inside the fish. In **Jonah 1**, we looked at what Christ said about Jonah from Matthew's account:

³⁸ Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you." ³⁹ He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here. Matthew 12:38-41 NIV84

I believe God resurrected Jonah to fulfill his ministry. That's a miracle. And God the father raised Christ from the dead to fulfill His plan for our redemption – another miracle. So, this is a picture of God's grace for Jonah and us, as well. Pay special attention to verses 3 thru 8 below:

Romans 6:1-11 NLT ¹ Well then, should we keep on _____ so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful _____? ² Of course not! Since we have _____ to sin, how can we continue to live in it? ³ Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in _____, we joined him in his _____? ⁴ For we died and were _____ with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the _____ by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live _____ lives. ⁵ Since we have been united with _____ in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. ⁶ We know that our _____ sinful selves were crucified _____ Christ so that sin might lose its _____ in our lives. We are no longer _____ to sin. ⁷ For when we died _____ Christ we were set _____ from the _____ of sin. ⁸ And since we died _____ Christ, we _____ we will also live with him. ⁹ We are _____ of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will _____ die again. Death no longer has any _____ over him. ¹⁰ When he died, he died once to break the power of _____. But now that he lives, he lives for the _____ of God. ¹¹ So you also should consider yourselves to be _____ to the _____ of sin and _____ to God _____ Christ Jesus.

God put you in Christ. He baptized (**unionized**) you as one of His own. We were crucified with Christ, buried with Him, and raised to new life by the power of God. Hallelujah!

Jonah 2:7 NIV “When my _____ was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my _____ rose to you, to your holy temple.

In Old Testament times, Jews went to the temple to meet with God. Today, the Holy Spirit indwells Christians, and we are God’s living temple, where we can **meditate** on His **♪ unfailing love ♪**. And when we don’t know what to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf:

Romans 8:26-27 NLT ²⁶ And the Holy Spirit _____ us in our weakness. For example, we don’t _____ what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays _____ with groanings that cannot be expressed in _____. ²⁷ And the _____ who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in _____ with God’s own _____.

The Holy Spirit is praying for us, but it’s never in conflict with God’s will. We often ask for things that are not God’s will, but prayer is not about trying to change God’s mind to get what we want.

Prayer aligns us with God’s will.

In the Garden of Gethsemane with the disciples, before He went to the cross, Christ...

Luke 22:41-42 NASB ⁴¹...withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to _____, ⁴² saying, "Father, if You are _____, remove this cup from Me; yet not _____ will, but _____ be done."

Christ said this:

John 14:13-14 NIV ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my _____, so that the Father may be _____ in the Son. ¹⁴ You may _____ me for anything **in my name**, and I will do it.

In my name is another way of God saying, according to My will. We often pray for things that are not in God’s will for us. We focus, too heavily, on what He can do for us, and we forget, too easily, all that He has done for us. He proved His love for us in Christ on Calvary.

Jonah 2:8 NIV “Those who cling to _____ idols turn away from God’s _____ for them.

Jonah, in a way, was his own worthless idol, and he made a run at forfeiting grace, but God would have none of it. Jonah wanted God to obey him and wipe the Ninevites off the face of the earth. The prophet wanted God to carry out his wishes, and he put his plan before God’s plan. He wanted his will to be sovereign, but the Sovereign King of the universe overruled him. Jonah sinned by disobeying an order from God, and sin, in any form, is a worthless idol. We think sin will give us pleasure, and it may for a while, but it always – always – adds to our woes. As we pursue our **own ways**, we may be enriched by what they offer. There is satisfaction in a job well done, pride in hitting that perfect nine iron, status in **earning enough** money to have all the nicer things in life. But the things of this world can only give us so much. They will never fulfill us completely. Only God’s grace through Jesus can do that.

Jonah 2:9 NIV But I, with shouts of _____ praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have _____ I will make good. I will say, ‘**Salvation** comes from the _____.’

At some point in his adventure, Jonah has an “**aha moment**.” The light finally comes on, and it seems that Jonah cuts a deal with God, for he says that what he has vowed he will make good. Of course, he was in no position to make any demands. He wasn’t a power broker; he was a powerless joker, and the joke was on him. Although he took matters into his own hands by rejecting God’s plan and seemingly escapes the hand of God, it’s not long before he becomes solely dependent upon the mercy of God. Yet, as Jonah’s adventure unfolds, God allows him to speak his mind, and he realizes that whether it’s safety in this life or eternal safety in the presence of God, it all comes from the Lord.

King David and the apostle Peter remind us of those two different aspects of salvation:

Psalm 18:35-49 NKJV ³⁵ You have also given me the shield of Your _____; Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great. ³⁶ You enlarged my path under me, so my feet did not slip. ⁴⁶ The LORD _____! Blessed *be* my _____! Let the God of my **salvation** be exalted. ⁴⁷ *It is* God who avenges me, and subdues the peoples under me; ⁴⁸ He _____ me from my enemies. You also lift me up above those who rise against me; You have delivered me from the violent man. ⁴⁹ Therefore I will give _____ to You, O LORD, among the Gentiles, and sing _____ to Your name.

Acts 4:11-12 NIV ¹¹ Jesus is “‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.’ ¹² _____ is found in no one else, for there is no other _____ under heaven given to mankind by which we must be _____.”

As Jonah prays, he ends by praising God for his salvation. Now, he is willing to **go and share** God’s love with others, as should we: [\[Sign up for the Share Your Faith workshop at Grace • June 21 • 9-3:30\]](#)

Hebrews 13:15-16 NIV ¹⁵ Through Jesus, therefore, let us _____ offer to God a _____ of _____—the fruit of lips that openly profess his _____. ¹⁶ And do not forget to do good and to _____ with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Jonah, after his ordeal and his prayer, is now aligned with God’s will. He says that he will make good on his vow, which was probably to go to Nineveh and preach. He now knows that salvation comes from the Lord — both physical and spiritual. He learned first hand of physical salvation, for God brought him up from the pit – alive. He learned that salvation comes from the Lord to whom God wants to bring it. God wants to save the Ninevites from destruction. Jonah didn’t want that, but now he acknowledges that **God rules** in the affairs of men. **God chooses** who will be **born again**, for the **wind blows** wherever it pleases.

There are people that God has placed in your life that need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. Learn the Scriptures, learn to heed the call of the Holy Spirit, pray for their salvation, and share the love of God with them.

Now salvation is more than eternal life. Salvation is the Lord providing every good thing for us, starting with the gift of faith by which we believe. From that moment when we become aware of His salvation, He is guiding us, comforting us, energizing us to do His will. And it is all from Him! We were chosen before the foundation of the world. Thank Him and do what He asks, for:

Salvation comes from the Lord!

Jonah 2:10 NIV And the LORD _____ the fish, and it _____ Jonah onto dry land.

Vomit is not something we like to think about, let alone talk about. It smells horribly, yet it is still food for other creatures. Jonah, though vomited from the belly of a fish, was now one who would bring a message – food for thought – to creatures he had previously held in contempt, people who had looked down on the Israelites as those not worthy of life. But in that volume of vomit, God turned a rebellious, slimy prophet – one going his own way – into a prophet of value. God redeemed Jonah. Is that not a picture of us, as well?

The Psalmist wrote words that describe what happened to Jonah and what happens to us when we pray to the Lord:

Psalm 40:1-3 NIV ¹ I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and _____ my cry. ² _____ lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; _____ set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. ³ _____ put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of _____ to our God. _____ will see and fear the Lord and put their _____ in him.

Just as God delivered Jonah was from the prison of the slimy stomach of the fish, He delivered us from the slave market of sin. He lifted our souls, which were stained from sin and that mired us in this life, and He placed us in Christ, our Rock. Thus, we can stand firm in the faith. As we will see in the next chapter of Jonah, the Ninevites believed God's message that came through Jonah. It was a message of doom that they took as truth from God, and they repented. As we share the Gospel message, the Good News of Jesus Christ, may God the Father **move many** to put their trust in Jesus.

The Bucket List is the story of two men with terminal cancer. One has a lot of money but no close family or friends. The other is an automotive mechanic. He doesn't have a lot of money, but he has a loving wife, family and friends. In the song 🎵 *Say*, written for the movie, John Mayer sings these words:

Take all of your wasted honor	Even if your hands are shaking
Every little past frustration	And your faith is broken
Take all of your so-called problems,	Even as the eyes are closing
Better put 'em in quotations	Do it with a heart wide open
Say what you need to say	Say what you need to say

And I add, “Say what you need to say to God in prayer.” If you want to remember one thing from chapter two of Jonah, remember that:

It is never too late to go to God in prayer for anything.

Next time you pray, remember that we have the distinct privilege as Christians to talk to our Heavenly Father. If you have a need, tell Him about it — at the start. Try not to solve in without God’s help. Peter wrote:

1 Peter 5:7 NLV Give ____ your _____ to Him because He _____ for you.

Scripture doesn’t say if anyone in Nineveh asked God for help before He asked Jonah to go and proclaim His message. As Christians, we can see that **people need the Lord**, and we can pray for God to **open hearts** to respond to His Gospel message. And, if someone shares a prayer request with us, we can pray and ask God how we can help. We have the distinct privilege of being an answer to prayer, as well. So, the Scripture says:

Proverbs 3:27 ERV ___ everything you possibly ___ for those who need _____.

Prayer seems always to be the weakest link in a Christian’s life. We have the opportunity to go to our Father – Abba – at any time, yet we labor and labor to solve the problem on our own. A prayer life takes time. It takes time spent alone with the Lord in His word learning what’s important to God. And what’s important to God will become important to us as we spend time with Him [**Jonah 01**] alone in His word and He works in our lives.

Here’s the key: ASK God to develop your prayer life with Him. He is the Master!

No matter what we are facing, we can:

Ask, Seek, and Knock! We can thank Him and Praise Him, for...

He delights in the prayers of His people!

Say what you need to say to Him and to those you love and to those He puts in your path.

Memory Verse

[Jesus said] _____, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!
Your first name

Matthew 5:44 NLT-Personalized

**May God move us to pray for all people,
especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

See you next week for Jonah 03.



Saturday, June 21

9am - 3:30pm



Share Your Faith
Workshop

**Presented by Rev. Arthur Hallett
of Evangelism Explosion International**

Click here to sign up

