

Matt Pardee

For Sunday, January 22nd "Jonah's Prayer"

Psalm 88 – *NIV*

Lord, you are the God who saves me;
day and night I cry out to you.

² May my prayer come before you;
turn your ear to my cry.

³ I am overwhelmed with troubles
and my life draws near to death.

⁴ I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I am like one without strength.

⁵ I am set apart with the dead,
like the slain who lie in the grave,
whom you remember no more,
who are cut off from your care.

⁶ You have put me in the lowest pit,
in the darkest depths.

⁷ Your wrath lies heavily on me;
you have overwhelmed me with all your waves.

⁸ You have taken from me my closest friends
and have made me repulsive to them.
I am confined and cannot escape;

⁹ my eyes are dim with grief.
I call to you, Lord, every day;
I spread out my hands to you.

¹⁰ Do you show your wonders to the dead?
Do their spirits rise up and praise you?

¹¹ Is your love declared in the grave,
your faithfulness in Destruction?

¹² Are your wonders known in the place of darkness,
or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

¹³ But I cry to you for help, Lord;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.

¹⁴ Why, Lord, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?

¹⁵ From my youth I have suffered and been close to death;
I have borne your terrors and am in despair.

¹⁶ Your wrath has swept over me;
your terrors have destroyed me.

¹⁷ All day long they surround me like a flood;
they have completely engulfed me.

¹⁸ You have taken from me friend and neighbor—
darkness is my closest friend.

Jonah 1:17-2:10 – NIV

¹⁷ Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2 ¹ From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. ² He said:

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

From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,
and you listened to my cry.

³ You hurled me into the depths,
into the very heart of the seas,
and the currents swirled about me;
all your waves and breakers
swept over me.

⁴ I said, ‘I have been banished
from your sight;
yet I will look again
toward your holy temple.’

⁵ The engulfing waters threatened me,
the deep surrounded me;
seaweed was wrapped around my head.

⁶ To the roots of the mountains I sank down;
the earth beneath barred me in forever.

But you, Lord my God,
brought my life up from the pit.

⁷ “When my life was ebbing away,
I remembered you, Lord,
and my prayer rose to you,
to your holy temple.

⁸ “Those who cling to worthless idols
turn away from God’s love for them.

⁹ But I, with shouts of grateful praise,
will sacrifice to you.

What I have vowed I will make good.

I will say, ‘Salvation comes from the Lord.’”

¹⁰ And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Takeaway: God's Grace meets us, even when we're in the darkest of places.

Questions:

1. What is your “Nineveh”? – What is the thing God wants you to do that you don’t want to do?
2. When have you felt like you were in the belly of the fish (a dark place)? Did you feel God’s presence with you? How did you feel God comforting you?

Sermons: <https://podcast.wpcwestlake.org/services/mp3/sermon20230122.mp3>

Service Video: <https://youtu.be/-e4BuJyQ3Rs>