



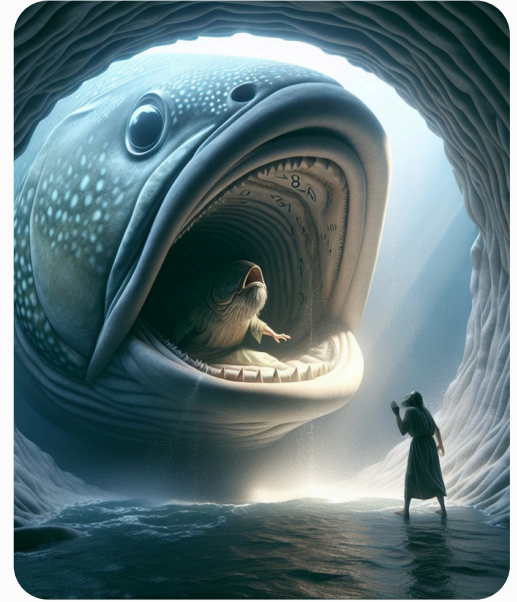
Pastor Luke's Weekly Blog

August 13, 2026

THREE DAYS IN THE DEEP

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 was called by God to preach repentance to Nineveh, Israel's most feared enemy; he fled in the opposite direction. He boarded a ship bound for Tarshish, determined to escape both the commission and the Caller. But God sent a great storm. When the sailors discovered that Jonah's disobedience had caused their peril, Jonah himself requested that they throw him overboard. And God had prepared a great fish.

The word appointed or prepared indicates deliberate divine arrangement. This was no accident of nature. God specifically appointed this creature as the means of both judgment and deliverance for His fleeing prophet.

When the Pharisees demanded a sign of Jesus' authority, He answered: An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:39-40). Jesus explicitly interpreted Jonah's experience as a shadow of His own death, burial, and resurrection.

Jonah in the belly of the fish is a picture of death and burial. He was swallowed up, entombed in darkness, in the deep. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice (Jonah 2:2). He described the experience in terms of death itself: seaweed wrapped around his head, sinking to the foundations of the mountains, the earth with its bars closing around him forever.



CENTRAL
UNITED CHURCH

But You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God (Jonah 2:6). After three days and three nights, the fish vomited Jonah out onto dry land (Jonah 2:10). Death swallowed him; but death could not keep him. This is the exact route of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The grave received Him on Good Friday. The tomb held Him in darkness on Holy Saturday. But on the third day, the Day of the Lord, the earth could not contain the Author of Life. He rose!

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). ***According to the Scriptures***, including, most certainly, the Scripture of Jonah 1:17, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ were embedded in the story of a reluctant prophet swallowed by a great fish in the ancient waters of the Mediterranean.

Jonah was reluctant to bring salvation to the Gentiles. His very survival; his death-and-resurrection experience became the vehicle for the greatest revival in the ancient world. Jesus, by contrast, was willing. He gladly took on our sin, went willingly to the cross, and from the tomb of death rose to bring salvation to all the world. ***God so loved the world***; every tribe, tongue, and nation (John 3:16).

Prayer Points:

1. Thank Jesus Christ for willingly entering the darkness of death so that we might be raised to life.
2. Ask God to remind you that He is the God who brings life out of the depths.
3. Let the reality of the empty tomb transform how you live – with hope, courage, and joyful certainty about eternity.
4. Let the risen Christ compel us into mission. Make us bold proclaimers of the gospel in our communities and to the ends of the earth.



Soli Deo Gloria – to God alone be the glory!
Rev. Luke Haisa