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JONAH PART 12
CH. 1:17-2:2a

In Jonah 1:17 it says, ***“Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah...”***. God had a plan. He knew ahead of time that His prophet would be cast into the ocean, presumably to drown. He had already arranged for a huge fish (not a whale) to rescue Jonah by swallowing him. It was no accident that this happened. It was a part of His plan based upon His foreknowledge of all things.

God sees “all time” at the “same time.” He sees the beginning and the end all at the same time. It does not mean that He “predestines it”, just that He already knows our free-will choices. That is why He can plan an intervention on our behalf before “it” happens. He had already arranged Jonah’s rescue before the storm.

That is how God can help you even in your greatest hour of need. He is an “interventional specialist.” But His intervention rests upon our trust in Him, and our calling upon Him generally speaking. He knew that if His big fish did the rescue, Jonah would call upon Him. And you can call upon God at any time; He is always listening. Caveat (beware): the “answer” might not come in the time you think it should, but it will come...just in His time.

In Jonah 2:1 it says, ***“Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord (YHWH) his God (Elohim) out of the fish’s belly.”*** It was not only a miraculous rescue, but also a miracle that God had “prepared” this fish (probably a whale shark) in such a way that his large stomach was apparently cleaned out sufficiently to be a three day and night “living quarters” for Jonah. (See yesterday’s “Jonah – Part 11” for discussion on this shark.)

In Jonah 2:2a the prophet says, ***“I cried (called out) by reason of my affliction...”***. Unfortunately, many people turn to God in a time of great distress, then quickly forget Him when the stress is alleviated. We saw this following the “9/11” twin towers incident. Churches quickly filled up with people. It lasted for about two months, then the churches began to fall back to their “pre-9/11” numbers. People also pray to God when personal disasters strike, but they do not commit to a personal relationship with Him. They often soon return to their old way of ignoring God and going their own way.

While God might answer a distress call, the only true answer is an ongoing relationship with Him. We should keep that relationship fresh every day.