A Sermon Outline By  Elza Lamb

"IT'S HARD TO KEEP A GOOD MAN DOWN"

Jonah 2:1-11

History is FILLED with STORIES of MEN and WOMEN who have been down and out but HAVE COME BACK. I think of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. No one has DESCENDED DEEPER into a FISH'S BELLY politically than did Lincoln. He was DEFEATED for the STATE LEGISLATURE in Illinois in 1832. He was DEFEATED for CONGRESS in 1843. He was DEFEATED for CONGRESS again in 1848. In 1855 he ran for the SENATE and was DEFEATED. He was on the VICE PRESIDENTIAL ticket in 1856 and was DEFEATED again. He RAN for the SENATE in 1858 and was once more DEFEATED. He became PRESIDENT in 1860 and LIVES on in HISTORY as one of the GREATEST PRESIDENTS of the UNITED STATES. Abraham Lincoln is proof that you can't keep a good man down.

John Bunyan, was thrown into PRISON where it would have been easy to give up, but down into the PRISON where he was put He penned the words of [PILGRIM'S PROGRESS], which has blessed millions through the generations. The truth is, you cannot keep a good man down.

Today we will look at JONAH'S DISTRESS, and JONAH'S DECISION, then at JONAH'S DELIVERANCE.

I. JONAH'S DISTRESS.
Jonah 2:1-6"Then JONAH PRAYED unto the LORD his GOD out of the FISH'S BELLY, Vr#2 ... And said, I CRIED by reason of MINE AFFLICTION unto the LORD, and He HEARD ME; out of the BELLY OF HELL CRIED I, and thou hearest my voice.

(a). Notice The Prayer Jonah Prayed.
Vr#1 "Then JONAH PRAYED unto the LORD HIS GOD...."
Vr#2 "I CRIED .... unto the LORD ...."

1. When did Jonah Pray?
Jonah Prayed In His "AFFLICTION" {distress, strain or suffering, trouble}

2. To Whom Did He Pray.
Vr#1 "Jonah Prayed unto the LORD HIS GOD.."
Jonah Had a PERSONAL GOD.

3. What Did He Pray.
Jonah Prayed The Word Of God. {Jonah 2:2 and Psalm 18:6; 120:1; 86:13}
{Jonah 2:3 and Psalm 88:6; 42:7;} {Jonah 2:4 and Psalm 31:22 = Jonah Knew His Bible.}

(b). Notice The Place Of Jonah's Predicament.
Vr#1 ...prayed out of the FISH'S BELLY, ..... Vr#2-6 ...."out of the BELLY of HELL CRIED I, .."

1. Jonah Was Alive For A While In The FISH'S BELLY.
Matt 12:40 .."as JONAS WAS ... so SHALL the SON of MAN BE ..."
Jesus was ALIVE on the CROSS .... SUFFERING .... Jonah alive in Fish's Belly.

2. Jonah Was Alive In SHEOL After His Death.
Luke 16:23-24 .... The Rich Man Prayed out of SHEOL....

II. JONAH'S DECISION.
Verse# 7-8 When my SOUL FAINTED within me I REMEMBERED THE LORD: and my prayer came in unto THEE, into thine holy temple. Vr#8 ... They that OBSERVE LYING VANITIES FORSAKE their OWN MERCY. = {Those who CLING to WORTHLESS IDOLS FORFEIT the GRACE that could be THEIRS}

(a). Jonah Remembered The Lord.
Vr#7 "I remembered the Lord".

1. How much easier it would have been on JONAH if HE had REMEMBERED the LORD when HE STEPPED up to the TICKET BOOTH at JOPPA to BUY HIS TICKET to SAIL for TARSHISH.

Romans 12:2 ...."be transformed by the renewing of your minds.

(b). Jonah Renounced Worthless Idols.
Vr#8 "They that OBSERVE LYING VANITIES forsake ... mercy ..."

1. Jonah looked back, REMEMBERED the LORD, and said ....."It Is Not Worth It!" ... If I'm GETTING AWAY with MY SIN and CLINGING to .......WORTHLESS IDOLS, ......I just KEEP FORFEITING THE GRACE that could be MINE.

III. JONAH'S DELIVERANCE.
Verse#9-10 "But I will SACRIFICE UNTO THEE with the VOICE of THANKSGIVING; I will PAY that I have VOWED. SALVATION IS OF THE LORD. .... And the LORD SPAKE unto the FISH, and it VOMITED out JONAH UPON THE DRY LAND.

(a). Jonah's Repentance Examined.
Verse#9 "I will SACRIFICE UNTO THEE" ... voice of THANKSGIVING ...
I Will PAY .... I have VOWED. ...

(b). God's Grace Extended
Verse10 ...And THE LORD SPAKE ... Jonah upon DRY land." He can DELIVER you today! .... Eph 2:8-9