

THE JOURNEY OF THE ‘JONAH-OVERCOMERS’

(or ***THE BATTLE OF DISCIPLINE***)

INTRODUCTION

Our prayer is that this writing, we trust, will undergird any saints who sometimes feel that they may have missed what the Lord required of them. *He hath showed thee O man what is good and what doth the Lord required of thee* . . . (Micah 6:8). It is important to first know assuredly that the Lord has spoken into your heart . . . ‘What HE requires of you’. Then you yield to the Spirit within and allow Him to convince you that **you** now require the same thing. Then a further yielding to allow the Spirit to achieve or accomplish His purpose in or through you. This is the walk of the Overcomer who is being molded into a Melchisedec Priest. God’s grace and purpose will be seen to be absolutely ruling.

In renewing this article, many of the meanings of the original words have been incorporated as we have endeavoured to hear from the Lord as to the intention that He has with such a booklet in this hour. This is, of course, not belittling the pattern that Jonah was for our Lord’s time in the grave (Matt. 12:41). God was purposing to show Jonah that if he would die to self, God would raise him to newness of His life.

Jonah is a unique example of the Lord bringing him through to His desired end with some of the reactions that, during our own processings, we just might have or nearly have!

Allow the Lord to put His spotlight on any area in your walk that is still not fully surrendered to Him, for He purchased you with a great purpose in mind.

THE JOURNEY WITHIN BEGINS

Jonah, what does the Lord require of you? Jonah’s track-record was good . . . else he would not be numbered among the ‘minor prophets’. This account of him ‘missing *the mark*’ of *the high calling of God in Christ Jesus* was simply ‘a bad day’ in the life of this ‘son-under-construction’!

This book of the Bible is about Jonah, whose name means *dove*. It is a parable representing any or all of us who have the anointing (pictured as a dove) that enables one to hear *the word of the Lord*. Usually the more one is willing to do what God says, the more readily they will hear it . . . but here, as with Jonah, we just might get sidetracked through lack of discipline or an imperfect vision of what God is like, which leads, so

often, to disobedience. Because we know some detail as to the background or the ‘track-record’ of those whom God would have us speak to, we let such information affect us and we don’t quite have the usual vibrant enthusiasm to see the assignment completed!

Picture yourself in Jonah’s situation, for you might just find yourself in a similar place. Let Jonah be a warning and, at the same time, an encouragement to you. Jonah overcame himself, that is the positive observation. He didn’t do it too triumphantly, but nevertheless he did make it . . . and so will each one of us who are apprehended by God.

Jonah, being a prophet or mouthpiece of God, knew the Lord and what He desired . . . but somehow Jonah’s own ideas as to how God ought to work and whom He should touch, supplanted God’s way and affected his discipline. God had a special love . . . the sort that will not let you go . . . for Jonah, as he was God’s choice for the job at hand.

Jonah, then, like us, is called of God, and as God requires that a man be found faithful, He purposed to test Jonah so *that Jonah would find out* how the Lord sees him and would come to see himself in the same way. The Lord’s vessels must be overcomers who are fully yielded to the mind of Christ . . . 100% reliable in all circumstances so that God can trust them. Is that not our cry—to walk in such oneness with Him?

Wherever we are in the Lord, we reckon that we know what He wants! For sure we have heard the word of the Lord, but have we, for some hidden reason, become a reluctant vessel?

Arise all you apprehended Jonahs, for you are going to Nineveh—that seat of traditionalism influenced by the religious systems of man as well as sun-worshippers of bygone years. Nineveh means *the dwelling of Nimrus* and speaks of a people bound up by traditions of every kind and unknowingly affected by man’s history and mythology . . . in simplicity, the lifeless ‘Church’ that man organizes and leads! (Sun-worship festivals are included in most Church programs but under Christian names.) God has been focusing upon these sincere ones who are ‘locked up’ and guarded against any intrusion of truth to deal with their wickedness . . . for that is how God views anything that replaces what He wants.

Jonah wasn’t ready to go among those folk for he had (probably) ‘written them off’ in his own mind as hopeless! He might have condescended to label them ‘outer court people’, cut off from the word of the hour, from *present truth*. God was about to show Jonah that He had a different viewpoint and therefore a different plan.

Jonah reacted! He couldn’t face such a task, especially after what he had thought about them and what might have escaped his lips too in an unguarded moment! He couldn’t get excited about going to those ones who, it appeared, did everything contrary to the moving of the Spirit of God. They *did what was right in their own eyes*, led on by the reli-

gious spirits ‘having a ball’. So instead of crying out to God for help and wisdom, he decided to go his own way.

Jonah felt he didn’t need a difficult step right then. An easier course would be much more attractive and he soon thought of one. A little more time and he was even convinced it was God! He’d go to the *Tarshish Fellowship* via Joppa. He even believed that God had blessed the trip, for was there not a ship waiting for him?!!! The fellowship in Tarshish understood how he felt and there were definitely a number of ‘golden gems’ (the meaning of *Tarshish*) among the folk there. . . .

Jonah went down . . . yes down . . . ! That is the way all go who flee from the presence of the Lord. Joppa was ‘beautiful’, for that is its meaning, and unfortunately it was situated in the Province of Dan — judgment. To be such a group where they could freely judge others—constructively, of course!—with no interfering forces, was always beautiful. The modern-day Pharisees are really *at home* in such a fellowship, where they all believe the same things and are quite proud of their ‘unity’!

Jonah! You surely don’t believe that you can dodge God? Stop and recall how the Lord alone knows best—especially in the details and the timings of His actions. Unbeknown to Jonah, because his willing obedience was suffering a setback, God was going to have His way. No one changes His mind and nor does any circumstance alter what He has devised. God cared and cares for all His people, whatever place they are in, and also He has a special care for His chosen vessels as He processes them towards the full stature of Himself. Never forget that the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent God is unstoppable . . . for His great plan of the ages is perfect.

God moved in! His Spirit (wind) moved upon the waters once again with a glorious upheaval that would work together for good . . . the good in this instance was to get the attention of a certain (fellow)ship whose strength was in ‘what they believed’ and could do. Each one had their own idea of what God was like. The ‘mariner-members’ would do everything to keep their ship afloat. They would learn how the ‘fear of the Lord’ would replace the ‘fear of dying’.

The sincerity of these mariners was praiseworthy. “*Let us remove unnecessary things from our ship*”. So overboard went certain gimmicks, chattels, programs and beliefs. This tempestuous scene demanded special prayer times: but Jonah did not attend, as he was hiding and asleep. He had no idea at that time how his selfish choice of action was affecting so many others. If one has a calling from God and does not move in it in obedience, then there will be a tendency to hide and sleep to avoid facing up to it.

There was something about Jonah however, that attracted the attention of the ‘Captain’ of the ship. Pastor ‘Shipmaster’, which means *a leader who knows how to handle the ropes* (!), sincerely wanted Jonah’s input, for he was afraid. He also wanted to know the

cause of their predicament. God moved and His spotlight shone right on Jonah as the cause. God even used the ‘casting of lots’ to expose Jonah and bring him out of hiding.

Friends, you can never run from the presence of the Lord once the word of the Lord has been spoken to you and expect things to run smoothly. Each man of the crew was calling out to God—or at least to their image of God in their ‘IMAGE-ination’ and Jonah was expected to do the same. He wasn’t. He was hiding and he was asleep.

It’s check-up time, Jonah! Why are you so slow to admit that you are wrong and it is your fault that God’s plan seems to be dragging? By the way, all you ‘Kingdom Jonahs’, do you really know to what you are called? *What does the Lord require of YOU?!*

It is always good to restate your vision lest it get covered up! Questions were being asked: Who are you? What’s your background? Where you from? What ‘Church’ do you attend?

Jonah was now convicted of his folly. He pushed back his shoulders and declared: *I am a Hebrew!* The meaning of *Hebrew* is *one who walks beyond or on the other side*. In the Spirit Jonah knew on which side of the cross he walked; do you? Do you know who you are in Christ? Not what you were, but now are! Jonah testified that he feared the Elohim-Creator who made the sea and the land . . . the all-in-all God.

Overcoming starts with your testimony of your relationship with Father-God. Then Jonah learned that *he that knoweth to do good and does it not, to him it is sin*. We know the rest of the account and can therefore ask the question, *How come you failed on such a simple test, Jonah?* It just doesn’t make sense. However, Jonah judged himself when he again found the problem was in the mirror, *Oh Lord, help me to get rid of ‘the me, myself and I’ from my life.*”The mariner-members obliged and expelled him from their ship after doing everything to save his life. By contrast, God wants us *to take up our cross*, die daily and follow Him by obeying the word He reveals in us. Those mariners were God’s tool for that situation where God wanted full control over Jonah’s life. Jonah received a revelation that for him *to live was Christ and to die was gain!*

Jonah’s true ‘colours’ were coming to the fore. He was now willing to lay down his life for others . . . one of the marks of the Melchisedec Priesthood . . . and these members of the crew hadn’t seen the like before. Jonah was willing to ‘die’ at last! Jonah didn’t see the ‘fruit’ of his actions . . . it was not really his business! This ‘death’ was *precious in the sight of the Lord* and He used it to cause these people in this ‘ship’ to fear the Lord, to give an offering and to vow that things would be different in their lives. God’s timing, etc. is a marvellous expression of His Sovereignty.

The Lord had it all planned . . . not difficult seeing He had all knowledge anyway! A special great fish of whale proportions was already on its way to this situation/circum-

stance. Jonah was swallowed up by it. Now focus on this — this traumatic happening was his protection. Somebody recently commented that every problem should become an adventure—it certainly was for this overcomer!

From the mariner's point of view, Jonah was dead. True, he was now buried alive and very much the captive . . . he was learning what it was to be *a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ* with no will of his own. He was graciously brought to the place where he knew that he could not do anything for himSELF. The three days and three nights of Jonah's 'hell' parallels the three days and three nights that *Jesus was in the heart of the earth*, which included a visit to hell.

Observe how the last resort now becomes Jonah's first resort. He prayed and poured out his soul unto the Lord from his confined inescapable position. His prayer started off motivated by his woeful situation and he did what so many of us do, he related all the details to God which He already knew. He even received the revelation that he was going through an experience such as one would expect in hell . . . hell being the place of correction unto righteousness where one learns to be willing to die out to self entirely. No more wood, hay or stubble will then remain in one's thinking. This certainly was hell for Jonah, the reluctant servant.

God heard his prayer. Jonah's revelation was that God was Sovereign in all this. Jonah testified to God that it was HE that had thrown him into the sea. All the heavy-duty waves were from God . . . Jonah knew that God was winning in this dealing. He also acknowledged that it was his failure that had separated him from God's presence. Jonah knew where to turn for help. Jonah's soul was now being touched by God; he saw his own thinking was pictured by the weeds that enclosed his head. His journey with the Lord took him down, down, down until there was no more down to go! He saw the ribs of the whale as his prison bars for as long as God wanted it so which was *until* Jonah broke before the Lord. (The word *forever* in KJV = *for an age* . . . which is a God-determined length of time in which He accomplishes what He desires).

What a marvellous turnaround for Jonah. His soulish thinking fainted and got out of the way. He saw as God sees . . . that it is so easy *to paint ourselves into a corner*"when we do not acknowledge the Lordship of Christ continually. God was looking for a sacrifice — the 100% offering of Jonah himself. A sacrifice willingly given and it would be a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Even when the situation was far from pleasant, there arose that sacrifice of thanksgiving, for it cost Jonah something! Then Jonah agreed to obey the Lord and he also acknowledged that 'salvation for all' was in God's hand.

God's dealing for the moment was complete and therefore the situation with the whale was no longer needed. It took Jonah three days and three nights to arrive at full surrender. How long is it taking you? God's tool, a mere 'whale', was there by the land right on time and Jonah was lifted to a higher place of life . . . land where he could now walk out

his decision.

Jonah's second chance! *Jonah, your commission is to go to this Nineveh people and speak to them exactly what the Lord speaks. Do not let your ideas enter the scene at all.* The great fish had vomited Jonah out in a precise spot that was exactly three days journey to Nineveh. God's accuracy in all things is very reassuring.

The three days and three nights match exactly the time Jesus was in the grave before He was resurrected. Here we have a journey of three days for this overcomer to make it to Nineveh. From the provision of resurrection-life by Jesus unto the full saving of the vast company of modern-day-Nineveh, will be three days, or three thousand years from the time of the provision by Christ.

Jonah's arrival at higher ground depicts resurrection life, for he had laid down his life and had been buried. Now we will see what effect this yielded vessel will have with the power of God moving through him. Speaking *the word of the Lord*, he declared that there would be forty days probation for this people. The people of Nineveh believed God's word to them, believed God, declared a fast from the things of the natural, carnal realm and they showed outwardly that they were for real. The King, depicting the leadership, did likewise. A mighty word given in the anointing of God always produces the required fruit. These citizens went even further . . . they wanted nothing that would keep the 'carnal life' alive.

God saw, heard their cries and spared the city at that time from judgment. However some of Jonah's old thinking was still prevalent. Why did he suddenly resurrect those thoughts? There was still that little thing to be disposed of. He thought that this sort of blessing was only for the 'elite' . . . he was still looking at people instead of the Lord and Him alone. Jonah was really upset but God, knowing this, used it to show him what still needed to be dealt with. This dealing of *death to self* was not over until **all** of the former Adamic nature was mortified.

Jonah was a stubborn learner or maybe just a slow one. A casual observer could see his heel marks all along the way as it appeared God dragged him into maturity! Jonah was in a bad state . . . now he was having a pity-party and kept himself apart from what God was achieving. He was again running from the great plan of God that He had for traditional Nineveh (Selah).

Deep within Jonah was the knowledge and desire for God completely. In his miserable self-centred place he had to DO something . . . he built a booth. He knew it was fitting. A booth was used in *the Feast of Tabernacles* and Jonah was finding himself celebrating that Feast in a way so very different than what he had expected. He'd just be an observer! But God was not going to let him backslide into the carnal realm, so, still being in absolute command, God caused a gourd to grow overnight which gave Jonah some

added shade. God must have smiled . . . for it is reckoned by many that a gourd is a castor oil plant with its root meaning to vomit! The Lord used such to remind Jonah of what he had been through when he did not enthusiastically go along with God's plan, which ended up in him being vomited out by the whale.

Not seeing the sovereignty and purpose of God in this scenario, he was delighted with the extra shade. Next day God commanded a worm to remove the gourd and with it went the shade. The Feast of Tabernacles will not improve your humanhood, it will release that which is the Lord from within you. The worm was unique too . . . it is with such worms that red dye is made. Jonah was not to forget the significance of the blood of the Lamb wherein was his provision for every step into becoming holy and perfect.

The worm removed his shade and God added a special wind of His Spirit to again put the pressure on Jonah along with some 'fire'. His problem was in his head (thinking). Again Jonah wanted to die . . . he was angry and God simply endorsed the desire to die and commended Jonah for his striking request. God had been wanting Jonah to lay down his life all along—lay down those thoughts that centre on natural things especially and to think Godly thoughts.

God decreed that He would save all the inhabitants of the city of Nineveh . . . all traditionally minded people will come [to know Him which is life eternal](#). There were 120,000 — the same as 120 x 1000, which translates to 'the glory of God' (1000) coming forth when "the end of all flesh" is accomplished (120) — all of those who are so bound up that they have no understanding as to what God is doing at this time.

God, being God, will achieve His great plan, which includes all those who don't know what is happening in them and around them. God will have his Jonahs, even if their preparation takes a while. God is the One who looks on the heart to see if it is desiring Him and His ways. He does not look at the mistakes, the spiritual pity-parties or the slowness to see the old life put under foot. [He is faithful who has called us, for He will do it . . . in spite of us!](#)

Far better it is for each one of us to fully surrender our whole life to Him right now and die to self without any 'hell-like', whale-sized circumstance to put pressure on us. God knows our situation perfectly and He has such a mighty purpose for every man that He prepares His vessels carefully and thoroughly, for which we are and will be very grateful.

If you observe the slightest indication of a bad day trying to overtake you, then a quick surrender is what is called for . . . if that does not happen, be not surprised at the lengths that God will go to in order to bring you through to His desired place in Himself. You are a chosen vessel and God has invested so much in you. He will simply bring you to a place where He can trust you implicitly. § Ray and Sheila Knight - 3533 Carrington Rd. #305 - Westbank, BC V4T 2Z9 - Canada