

a tremendous case of the disobedient servant of God yielding to the will of the Father. How much like our Lord (John 10:17, 18). But the answer to what must be done is this--judgment of wrong doing!

It is truly a miracle that the sea ceased from its raging (literally in Hebrew, the sea stood!). Normally the waves continue to swell when the wind ceases, but God Who was responsible for it all wrought a miracle. The sea obeyed like His servant (cf. Matt. 8:26). When God's will is done, the peace of God is experienced.

5. DEDICATION for life. v. 16.

It just seems that this verse is placed in our Bibles to show the reality of these mariners' desire before God. Three major actions are listed:

- a. They feared the Lord (Jehovah).
(Deut. 6:13,24) Proper relations with God bring about godly fear (Prov. 1:7).
- b. They offered sacrifices to the Lord (Jehovah). A true worshipper comes with this!
- c. They vowed vows. This was a promise to do afterwards what they could not then do!

CONCLUSION

If there is any passage which affirms the truth that men are required to live up to the light that they have, this is it. It was from all points of view a strange situation, but God brought Himself the glory and that even among the heathen! May God help us to obey what we do know to be His will and then see Him work wonders for His glory alone. Amen.

THE BOOK OF JONAH

"Self-Condensation"

Jonah 1:10-16

Introduction

1. Words of amazement and wonder are recorded in the Word of God. One such statement is that found here (v.10): "Why hast thou done this?" Indeed, the inconsistency of believers is the marvel of the young Christian, the repulsion of those without, the hardening of the unbeliever. It will ever be so. All nature seems to cry out to and against the unfaithful Christian!

2. Surely, sin is foolishness. But had not our Lord warned us of the waywardness of men's hearts, such unrealities and inconsistencies would be a sore trial of faith. Hence, what would seem to be a scandal is but a testimony to the truthfulness of the Word of God (cf. Gal. 5:19-21; I Cor. 1-6).

3. But what is to be done about all of this? Is there no solution to the problem? Yes, thank God there is! Heaven is God's answer to the wicked devices of men's strategies (1 John 3:1-3; Phil. 3:21). Meanwhile, however, there are other answers. Some of these are suggested in the text. Here they are:-

1. DIRECTION from Jonah. vv. 10-12.

That Jonah was fleeing from the Lord was patent. Indeed, the prophet had devulged this to the heathen sailors. This being the case, the sailors determined to inquire what could be done with the culprit to relieve the disaster.

It is known that Jonah was a prophet. The lot had marked him out as the sinner. He must give direction. Others would follow and obey. To make things more pointed, the sea like a thing which was alive and obedient to its Master's will. The Hebrew can be rightly rendered: "the sea was going and was whirling." It held its course and the waves tossed. The whole marched on like battalions which were marshalled for the end to which they had been created. The sea was out to avenge the Lord. It

is terrific to read this portion of the Word of God for it unequivocally teaches the divine power in natural forces.

Specifically, Jonah directed the men to lift him up and impose him (literal translation) upon the sea! These are drastic instructions to be sure. BUT, the Word of God says that Jonah "knew" that it was for his sake that the tempest had been sent. What does this mean? It means that Jonah had divine revelation of the incident to the intent that he interpreted God's message in the storm (cf. Heb. 1:1)! Let no one miss the wonderful truth of Jonah's obedience now to the revealed will of God. Sometimes hearts must go through the storm before they yield to the Lord (cf. Isa. 43:2).

NOTE: Jonah's self-condemnation here raises other important issues:

- a. Sin, even when confessed, must be punished. Thank God He often lays it on His Substitute (Isa. 53:6).
- b. Sin must be dropped to gain peace. Check these verses (Isa. 48:18,22; 57:19-21; Psa. 32:4, 5).
- c. Sin demands complete obedience (1 Sam. 15:23).

2. ATTENTION to the sea. v. 13.

Spontaneously the men on the ship tried to avoid Jonah's assessment of the situation. This is always the way of the flesh. It seeks to find "another way" than that which God has established (cf. John 10:1). Man's ways always differ from God's (Isa. 55:8,9). When will man ever learn to digest this truth!

Real energy was put by the sailors into their efforts. The Hebrew verb for "rowed hard" is "dig." Like a man turning up dirt, so these men dug their oars into the water to firmly bring the ship to land. But all was in vain. Here was the reverse of the Flood. There the ark stayed up by the power of the divine will. Here the ship could make no progress

by the power of the divine will. Elsewhere the ship did not sink with its crew and passengers at the power of the divine will (Acts 27).

Do not interpret recklessness in actually being prepared to lose life than cause death as of God. It wasn't in this instance. Of our Lord, that crowd was prepared to kill HIM and spare themselves, so they thought! It is interesting that the two phrases in vv. 11, 13 are identical in the original (the sea wrought and was tempestuous). God never lost control of the forces which He had established! This is true unto this very hour. How comforting!

3. PETITION before the Lord. v. 14.

Let it be noted that the men did not appeal to their own gods as they had done (v. 5), but now they speak to the Lord! And this they do with great vigor. With deep need they moved their voices toward heaven. Two specific Hebrew verbs are used, one twice, to emphasize their desperation of appeal. They asked God for three requests:

- a. Personal safety. They did not want to be held accountable for the life of Jonah. Somehow they knew that life was for life, blood for blood (cf. Rom. 1:19,20). Complete exoneration for the deed about to be done was requested prior to its commitment.
- b. Practical judgment. They felt that Jonah was more innocent than they, yet before God he was guilty! It is as if their whole lives came up before them and they pled with God not to look with disfavour upon them because of this one more act of transgression. Sounds like real confession.
- c. Performance of God's will. Here is a concise confession of faith for men who apparently had come to see and know the true God (Psa. 135:6).

4. ACTION against sin. v. 15.

Jonah had instructed the men to lift him up and impose him upon the sea. The same two verbs are used in this verse to indicate the action of the sailors. It is