

BY PASTOR WALE AFELUMO

JONAH'S JOURNEY: THE TURN

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

Jonah 2:1-10

ADDITIONAL STUDY

2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 119:60
(NIV), & Acts 3:19

PRAYER

Dear Father, I see where I have erred, show me the lessons in my trials and lead me to repentance. Let me find my way again. My desire is to do your bidding. I say yes Lord! Amen.

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly. And he said: "I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, and He answered me. "Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and You heard my voice." Jonah 2:1-2

God is always working within and around our clumsiness and accomplishing His purposes through them. Just like He did with Jonah. God kept him and preserved him in the belly of the fish in spite of his disobedience. Right in the midst of our struggle, our pain and discomfort God preserves and keeps us for the assignment because He also doesn't want to lose a servant.

When the storm arose and the ship was going to crash with Jonah in it, God was trying to get Jonah's attention. When Jonah was thrown into the sea and the fish swallowed him up, God wanted Jonah to come to his senses. Isn't it funny that God never rebuked Jonah outrightly? However, Jonah got a rebuke through the events that happened after he took flight; he learned obedience through the things he suffered. For some of us, God is trying to get your attention and until you say to God, like Jonah, "Let your word come to me a second time," that difficult situation may persist. So even in suffering, you must pay attention! God may be nudging you. There comes a time in your life that you must:

Look at the events around you and hear God speak to you through the tough times; when we disobey God we invite His chastisement. God allows trials and tough times to discipline us and prepare us for the place He is leading us.

Tell ourselves enough of the excuses. As soon as we realize that our struggles are God's chastisement, we must yield at once or we only worsen our predicament as in the case of Jonah who was thrown into the sea and then was swallowed by a fish! Turn and throw ourselves into God's hands. Bite the bullet. Obey! Take the first step and say a prayer of repentance like Jonah and cry out for help. Make a move towards answering the call. The sorrow that disobedience brings comes to test us and then gives us a second chance to repent and obey.

Finally, obedience calls for action. Put in the sickle to rescue people. Get the work started and know that God is going to back you up. Let what you learnt and experienced while 'running from God,' become a source of validation for your mission – the fact that Jonah survived the belly of the fish became a sign to the people he preached to, it made his message more believable.

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