

Jonah

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[0 : 0 0] seeking the Lord's help I direct your attention this evening to the second chapter of the book of Jonah and the verse 9 second chapter of the book of Jonah and verse 9 but I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving I will pay that that I have vowed salvation is of the Lord that I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving I will pay that that I have vowed salvation is of the Lord we can see in the belly of the whale repentance godly sorrow and repentance manifested in the heart of God's servant Jonah and we can hear what he said and what was in his heart we can see that the Lord brought him into a willing obedience to his will and made him ready in the belly of the whale if ever he spared his life that he would walk in the paths of obedience these vows are solemn matters they are to be kept we read of a number of vows in scripture so I might went in looking at this text this afternoon to Hannah and the path she walked in and the trial that was hers peculiarly laid upon her by the Lord and in those opening chapters of the book of Samuel we see the sweet communion between her soul and her God then we read she bowed a bow and said

O Lord of hosts if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember me and not forget thine handmaid but will give unto thine handmaid a man child then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life and there shall no razor come upon his head and we read that the Lord remembered her and we see how she indeed kept her vow and here we have the vow of the Lord's servant Jonah in the valley of the whale and we can see the work of the Lord wrought out in his heart in that solemn place into which the

Lord brought him and the Lord's purpose was that he should be made willing in the day of his power willing to go to Nineveh and this was the vow that he made that he would go the Lord brought him forth and that he would walk in those sacred paths of obedience which we see he did in obedience to the commandment of his God his disobedience is a solemn matter it was as it were instantaneous when the Lord called him to go blind unbelief is sure to earn and did it he went immediately in this path of solemn rebellion and turned to flee from the presence of his God this in the Lord's mercy was a place where the Lord did not leave him and we see the remarkable nature of the storm that was raised up

Jonah had that his God was following him in his disobedience and that his intention was not to leave him and when the matter was brought to a head and he told the sailors what he was doing and of his disobedience when he commanded them to cast him over the side of the ship we see that he cast himself quite manifestly into the hands of his God this remarkable story is referred to by the Lord Jesus Christ thrice in the New Testament and once in the most extraordinary circumstances as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale so must the

Son of Man be three days and three nights in the belly of the earth it has always appeared to me most remarkable that the Lord Jesus Christ when here on earth should show that he was well aware of the prayers of this man in the belly of the whale we know they were answered through his intercession in the course of heaven we know that the Lord knew Jonah in the course of heaven just as he revealed his knowledge of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration and showed them manifestly with Peter, James and John so the Lord gives divine credence here so clearly to this pathway which

[7 : 44] Jonah walked in and we see here that the Lord used this pathway which Jonah walked in in this solemn dealing with his God that Jonah had here in the belly of the whale brought as he was to confession and repentance and godly sorrow for sin brought into the hands of a sovereign God to realize it and brought down to wrestling prayer here we see the most remarkable scene a man walking in sin and disobedience halted and brought to his knees almost like the apostle Paul was in darkness trapped as it were in one place and held

God deals with his dear people in prisons he dealt with Joseph in a prison tried him and brought him into a place where he did business with his God in deep water and had a solemn realization of the hand of his God upon him well in this case Jonah was brought to communion with the Lord of a most remarkable nature and as soon as he was in the belly of the whale we read he cried unto the Lord his God what a mercy he had a knowledge a spiritual knowledge a divinely given knowledge of the Lord his God he was born again of the spirit of

God manifestly and here we see when the Lord dealt with him how he was brought to commune with him go to him seek his face and he speaks in this chapter of his prayer I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord and he heard me out of the belly of hell cried I and thou heardest me that is the grave he was in a place where death stared him in the face where there was no deliverance and he was in that place not just naturally but spiritually where he was learning and where

God was teaching him this that comes in his confession salvation is of the Lord he was in a place where he was learning sovereign grace the Lord was dealing with him ever he was to come forth it would be a divine deliverance and he knew it we can hear his prayer in the simplicity of it it is this you know Lord save or I perish undertake for me from the prayers but the solemn nature and weight of what he was in lay in this brought himself into and his

God was dealing with him he could not escape this we see in some of the trials of God's dear people when they come into their prisons that it is an ordained path of God we see it with Job and Joseph they came into solemn path God was teaching them we cannot say that Joseph walked in all his years and years of affliction for any particular sin he committed he walked in that path according to God's solemn determinate counsel to teach him and to use him and Job is very similar but you know in the fiery furnaces of affliction whether they are brought upon us by our own sin and iniquity or whether they are like Job and Joseph

[13 : 13] God has a determinate counsel and purpose in them they are the fiery fires of affliction in which the Lord determines to melt the hearts of his dear people and bring them into close communion with himself on account of their need the Lord brought Jonah into a place of need oh it was a place of indescribable need he was brought utterly into the hands of his God to determine whether he lived or died and he knew it and in that pathway his eyes were raised to heaven and we have this and he heard me well could the dear man of

God say salvation is of the Lord we wouldn't speculate sufficient to know that he was deeply aware of communion with his God deeply aware that his godly sorrow and repentance his confession had been received by his God you know I believe when Jacob was at Rukjabbah on his knees wrestling with his God it was confession he knew how just was the trial he was in he knew how it had come about he was not unaware he brought the entire thing on his own head he wasn't unaware what he sown he was now reaping and if the

Lord were to wipe out his own family and end his own life and his brother coming to him in wrath and anger with armed men were to bring to nothing everything that he had God would be giant and you know like Jonah he went apart in confession and godly sorrow and repentance and the Lord heard him we read that he blessed him there we hear the Lord servant Moses in great need saying if thy presence go not with me carryeth not up hands oh how he felt the need of the Lord's presence well we know this that in the midst of all his fear and temptation and darkness

Jonah was aware of the light of God's countenance and we can tell that he understood fully the nature of it and that is this that it was mercy he cried to the Lord and he heard him he answered his prayer and he goes on to say out of the belly of hell cried I and thou hearest me all how we see the way in which God's dear children come to make the confession that Jonah made when the Lord was ready to deliver him he made that confession on the ground of a sacred experience of the

Lord's presence in giving him a spirit of godly sorrow and confession and wrestling prayer in that solemn place the pit of corruption the place of his own guilt and sin sorrow and darkness rebellion and as a servant of god turning away from the will of his god and we see here his confession and the beauty of him the blessed nature of that sweet communion which he knew the lord gave his dear servant a hope not necessarily exactly what would happen but he gave him a hope in answer to his prayer and he brought him to a sweet place where he knew the lord's approbation upon him we see the lord dealing with his servant david in his great sin of adultery and we see how he wrestled for the child the lord didn't answer him the child died but you know we read the lord heard him nathan was sent to tell him some solemn truth yes his prayer was heard pardon was to be known in his heart but the sword was never to leave his house he would ever carry in life's journey the most solemn marks of his disobedience and rebellion against the lord servant moses when the lord commanded him like jonah to go in his name and go to egypt to pharaoh he turned to argue with his god i've often been amazed that he didn't raise the issue with his god that he was eighty which he was at that time he had been forty years in the court of pharaoh and forty years in the back side of the desert when the lord met him at the burning bush yet his life's work was to be the remaining forty years of his life but he didn't offer that excuse the excuse he offered was he was slow of speech unable to speak and you know i've always thought this for the rest of his days as

[20 : 49] Aaron spoke in the court of pharaoh for him he must have carried in his heart the guilt and sorrow of the burning bush ever carried the solemn consequences before his eyes of his unbelief and his unwillingness to go trusting in the lord these things are written for our instruction the case of jonah is written for our instruction not to solemnly follow him in an antinomian fashion and say we shall receive the same blessings that he received no but to be given grace to keep our eyes on jesus fixed and to obey him in his divine commandments to have no other rest but to walk in the paths of obedience before our god to his divine commandments and jonah goes on there cast has cast me into the deep he knew who'd done it or here's his confession god had done it and he goes on in the floods compassed me all thy billows and thy waves passed over me and

I said I'm cast out of thy sight yet I will look again toward thy holy temple oh there is a blessedness and a sweetness in this spirit that jonah had cast out of god's sight righteously that was his confession and yet in the midst of his sorrow and his guilt and his rebellion the lord had brought him to look again towards his holy temple to look again toward that work of the ministry we're reminded of that scripture having put our hand to the plough and looking back oh how solemn that is the lord calls his dear servants in the work of the ministry to go forward trusting in him leaning upon him not on any arm of flesh but resting in him proving his strength proving his faithfulness proving the truth of the word that he taught his apostle

Paul when he laid that thorn in the flesh upon him and he asked the lord to remove it the lord said my grace is sufficient for thee and he said most gladly therefore I glory in mine infirmity that the power of christ might rest upon me and all how we see here that Jonah as he had originally looked at the awful nature of the burden of going to Nineveh and fled from it now in the belly of the whale in his vow he was ready to go well might the dear man of God have said in his prayer Lord I am ready to go spare me this once forgive pardon mine iniquity O Lord for it is great enable me to go leaning upon thyself thou art my salvation and thou art my strength and he goes on to speak of the waters compassing him about even to the soul not only were they natural waters but they were the solemn sins of a lifetime the sins that laid heavily upon his heart they compassed him even to the soul and he felt the solemn nature of it

I believe here we may well believe that there was a full confession of all his sins brought before him in this place where the Lord brought him aside to deal with him and to teach him the Lord loaded his servant Job with a multitude of sorrows and at the end of his book he comes to that beautiful place where he says I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear but now after these troubles mine eyes see of thee glorious sight of God's holiness and majesty and what does he say wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes the Lord brought his dear servant to a blessed place in affliction using affliction as the hymn writer says afflictions make us see what else would escape our sight how very violent base are we in

God how pure and bright I went down to the bottoms of the mountains the earth where the bars was about me yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption O Lord my God the grave hell and corruption in his own heart this was what Jonah learnt in the valley of the whale death and corruption and all what a solemn place yet what a good one it is the place that God will bring every one of his dear children to in the course of his work of grace in their hearts he uses means to teach

[27 : 58] I believe this there is no truth no doctrine that we do not learn only in the path of experience it's only as the Lord brings us into these places that he applies his truth in our hearts and works to teach us and we see here that the Lord's servant Jonah was taught doctrine in his heart he was brought down to know his own corruption in his soul and he says has brought up my life from corruption

O Lord my God we can see here that Christ had an interest in him for how this man of God was brought to know redeeming love and blood in this place and to commune with his God Jesus being his advocate you know there is much more than meets the eye in the words of Christ as Jonah was three days and three nights in the valley of the whale he communed with Christ just as Jacob did at Brook Jabba he knew him just as Moses did at the burning bush just as Job said

I know that my Redeemer liver these men of God came to this sweet communion with Christ and you know Christ went down into the grave exactly these words hell and corruption will not leave my soul in hell neither would thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption he went that way for his dear son Jonah he went down into that path which we read of he was obedient unto death even the death of the cross and I believe there is much more in Christ words and he said when they asked him for a sign he would only give them the sign of the prophet

Jonah what teaching there is here a Lord leading his dear church down in their hearts and souls to be killed to everything here buried with Christ in baptism raised with him to newness of life there is so much religion today that knows nothing of this he knows nothing of what Job came into easy believism starts on the wrong foot it starts without this path it starts on the mountain top all you've got to do is believe when the

[34 : 44] Jonah had the most sacred experience in the belly of the whale of walking with his God he had a glorious realization that this truth was blessedly true salvation is of the Lord he came forth on dry land I believe there are two things very clearly here in his experience and one comes before the other he came forth washed hardened redeemed cleansed knowing in his heart as this chapter shows us the depths of the truth that eternal salvation regarding his soul was all of sovereign grace was all of redeeming love all centered at Calvary all was the work of the eternal son of God and that is the fundamental truth that stood out in this experience now secondary to that was that his life was spared and he had received a divine commission to go forth to Nineveh it hadn't been withdrawn

I will sacrifice unto thee with a voice of thanksgiving I will pay that that I have vowed and
he could put this glorious amen on it this precious seal salvation is of the Lord who has the
Lord so led you that you can truthfully enter into the same path as Jonah and you can say
from the depths of your soul salvation is of the Lord amen yeah as as as as as as aselles
as as as as as as as as as as as as