

**Turn
Your Eyes
Upon Jesus**

Victor Paul Wierwille

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Upon Jesus**

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Our Times

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Victor Paul Wierwille

edited posthumously by
Christopher C. Geer

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The scriptures used throughout this book are quoted from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. All explanatory insertions within a scripture verse are enclosed in square brackets. All non-English words are printed with English letters and italicized.

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*To
The Household of The Way Corps
May We
Rise Up, O Men of God*

Contents

	Preface	ix
1.	Our God Is Able	3
2.	David and Bathsheba... The Final Chapter	23
3.	A Study of the Book of Jonah	35
4.	The Healing of Naaman	53
5.	The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon	63
6.	The Capacity to Endure	75
7.	WAR: Its Cause, Continuation and Termination	93
8.	Sin, Sickness and the Saviour	109
9.	The Root of Righteousness	117
10.	Partakers of Divine Nature	131
11.	Because He Shared, We Share	143
12.	Fishers of Men	153
	About the Author	167

Preface

How often Dr. Wierwille's life and teaching ministry was enriched by song! He joyed and rejoiced in song, and as you enjoy God's Word on these pages, may you too joy and rejoice in God's goodness and love — and may you be so thrilled with God's Word that you *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*.

Christopher C. Geer
Gartmore, Scotland
March 1990

My God and I

*My God and I go in the field together;
We walk and talk as good friends should and do.
We clasp our hands, our voices ring with laughter,
My God and I walk through the meadow's hue.*

*He tells me of the years that went before me,
When heavenly plans were made for me to be;
When all was but a dream of dim conception
To come to life, earth's verdant glory see.*

*My God and I will go for aye together,
We'll walk and talk as good friends should and do.
This earth will pass and with it common trifles
But God and I will go unendingly.*

Chapter 1

Our God Is Able

There was an empire situated in south-west Asia in what today is in the area of what we refer to as Iraq. In the Old Testament, this empire is referred to as "Accad" or "Akkad". It is also referred to, and used a number of times, speaking of "the plains of Shinar", or "Shinar". At other times there are references in the Bible to people who live in the "land of the Chaldeans".

This empire was called Babylonia. It is in the area that at one time had in it what is referred to in the Bible as the garden of Eden. It is the area from which Abraham came, for it was from a very great city of this particular empire called Ur of the Chaldees that Abraham left.

On the north this empire was bordered by Assyria — to the east by the Persian hills, or as the Old Testament refers to it, Elam — on the west by the Arabian Desert and on the south by the Persian Gulf. This was the empire known as the Babylonian Empire.

It got its name from its capital city, the city of Babylon. This great city was situated in what is the geographical centre of the world, and there in its day it sat, as I heard someone say, "like a diamond on a couch of velvet".

This great city was surrounded with double walls of protection. Those walls were approximately seventeen miles long to border the city, and the outside wall was wide enough that two chariots could have a race on it going around the city.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

In that great city a vain, yet fabulous and very great king called Nebuchadnezzar built what became known as one of the seven wonders of the world, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. He built this for his wife whose name was called Amytis. She was a Median princess whom he had married, and the Hanging Gardens, one of the seven wonders of the world, were built by Nebuchadnezzar for this beautiful queen.

In it, up to this time, have been located via archaeology fifty-three major temples to different gods within the border of that great city of Babylon. The greatest two temples are to Ishtar and to Marduk. Ishtar was the goddess of fertility. Marduk was the sun-god.

The record of some things that occurred in the times of this great empire of Babylon is written in the Book of Daniel. Daniel, the man of God, was a prophet living at that time, and things had occurred in the city of Jerusalem and in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to the south. The Temple in Jerusalem had been ransacked. The best of their young manhood had been taken as slaves to Babylon. The most beautiful women had been taken as slaves to Babylon.

Daniel 3:1:

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height *was* threescore cubits, *and* the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar had, on his expeditions, gone out to the known world at that time — all the other empires, all the other kingdoms — and wherever he went he captured their gods and he brought their gods back to Babylon. He had the greatest collection of gods of any king that perhaps has ever lived. When he would capture these gods of those countries and bring them back, he set them up in the city of Babylon. He knew that he was bigger than any of the gods he had captured, because it just happens to be a law of logic that if you can capture a god then

you are bigger than that god. So finally Nebuchadnezzar had the most brilliant idea he could ever have. He said, "Since I captured all the gods — there are none left to capture, I have got them all — then I must be god." So he had this statue made out of pure gold sixty cubits high and he set it out there on the plain of Dura and he said, "There is your god!"

Then he did something else.

Verses 2–5:

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Then an herald cried aloud [with might he heralded forth], To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up.

This is sort of remarkable that King Nebuchadnezzar figured this all out. He had seen that at these other gods people would fall down, they would worship them, so he decided that to this god that he had set up of himself, made out of pure gold, he would demand that whenever the things in verse 5 occurred

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

everybody would bow. Today some people look toward Mecca when they pray, some others toward Jerusalem — a few of us look to God.

Verse 6:

And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

That command had some heat in it! This was a declaration from the mighty king, Nebuchadnezzar. He had called in all the rulers from all those other countries that he had captured, he had brought them all back, and he said: "Fellows, I do not care where you live, if you are a thousand miles from here or five thousand. At that hour when these things occur, everybody down facing toward the statue that I had built on the plain of Dura."

Verses 7-11:

Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and [they] accused the Jews [Judaean].

They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.

Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

Our God Is Able

And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, *that* he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Is that what the king had said? Yes, it is exactly what the king had said.

Verse 12:

[But you know, O King] There are certain Jews [Judaeans] whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon....

The reason that he had set them over the province of Babylon is because of what the man of God, Daniel, had done. For in the 2nd chapter in verses 46–49 it says:

...the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.

The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth *it is*, that your God *is* a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret.

Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise *men* of Babylon.

Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel *sat* in the gate of the king.

That was how three young, tremendous men — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — got to those prominent positions of

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

authority. But, you must remember that they were Judaeans. They had come from a land that at least at one time had heard about the one God, to worship the one God. They had remembered back in their minds, "I *am* the Lord thy God, which have brought thee [forth] out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." And here they were in a land in positions of authority and power and this great leader had set up this statue of himself on the plain of Dura made out of pure gold, and he demanded that they worship that statue as god.

And so, after these commands were given, these three great men — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — whenever the music played, did not bow; they did not fall down on their faces to worship that god. Naturally there was a lot of jealousy, because whenever there are men of God standing for God's Word, all the unbelievers envy them, get jealous about them, want to defeat them, want to destroy them. They figured that the way to destroy them was to go back to the king, and they worked him very psychologically. They said: "You are the king, therefore O King, you live for ever. Look, King, you have got three great men here who are in responsible positions of authority, and those three fellows down there are not bowing when they are supposed to." And this really was something, because it says in chapter 3, verses 12-15:

...these men, O king, have not regarded thee...

In other words, "They did not pay attention to what you said. They did not believe it."

...they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

Our God Is Able

Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, *Is it true*, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; *well*: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

Boy, oh boy! Imagine that. Let us say that you are in a responsible position of authority, like the Attorney-General of a state, and you are called in, and you are set right down, and you look into the governor's eyes and the cabinet is present, and they say to you: "Listen, you have not obeyed our orders. You have not carried them out. Who do you think is going to deliver you? Who is going to set you free?" The king laid it right on them. He said: "Who is that god that shall deliver you out of my hands? Nobody, because I am King Nebuchadnezzar. Nobody can violate my orders. You cannot do it. Nobody can touch me, don't you know that?"

It is sort of neat that these men were incarcerated and brought in — being men of that high authority and power. But, maybe I ought to take you into a psalm and show you something about these men and that time.

Psalms 137:1:
By the rivers of Babylon....

The rivers of Babylon were the Euphrates and Tigris. The Euphrates river went right through the centre of that great city of Babylon.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verse 1:

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

"When we remembered our homeland, when we remembered Jerusalem, when we remembered the worshipping of the true God..."

Verses 2 and 3:

We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us [that is they laid heavy requirements upon us, they] *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one* of the songs of Zion.

They did not really want to hear one of the songs of Zion. You see, they wanted to make fun of them: "Oh, so you came from Jerusalem. You were there where the man of God read the Word to you. Is that right? You were there singing the songs of Zion. And yet you have come over here in our place, and you hung your harps upon the willows. You are not singing any more. Come on, let us hear how you sing. We want to hear one of those great songs of life. Let's hear you."

They said:

Verse 4:

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

"How shall we sing the Lord's song in an unbeliever's land?"

Those men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were some of the greatest that all Israel had left of the Hebrew children — wonderful, committed men, men not only of spiritual conviction but men of ability. They were not placed as heads of State under Nebuchadnezzar because they graduated from kindergarten.

They were men of ability. They were trained; they were educated; they were highly qualified men.

And the king said: "Look, I got this report. I do not care how great *you* are, how important *you* are, *I* am King Nebuchadnezzar. Now, either you obey those orders that I issued or else you are going to get thrown into that fiery furnace. Who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" That is what he yelled, according to Daniel 3:15.

"Who is that God you talk about? Who is that God that can deliver you? Look, I can get you killed any time I want. I can get you put out of your job. I can take anything away from you. *I am the head.*"

Nebuchadnezzar said to those men — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — "Where is your God? What God have you got that can protect you?"

Daniel 3:16 and 17:

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter.

If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace....

The king had said to them, "Your God cannot do it." Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego turned around and said, "Our God is able." Now you have got a battle of minds.

"Where is your God that can deliver you?", Nebuchadnezzar had said. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego said, "Our God...is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king."

Verse 18:

But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Our God is able! Do you know what they were saying? "Our God is able, but if our believing is not big enough, we want to tell you something, O King, we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up." That is commitment!

The king had said one thing: "Where is that God that will deliver you?" Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had said: "Our God is able to deliver us. But if not, if our believing is not big enough for our God to deliver us, we want to tell you something, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not going to bow down, and we are not going to worship your golden image." Can you see the rage he is in, the fury? Imagine, a governor saying that to a king. This is bigger! This is fantastic that those three men — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — were so committed in their hearts that they could confront the greatest king perhaps of all time, Nebuchadnezzar, and look him straight in the eyes and say to him: "Our God is able to deliver us.... Our God is able to deliver us.... Our God is able, but we will tell you something, if not, we are still not going to bow down and worship and serve your golden image." That is telling the king!

I can just imagine how they felt. They were human beings, and they knew that when they made their declaration their necks were on the block. They could have gotten out of it so easily by just compromising, couldn't they? They could have said: "O Nebuchadnezzar, you have been real good to us, you know. We are buddy-buddies, and you know from time to time you have been giving us bonuses and, you know, we did not mean any harm. But, we had a little problem: our people were there, and we wanted to keep them happy in our particular precinct; we want to take good care of them, and therefore we did not bow." They could have said: "We will do it, King, but maybe we can do it behind the door? Can we get in our private little office and then when the music sounds we would bow, and then the people will not see us? How about it, King?" They could have compromised, but they did not compromise. The

Our God Is Able

moment you compromise one iota on God's Word, you are done.

These men stood before that king and they said, "Our God is able, but if not, we are still not going to bow down and serve you." Then Nebuchadnezzar was really angry!

Verse 19:

Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego...

He was not just in a fury, he was full of it. You could just see the blood coming up in his face making him red. Even "the form of his visage was changed" — those blood veins stood out in his neck — "...was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego."

...therefore he spake, and [he] commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

That is a hot furnace! The king was so angry that anybody would have the audacity to defy him, King Nebuchadnezzar, who knew that he was god, that he said, "Fellows, throw the coal to the furnace." And, they heated it seven times as hot as it was wont to be heated. He must have brought it right up to that point where it was just ready to blow the valve loose. And then, do you know what else he did?

Verses 20 and 21:

And he commanded the most mighty men that *were* in his army [the most valiant men, the greatest men of war that he had in his whole army] to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, *and* to cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Then these men were bound in their coats [mantles], their hosen, and their hats [turbans], and their *other* garments, and [they] were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

...Which had been heated seven times as hot as you ordinarily would put the fire in that furnace.

Verse 22:

Therefore because the king's commandment [or word] was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire [sparks of the fire coming out of that furnace] slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

The sparks of the fire coming out of that furnace slew those mighty men whom the king had ordered to throw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in.

Verse 23:

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

That is quite an experience! It is so far beyond my mind that I cannot understand it from an experiential point of view, but I believe it, because I believe the Word of God is the will of God, that it means what it says. I do not understand electricity either, but I use it.

Just imagine three men making that statement to that great king. That would make God sit up in heaven, because this does not happen on earth very often; it is usually compromise with government men — compromise.

These men refused to compromise! If I see this picture at all, when those three men — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego — said to the king: "We may burn, but we are not going to bow, O

Our God Is Able

King. We may burn in your fiery furnace because we cannot get our believing up big enough — for our God is able to deliver us — but if not, we still are not going to bow, O King." God must have stood up in heaven, and taken a look down to earth. He must have said: "My goodness! I have not seen anybody believing like that down there for a while. Those are My boys down there saying to the king, 'You may throw us in, but we are not going to bow. You may burn us...'"

And do you know what God decided up in heaven at that moment? "If you do not bow you will not burn." That was a decision of the hierarchy — God. They had said to the king, "You may burn us, but we will not bow." God said, "If you do not bow, you will not burn." Those were the orders from Headquarters.

But, the old king got them, tied them all up and threw them in the fiery furnace. The fellows who threw them in burnt.

Verse 24:

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished...

The king was absolutely amazed!

...and [he] rose up in haste, *and* [he] spake, and [he] said unto his counsellors [to his top brass], Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire [the fiery furnace]? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

"We did it." And he said, "But fellows, look...."

Verse 25:

...I see four men loose, walking [walking, WALKING!] in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Glory! Isn't that fantastic! The men who threw them in burnt to a crisp. Some little period of time afterwards, somebody said, "O King, King, King, come and take a look, take a look!" And the king stood back there and he looked in that fiery furnace, and he said, "Did we not throw three in there?" And all the fellows said: "We sure did, King. We sure did." But the king said: "How come then I see four in there? We only threw three in! I see four, and they are not burnt to a crisp!" And the king said, "The fourth is like the Son of God."¹

Verse 26:

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, *and* spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come *hither*....

This was the same king who had said, "I am God"! These were the same men who had looked him in the face and said, "You may burn us, but we are not going to bow"! They were the same men who said to him: "Our God is able to deliver us but if not, we are not going to bow."

Now he sees them there beautiful, perfect, with not even a smell of smoke on them. He looked and he said, "Well, that God you serve has got to be bigger than I am. You must be serving the one and only true God."

Verses 26 and 27:

...come forth, and come *hither*. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth [out] of the midst of the fire.

And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men,

1. It does not say, "It is the Son of God"; it says, "like the Son of God". Sons of God in Job and in other places were angels. Michael is the top angel that is responsible to fight for the Lord's believers.

Our God Is Able

upon whose bodies the fire had no power [it had not hurt them], nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

I want to tell you something, that has got to be something, because sitting around a fire many of us have had a little smell of smoke on us. These men were thrown in the hottest fire that perhaps has ever been made, but they were not hurt; there was not even a smell of smoke on them. You talk about our God being able to deliver! Most of our commitment and our believing today is small compared to what theirs was.

Verse 28:

Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed *be* the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

You are not a servant of God; you are a son of God when you are born again. Can you for one moment believe that God would do less for His sons than He would for His servants? No! But we have been so talked out of the power of God, we have lived so long in a world of unbelief where men of authority and power without God have ruled, that we as sons live far below par — more so than even God's servants in the Old Testament.

God has not changed. Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son. He is the same, yesterday, today and for ever. God has not changed, and Christ is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints. That is better than having the governor to intercede for me. That is better than to have any high-ranking government official interceding. It is God being interceded to by the Lord Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, in your behalf and in mine.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verse 28:

...and have changed the king's word...

They sure did change the king's word. The king had said, "If you do not bow, you will burn." They changed it. He threw them in to burn. They had not bowed; they did not burn.

...and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

Now the king was going to make another decree, typical king.

Verse 29:

Therefore I make a [new] decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

So, immediately the king wrote a new decree. Before this he had said, "I am king — I am God." Now, after Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego had proven something to him, he said, "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort."

It took one of the great pagan kings of all time to tell that truth. Today, many times, born-again believers do not believe what that great unbelieving king said in that day: "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort," the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

These were men who had gone into captivity and refused to sing the song of Zion, men who had hung their harps on a willow because, "How can we sing the songs of Zion in an unbeliever's land?" Men who had hazarded their lives for the integrity and accuracy of that one true God. When the king had said, "You have got to fall down and bow to my golden image,"

Our God Is Able

they had said: "King, we will not do it. We may die, but if we die, we are going to die believing in our one God." And finally, the king said, "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort."

Verse 30:

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon.

Let us say with that same greatness again today: "Our God is able and our God is willing to deliver us, but if my believing is not big enough, I still am not going to bow."

God of Our Fathers

*God of our fathers, Whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendour through the skies,
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.*

*Thy love divine hath led us in the past;
In these our lands may we by Thee be led.
Be Thou our Ruler, Guardian, Guide, and Stay,
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.*

*Refresh believers on their journey's way.
Lead us from night to never-ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine;
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.*

Chapter 2

David and Bathsheba...

The Final Chapter

In I Kings 1:5 it says:

Then Adonijah the son of Haggith¹ exalted himself, saying, I will be king...

Adonijah said, "I want to be king," because King David was just about at the end of his days.

Verses 5-7:

...and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a* very goodly *man*; and *his mother* bare him after Absalom.

1. II Samuel 3:2-4: "And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith...."

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah helped *him*.

Joab was the head of the army for David. Adonijah got to Joab, and he got Joab to now begin supporting him. It sounds like modern politics.

Verse 8:

But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah.

In other words, Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet did not concur with what this young man wanted to do.

Verses 9–12:

And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zohemoth, which *is* by En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants:

But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not?

Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.

David and Bathsheba... The Final Chapter

It does not say in here that Nathan's counsel was by revelation, but it was. Nathan was the prophet, the man of God, and the spirit of God was upon him. Here was a situation which was contrary to what it was supposed to be, and it was not in the best interests of the children of Israel, and the Prophet Nathan knew this by revelation.

He said to Bathsheba, in essence: "Come on over here, I am going to give you a little advice, thereby, if you will carry it out, you are going to save your own life and you are going to save the life of your son, Solomon. The reason Adonijah has invited all his brothers is because he is going to chop their heads off. He wants them to come to dinner, eat their last supper, and then he will get rid of them, because then he only has to worry about Solomon and Zadok and me, Nathan.... He is getting closer to victory so that he can take over the kingdom."

Verse 13:

Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?

David was on his deathbed. He had made a commitment previously that when he would die Solomon would be the successor to the throne, but now Adonijah knew that David was sick and that he did not know what was happening. "If I just work quickly, now, I can become king."

Nathan said to Bathsheba, "Go and get thee in unto king David..." and ask him "...why then doth Adonijah reign?"

Verse 14:

Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I [Nathan] also will come in after thee, and [I will] confirm thy words.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

This simply means: "I will back you up; I will say what you have said."

Verses 15–19:

And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber; and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite² ministered unto the king.

And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou?

And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the Lord thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.

And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest *it* not:

And he [Adonijah] hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host [of Israel]: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

Did you notice that she did not call herself the wife of the king? She called herself a handmaid. She did anything necessary to get the king committed. I believe that Nathan told her exactly

2. I Kings 1:1–4: "Now king David was old *and* stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the damsel was very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew her not."

David and Bathsheba... The Final Chapter

what to say to the king: "Don't go in there and say, 'Look, do you remember the time you raped me one night?' " David would have said, "Woman, get out."

This is what I mean by in-depth spiritual perception, that when you read this Word of God you see what is really behind it. Bathsheba had all the right in the world to come in and say: "Look, you're my husband. Abishag, you get out of here, you sex fiend." Why sure she did. She had all the right to say to him, "Look, you made a commitment long ago that Solomon...." But, she did not do that, and the only way to understand this in God's Word is to see it as revelation, that Nathan had said to her: "Now, Bathsheba, when you get in there take it easy. Don't say anything about that other woman that is in there. Don't you say anything about former promises or all that until you say, 'I am just your handmaid, but you did say once that after you died Solomon was to be king....' "

You can see how revelation became very important in this situation. The reason that I am showing you this is because otherwise you will read Scripture and never realize that it is showing the operation of the revelation manifestations, so you have got to get really sharp spiritually in seeing these things in God's Word. Now let us watch what else is recorded.

Verse 20:

And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee....

"Even though Adonijah has gone out and even now he has prepared a big feast to make himself king, the people are not really looking at him; they are looking at you." But, the truth was that a lot of people were already looking at Adonijah — because he had Joab on his side, he had one of the prominent priests on his side, he had all the weight of the authority basically on his side — except he did not have the prophet, the man of God, Nathan, nor did he have Zadok.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verses 20 and 21:

...the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that thou shouldst tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.

What she was really saying was, "When this occurs, Adonijah will kill Solomon and me."

Verse 22:

And, lo, while she [Bathsheba] yet talked with the king [David], Nathan the prophet also came in.

This is exactly what he had told her that he would do.

Verses 23–25:

And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he [Nathan] was come in before the king [David], he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah.

What a sharp statement! David was still living and in every facet, every technicality, who was king? David! And Nathan said

David and Bathsheba... The Final Chapter

that they were already shouting, "God save King Adonijah," and yet David was still living. Look what that would do to David's mind. Isn't the word of wisdom wonderful? Nathan was not going to rub King David the wrong way, and why should he, he was walking by word of knowledge and word of wisdom.

Verses 26 and 27:

But me, *even* me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.

Is this thing done by my lord the king...

"Did you give that order, David?"

Verses 27-31:

...and thou hast not shewed *it* unto thy servant [I, Nathan, am your servant.], who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

And the king sware, and said, *As* the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,

Even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

Then Bath-sheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

All this came to pass by the revelation that a man of God, Nathan, had received and communicated to Bathsheba, and Bathsheba just went in and carried out literally what Nathan had said. She saved her own life and the life of Solomon.

Verse 32:

And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest...

Now David was going to go into operation. Bathsheba and Nathan had just gotten him to commit himself.

Verses 32-36:

...and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon:

And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon.

Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the Lord God of my lord the king say so *too*.

I believe that all this was true because a man of God operated the revelation manifestations and a woman carried it out.

David and Bathsheba... The Final Chapter

Verses 37-41:

As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.

So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon.

And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

And Adonijah and all the guests that *were* with him heard *it* as they had made an end of eating....

They must have made it a point to go right past where they were having the banquet.

Verses 41-49:

...And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore *is this* noise of the city being in an uproar?

And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou *art* a valiant man, and bringest good tidings.

And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule:

And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This *is* the noise that ye have heard.

And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.

And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed.

And also thus said the king, Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, which hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing *it*.

And all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

Now they were afraid to get their heads cut off!

Verses 50–53:

And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

David and Bathsheba... The Final Chapter

And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.

So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

What I was after in our study was to try to indicate to you some of the inner depths of the operations of the revelation manifestations that you have to see as you work God's Word.

Chapter 3

A Study of the Book of Jonah

There is a remarkable record in Matthew 12:40.

For as Jonas [Jonah] was three days and three nights in the whale's [*kētōs*, sea monster's] belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

This is a remarkable record because very few believe in the historicity of the Book of Jonah and that it was literally true. They speak of it as being a myth or a fable. Whenever the Lord Jesus Christ himself documents something, I just have no question about it at all, and certainly here we have a documentation that Jonah was in the sea monster's belly three days and three nights. That is not a figure; it is a literal truth. The "three days and three nights" make it a period of seventy-two hours, and it relates itself to that period of time when Christ was in the earth "three days and three nights".

"As Jonah was three days and three nights in the sea monster's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Matthew 16:4:

A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

the prophet Jonas [Jonah]. And he left them, and departed.

That sign of the Prophet Jonah, to the best of my understanding, was that here was a man of God who totally wanted to protect Israel, who was willing to give his life for Israel, even though God had said that Nineveh would become the judge of Israel because of Israel's wickedness. The sign was the dedication of the man, the commitment of the man to Israel. This second record in the Gospels augments even the depth and importance of this man called Jonah and what he did and what he represented.

In Luke 11, it ties it together in a very in-depth yet remarkable and wonderful way.

Luke 11:30:

For as Jonas [Jonah] was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

As Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of man, Jesus Christ, was a sign to his generation. Jesus Christ was a sign of his commitment to his generation.

Jesus put Jonah on the same level regarding the sign that he put himself. That puts Jonah in a very high category in God's opinion, and in my opinion also.

Furthermore, he was three days and three nights, which is a sign of completeness and fulfilment, in the sea monster. I do not believe that Jonah lived in the fish; I think he died. After he got spewed out, on his way to where he did not want to go in the first place, God again gave him life, but he died again, and today Jonah is dead, awaiting the resurrection.

Let us look at part of II Kings 14.

A Study of the Book of Jonah

II Kings 14:23–25:

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and [he] *reigned* forty and one years.

And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat,¹ who made Israel to sin.

He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which *was* of Gath-hepher.

Here this man of God, Jonah, the prophet, is mentioned, and it is in the reign of Jeroboam II. Jonah also knew by divine revelation that Assyria, of which the capital city was Nineveh,² would come down and trouble Israel because of Israel's unfaithfulness to God and His Word, and he did not like it.

It is very interesting because at this time in history Assyria was being attacked from many different areas, and there are eighteen years in Assyrian history, which is at this same time, where there is no logging of their history at all, because things were going so badly for them that they refused to write it in their textbook. The Prophet Jonah knew by divine revelation that Assyria would be the persecutors of Israel because of their sins, and he figured out that if Assyria got destroyed then they could not persecute Israel. He did not want Israel persecuted because he loved Israel. He wanted Israel to move ahead as had

1. Jeroboam the son of Nebat was Jeroboam I. Jeroboam the son of Joash was Jeroboam II.

2. In the text of Jonah, Nineveh is used to represent the country of Assyria of which it was the capital.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

occurred in II Kings 14:25. So there he had the revelation on one hand, and on the other hand he had his heart in his hand.

With that background I want to go to the Book of Jonah.

Jonah 1:1 and 2:

Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

That was the divine revelation given to Jonah. Jonah arose all right, but he went in the other direction! God had told him to go to Nineveh. Jonah rose up to go to Tarshish.³ That is a long way from Nineveh!

Jonah must have figured that God would not be able to find him in Tarshish, because after all He is the God of Israel. Perhaps He would not pay any attention if the man of God went over to Tarshish, or so Jonah must have thought.

He did not run away because he was afraid. He ran away because he really, truthfully, just did not want to deliver God's message. There was a reason why he did not want to deliver the message: because he loved Israel.

God had given him revelation previously and Israel had been saved. They had restored the coast of Israel, and Jonah knew something that every man of God has always known, that God does change His mind when and if the situations change. Abraham knew it. Isaiah knew it. Nehemiah knew it. The prophets of God have known through the years that because circumstances change, therefore God changes His mind. When I speak of "change His mind" I mean that His revelation changes. A born-again believer may receive revelation one day and then the following day he may also have revelation and it will be

3. Tarshish is that city which today is called Seville in south-western Spain.

A Study of the Book of Jonah

different than that which was given by God previously. The answer is always that the circumstances have changed.

Jonah knew this. He figured out that even though God had said he should go to Nineveh, if he went to Tarshish for a while that would give God time — because circumstances would change — and then he could come back, in which case Nineveh would be destroyed, and thus Assyria would be out of the way. Then they could not persecute Israel, and he could go back to Israel and hold forth the Word and the people would rally around the flag of the Word.

Verse 3:

But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

So when God told him to go to Nineveh, he headed out for Tarshish, and he wanted to get away from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, which today is Jaffa, Israel, and he found a merchant ship, one carrying merchandise, which was going to Tarshish. He bought himself a ticket, "and [he] went down into it." That means he went to his cabin to go with them to Tarshish "from the presence of the Lord".

He must have thought that if he got that far away then God would not be concerned with him. Back in Israel Jonah was known as a man of God, but over there he would be unknown. He must have felt sure that God knew that he was being unfaithful and was not carrying His message so He would not pay any attention to him.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verses 4 and 5:

But the Lord sent out [permitted⁴] a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that *were* in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

Remember that the revelation to Jonah was only, "go to Nineveh...and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Verse 3 begins to tell some of the things that happened as the result. It no longer is talking of God's divinely given revelation but rather of what Jonah and the other men did. God's divine revelation is in verse 2.

Verse 5:

...But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship [his cabin]; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

That little storm did not bother him, although it was tearing up the ship. His conscience did not bother him one iota. He was at perfect ease within himself, because he felt he was doing the best he knew how to do, even though he was going away in the opposite direction of where he ought to have been going. Therefore Jonah, a man of God, by doing this had to be absolutely convinced, I believe, within himself that God would change His mind, because circumstances would change. And if he just did this little trip, he could come back and minister among Israel the greatness of that Word again, and Israel would hear it.

4. For an explanation of this idiom see Victor Paul Wierwille, "Letters to the Teacher," *The Way Magazine*, January-February 1982, p. 21.

A Study of the Book of Jonah

Verse 6:

So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

They were really upset with him that he was sleeping while the ship was threatening to break up.

Verse 7:

And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil *is* upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

They got the right man!

Verses 8-10:

Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us; What *is* thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country? and of what people *art* thou?

And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear [reverence] the Lord [*Jehovah*], the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry *land*.

Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and [they] said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

He said, "I serve the one and only true God, the Lord God *Jehovah* of Israel, but He told me to do something and I am running the other way." He told them some of the facts, but he did not tell them everything, not by a long shot, as you will see.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verses 11 and 12:

Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

He said: "Look, just take me and throw me in. It is OK because I know that the adversary is taking this advantage and it is because I was unfaithful. I am willing to die." For a man of God to so love Israel as to make this statement brings tears to my soul. Even though Jonah was absolutely wrong not to obey the revelation he had received, he was committed to loving Israel.

Now those men did something beautiful, they rowed harder after he had told them this. They put forth all their effort, and they dug right in to see if they could not bring that ship to land.

Verses 13-15:

Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring *it* to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

Jonah had told them to do just this. They tried to avoid throwing him in, but finally they could not.

A Study of the Book of Jonah

Verse 17:

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish [sea monster] to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Remember what Matthew 12 said.

Matthew 12:40:

For as Jonas [Jonah] was three days and three nights in the whale's [sea monster's] belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The "as...so" puts it in the category of death. *AS* Jesus Christ was dead for three days and three nights, *SO* Jonah was now dead. He was not living inside of that sea monster roaming from apartment to apartment typing out his script.

We have no question believing Lazarus, and how long was he dead? When Jesus got there to raise him, it was already four days. Jonah was only three days, so I have no problem with Jonah. The Lord watched Jonah disobey and head for Tarshish, but the Lord knew by His foreknowledge what he was going to do, so He got Himself a nice big transport ready, because He was going to get him to Nineveh, one way or the other. And that is all because of the foreknowledge and the love and the grace and the divine presence of God. He is not overriding Jonah's free will, but He sees free will as much further along than we see it at the immediate present.

Jonah 2:1:

Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly.

He did not write down what is written here while he was inside the fish. This was written later, after he was raised, because all the verbs in this section are in the past tense.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Verses 2-4:

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell [*sheol*, the grave] cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice.

For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

That is great. He said, "I went the wrong way, but I am going to look again toward Your holy Temple." Jonah, a man wanting to run away, turned around and said, "Well, I have got no other place to go; I am still coming back to look at Your holy Temple." This was what he prayed just before he died.

Verses 5-9:

The waters compassed me about, *even* to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

I went down to the bottoms [the cuttings off] of the mountains; the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.

When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the Lord [*Jehovah*].

A Study of the Book of Jonah

That was what he prayed and later wrote down. Then we have a beautiful conversation in verse 10:

And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*.

He said to the fish: "Have you had enough of this fellow on the inside? You cannot digest him so you might as well regurgitate him." So he spat him out on the dry ground.

Jonah 3:1:

And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

This again was God giving divine revelation.

Verses 2 and 3:

Arise, go unto Nineveh [that was what He had told him the first time], that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

So Jonah arose [And fled? No.], and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

This time Jonah went to Nineveh. The first time he went to Tarshish, and God got the sea monster which brought him back and spat him out. And of course, having been dead, he was sort of a little more appreciative of the privilege of being alive for a few hours.

Verse 4:

And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey....

Up until a number of years ago, they thought this was totally erroneous. I do not believe it is, and nobody else who believes

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

God's Word would believe that it is. Because, in the archaeological fields, they believe that the circumference around the city was over sixty miles. The diameter was approximately twenty miles. That was a pretty good-sized city! And, it was the capital city of Assyria.

Verse 4:

And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and [as he walked along...] he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

God had told him to preach unto the city "the preaching that I bid thee", and the preaching was, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." I can just see Jonah effervescing! Oh, he was really tickled to death with this, because if Nineveh is going to be destroyed then God has changed His mind, and then Nineveh could not persecute Israel like the revelation had been previously. So he was really yelling this! "*Forty days, Nineveh, and you have had it.*"

Verses 5 and 6:

So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered *him* with sackcloth, and [he] sat in ashes.

He sat in ashes to indicate that it was absolutely all over with — that he was sorry and had repented.

Verses 7-10:

And he [the king] caused *it* to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles [all of his great men], saying, Let neither man

A Study of the Book of Jonah

nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:

But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands.

Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented [this is the figure of speech called *anthrōpopatheia* or *condescensio*] of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

Jonah had been so blessed because he thought that Israel would now be safe, but circumstances had changed. God knew all the time that they were going to repent.

Jonah 4:1:

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

He did not want to see them repent; it displeased and upset him awfully. Now, he was going to pray again.

Verse 2:

And he prayed unto the Lord, and [he] said, I pray thee, O Lord, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country?...

What was his saying when he was still in his country? It was that Israel would be overthrown by Assyria, by Nineveh. But, if Nineveh were to be destroyed then Nineveh could not overthrow Israel.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

...Therefore [here is the reason] I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Jonah knew this, as all prophets have known. It is true because circumstances change.

Verse 3:

Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for *it is* better for me to die than to live.

"I have had it. I died once and got up; I am ready to die again, Lord, because I do not want to see Israel encompassed with those uncircumcised from Nineveh, from Assyria." That was what he was thinking.

Verse 4:

Then said the Lord, [Jonah,] Doest thou well to be angry?

Jonah never answered Him; he just took a walk. Jonah could be dead wrong, and he was about certain actions that he did, but he was still a man of God. He was so concerned about Israel that he was willing to die for Israel; he was willing to do anything as long as Israel could live. The Lord said, "Doest thou well to be angry?" He never answered Him; he just took a walk.

Verses 5-7:

So Jonah went out of the city, and [he] sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth [a little tent], and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made *it* to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his

A Study of the Book of Jonah

head, to deliver him from his grief [because it was pretty hot under that tent with the sun shining]. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

God sure needed that old prophet! It is marvellous how God knew ahead of time that just exactly where Jonah was going to hang his tent out and stake it down this beautiful gourd would grow up to cover him, and that He knew ahead of time that the worm was going to come.

Verses 8 and 9:

And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement [sultry, hot] east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and [he] said [again], *It is better for me to die than to live.*

And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he [Jonah] said, I do well to be angry, *even unto death.*

"I am doing *real good* to be angry. I have got a right to be angry, even unto death."

Verse 10:

Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night.

"Here that poor old gourd died, and you had pity on it. But, all these people in Nineveh, you do not care about them. You do not care that they have been in sackcloth and ashes and felt

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

sorry for being so sinful. But, that little old gourd, you felt bad for that."

Verse 11:

And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and *also* much cattle?

That was pretty bad. God said of Nineveh, "Those fellows are so stupid over there that they cannot even discern between their right hand and their left hand." But they said, "We are sorry for being so sinful," and in spite of their stupidity they were saved. Jonah was angry at the repentance of Nineveh. He wanted them destroyed so they would not persecute Israel.

And that is the end of the Book of Jonah.

The Book of Jonah is read so little and studied so little, and yet in the great records where Jesus Christ compared, it was with Jonah that the comparison was made.

Jonah endeavoured to discount the word of knowledge and word of wisdom, the greatness of the divine revelation given to him. But once you have revelation you have revelation. You can run the other way, but that does not change the revelation. The revelation will only change if the circumstances change.

You have to read in the 4th chapter again to really find out why he ran.

Jonah 4:2:

...I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

That was why he left.

One of the greatest things I see is that "as Jonah was three days and three nights in the sea monster's belly [dead]; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of

A Study of the Book of Jonah

the earth." God raised Jonah, but Jonah died later and is awaiting the resurrection. God gave this revelation and knowledge to Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ used Jonah as the illustration of his own death and resurrection.

I do not believe that Jonah was nearly as unfaithful a prophet as people have said through the years. I think he was doing everything in his power that he could think of to preserve Israel, and the best he could think of was to head for Tarshish and give time for Nineveh to be destroyed, then they could not persecute Israel.

He really loved Israel, and I see this love in him a great deal like I see it in Moses — when Moses was interceding for the children of Israel — even though their ways of going about it were different. I also see the greatness of the divine revelation. I see a commitment that as far as Jonah was concerned he was willing to go against the revelation God gave him as long as he felt it would be best for Israel. He was wrong, but *he* felt this.

He was committed even to the end that he said, "Look, throw me in the water." He did not know God had a sea monster there waiting to swallow him. He knew that he would die, and that that would only be the end until the resurrection. It must have been a unique surprise to him when he found that that fish was back there and had swallowed him. He had just enough time to say that nice prayer that he said, and he was finished — dead.

Then that fish brought him on his way towards the Nineveh territory, which took him about three days and three nights, and then spat him out, and God gave him life. Then he gave that Word to Nineveh after he walked for one day, and in one day's time the people heard that Word. They changed; the circumstances changed; the revelation changed. Jonah learned that God's will cannot be thwarted, no matter how a man of God may endeavour to walk once the will of the Lord is established. God's will is there because God sees ahead by foreknowledge. He saw that Israel was not going to repent. He saw Nineveh would be a lot better, even though they did not know their right

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

hand from their left. And, it has always been a history that whenever people of God walk away from God, as Israel had done, they get persecuted tremendously.

About the Author

Victor Paul Wierwille (1916–1985) spent many decades searching out truths in God's Word. As part of his search he consulted and worked with many outstanding individuals in Christian studies for keys to power-filled, victorious living. Such men as Karl Barth, Joseph Bauer, Glenn Clark, Karl J. Ernst, Josiah Friedli, Louis C. Hessert, Elmer G. Homrighausen, E. Stanley Jones, George M. Lamsa, Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr, K.C. Pillai, Paul Tillich, Ernst Traeger, and many others were a part of Dr. Wierwille's quest to find great truths in the Word of God.

Dr. Wierwille's academic career included Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Theology degrees from Mission House (Lakeland) College and Seminary, graduate studies at the University of Chicago and at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he earned the Master of Theology degree in Practical Theology. Later he completed his work for the Doctor of Theology degree at Pike's Peak Bible Seminary and Burton College in Manitou Springs, Colorado.

For over forty years, Dr. Wierwille devoted his major energies to intensive research and teaching of the accuracy of God's Word. Beginning in 1953, he taught Biblical research and teaching classes on Power for Abundant Living. He was the founder and first president of The Way International, a non-sectarian, non-denominational Biblical research, teaching and fellowship ministry.

