The Journey to Tarshish

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God bless you,

Adewuyi S. Oluwatobi,

Coordinator

Topic:

THE JOURNEY TO TARSHISH

Bible Text: Jonah 1:1-3

Teacher: Adewuyi S. Oluwatobi

Prayer

Father, we bless Your name for You are faithful, we thank You for another moment in Your presence, blessed Savior we say may Your name be exalted as we go into the study of Your word in Jesus Christ name. Amen

Study

It is a good thing to be here once again in the presence of The living God as we learn at the feet of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I hope you all had a wonderful day and I hope our focus is still on our journey to the kingdom of God, I pray we would not miss it at last in Jesus name.

We must have heard about Tarshish before, whenever Tarshish is being mentioned one of the first names that comes to mind is Jonah, we have to look into Jonah's journey carefully tonight for us to have an in-depth understanding of what actually happened to Jonah and how it concerns us today. Praise The Lord!

Please turn your Bibles with me to the Book of Jonah 1:1-3

1:1 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 1:2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. 1:3 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.

Here we see The Lord telling Jonah the son of Amittai to go to Nineveh, "a great city" to cry against it because their wickedness had come up to Him, before The Lord takes a step to warn a set of people or a person, it means that such a person

must have passed boundary, that was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah, their wickedness came up to The Lord and He went there to see what they were doing yet these wicked set of people still continued. Genesis 18:20-21 KJV And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; [21] I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

This time around The Lord did not come down to see their level of wickedness but He directly sent Jonah to give warnings to them, why God sent warnings to them instead of Swift destruction is to see if they would change, it is to see if they would take to His warnings and repent from their sins. But Jonah "arose", he did "arise" as instructed by God since God said to him "arise" but he took a contrary step at this point.

Jonah Arose To Flee!

He did not arise to go to Nineveh but he "arose" to flee" He did not bother to follow God's instruction fully, he only did part, same way it is with many people, God told them "arise go for evangelism" but they arose and established a church, God said "arise go and warn that rich politician to repent" but they arose and got appointed to positions infact started collecting gifts from him. It is a tragic thing not to follow God's instructions the way He says it. Joseph understood this and he followed the angels instruction to take baby Jesus to Egypt away from King Herod, he did not say "after all what the Egyptians did to my forefather, should I still go into their land?" He obeyed, many no longer bother to obey God's voice, they feel they are wiser than God and and do not need His advice, many are still living in half obedience to The word of God like Jonah.

Many know they do not obey God fully like Jonah yet they keep looking at those around them thinking in their hearts that they are better off because they believe they are more righteous even in that disobedient state, thereby comparing themselves by themselves which apostle Paul calls foolishness. When we read The word of God with it's instructions to us and we pick a part to follow and another part to neglect then we are behaving like Jonah, God does not care about our half level of obedience He is moved by full obedience. Don't forget that Jonah

"arose" as instructed but it was not to carry out God's plan and purpose, God told you to get married to Sister Mary but because you feel Sister Mary is not beautiful like sister Martha then you choose to marry sister Martha, yes you married as instructed but not to whom God said you should marry, that is incomplete obedience and do you know that half obedience is no obedience at all but outright disobedience!

Because of incomplete obedience to God's instructions a lot of people have pierced themselves through with many sorrows, there are many couples these days who should be enjoying their marriages but they are only enduring because they got married to the wrong person, they chose with their instincts which is human wisdom, they believe they know more than God and they can see the future that God cannot see and this has led them into eternal regrets. It is of a plain truth that the most dangerous place to find oneself after hell fire is wrong marriage so they regretting everyday of their marriage.

For those who are reading this and are not yet married, you will not end up in wrong marriage in Jesus Christ name!

You were given two job opportunities and the Lord said "pick the one with the lower pay" but you thought about it and chose the one with the higher pay because you concluded that you have a lot of expenses on ground which the one with a lower pay would not settle, you have just behaved like Mr Jonah Amittai, you are using your own wisdom to judge and weigh what God tells you. There are those who God told to study a particular course but because they do not like it they shun God's voice and did what they like, we have those whom God called into ministry, He told them not to go to school but they did not listen and went, God told some to go into full-time ministry but they did not listen, they thought they would starve and beg to eat, then they "arose" but not to go to Nineveh, instead they went to Tarshish away from the presence of The Lord.

Jonah fled to Tarshish because he did not want to do The will of God, when we intentionally disobey God by neglecting His will for us, in terms of purpose, family, marriage, education, ministry etc we are leaving The presence of God, that is why God's presence has departed from many ministers of The Gospel and Christians, they intentionally continue to disobey God by doing what He did not

tell them and also going to where He never sent them, they preach the gospel that surprises God Himself because He finds these Gospels alien, so His presence is no longer with them. Some Christians still argue about biblical truths just because they do not want to obey God's word fully so they choose to head towards Tarshish instead of Nineveh were God's Word directs them to.

He Left God's Presence

The moment Jonah fled disobeying God, he left God's presence. Jonah 1:3 KJV ...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. And the result of his running away was that he started going down, he went down and down. Instead of him to **go up** to Nineveh, he went down to Tarshish, the tragedy of disobedience is that it places one in the same level with those who are going down (unbelievers), one would begin to have things in common with them, the destination of those who do not know God is always down in the pit. Therefore, when a believer joins their train, he too heads towards same direction.

Beloved have you not started going down with unbelievers because of your perpetual sins? Haven't you gone down to Tarshish instead of Nineveh? where did God tell you to establish your church, is that where it is currently? What God called you to preach, is that what you are preaching currently? If it is not, then you are already going down to Tarshish, you have to retrace your steps back to Nineveh in obedience to The Word of The Lord. Jonah then found himself amidst those he was not to be, those who serve other gods. Jonah 1:5 KJV Then the mariners were afraid, **and cried every man unto his god,...** Just because of disobedience sin has placed so many people in associations they shouldn't belong to, lack of contentment has made you join the occult, seeking for power where there is no power because of earthly riches that does not last, you have gone down to the point that rising up is becoming impossible, make a U-Turn and stop heading towards Tarshish.!

The moment a man sins and leaves God's presence the devil would give him other companions, the ones after his own heart.

You can easily know if you are currently heading towards Tarshish like Jonah if

those you keep as friends are mostly unbelievers, with this you will know you are heading toward a deadly journey!

Jonah Slept Off

The most tragic thing that happened to Jonah was that after he joined the wrong company he still went to the lowest part of the ship and **slept off** as if all is well. Those who at first knows God then departs do become worse, Jonah slept!. He did not bother about what he had done against God, but slept, It gets to a point when a man continues to kick against God's commandments that such a man would not have conscience or The Holy Spirit to convict him of sin, he would do all things (sin) without being warned. It was the unbelievers there that still came to wake Jonah up to call on his God, what a shame! The devil is more strategic these days, he would rather pair a sinful Christian with whom will kill his spiritual life totally, that is why you keep falling into fornication with that brother or sister even though you made up your mind by saying you will not do it again.

He did not allow you break the relationship because he knows you will be free, so to keep you captive he keeps deceiving you that you can manage the affair without fornicating but he knows that he is deceiving you. The devil keeps telling you to keep women other than your wife close to you, that it is just a show of love because he knows that by so doing he can get you.

Assuming Jonah did not listen to the voice of the devil by going down to Tarshish, he wouldn't have found himself in the midst of unbelievers going down.

Fears God, Yet Disobeys Him

Then Jonah 1:9 KJV And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. Jonah said he feared God, this statement is very surprising and can stare up questions. He fears The God he disobeyed, this means that it is possible to fear God and still disobey him, that was the case with Jonah, just like the Israelites at a point in time 2 Kings 17:41 KJV So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day. 2 Kings 17:32-33 KJV So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the

houses of the high places. [33] They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. Jonah feared The Lord and still disobeyed Him.

We have many like him these days who fear The Lord yet intentionally disobey Him, they are workers in the church, they pray, fast and do many good works but there are times they do what they wish intentionally, they intentionally commit sin, saying it's their weaknesses, some would say that they would later ask God for forgiveness, even others justify themselves, these set of people are those whom Jesus talked about in Matthew 7:23 KJV And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. The Lord Jesus Christ would tell them on the last day that He does not know them because they keep on sinning, we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling asking for Grace to overcome all kinds of sin that easily besets us so that we can be Holy and make heaven. We must not keep going down in our thoughts, motives and actions. We must keep going up in our walk with God and constantly examine ourselves if we are still in faith, totally obeying The word of God by going to wherever He sends us to go, we must head towards Nineveh where he sent us and not Tarshish.

We must be ever ready to follow His word just as He has said it without thinking it over or asking questions why He gave us such command. As Christians we must see The Word of God as His last command which must be obeyed whether it is convenient for us or not, let's check our lives if there are ways we have been behaving like Jonah, let's make amend so that we would not regret our eternal destination.

This is where we would end today's teaching, I pray we won't be hearers of His Word alone but also doers of it in Jesus mighty name, Amen. God bless you!

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