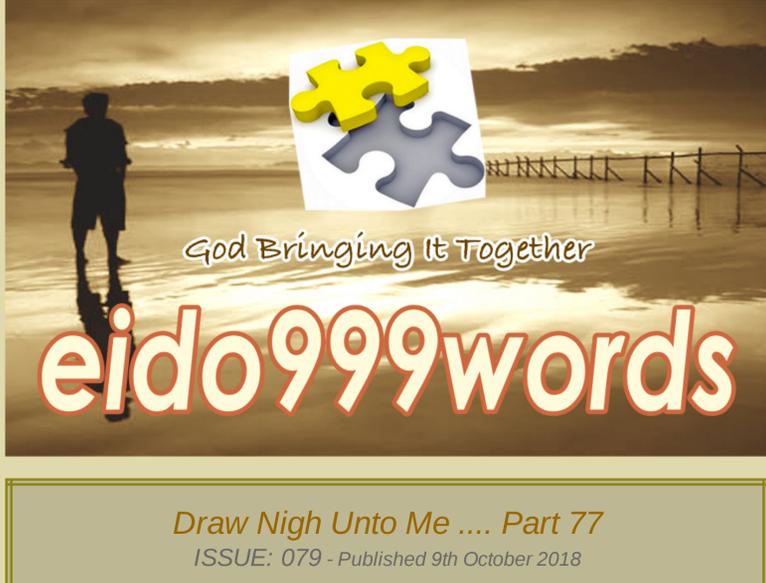


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Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 77

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Defaced - Week 69

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 16

So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)

The Sign of Jonah - Part 6 of 6

By Doug Batchelor [Emphases added]

Ref: <https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/book/e/75/the-sign-of-jonah>

The sailors, the wind and waves, the fish, the Ninevites and their livestock, and even the gourd and the worm all obey God.

Everyone and thing obeys but stubborn Jonah, who is supposed to be a prophet of God and yet is the only one who rebels against the Word of the Lord!

One of the central teachings of Jesus and the apostles was that "many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"

Matthew 8:11-12 KJV

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jonah seemed to resent that God heard the prayer of the pagans in Nineveh and forgave them.

Likewise, the Jews wanted to kill Jesus when He said that God hears the heathen's prayers

Luke 4:25-29 KJV

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

Why is it that the Church, like ancient Israel, seems so blasé regarding the message of warning and love we have been given?

The world is yearning for truth; it's ready to listen.

Matthew 9:37 KJV

Mat 9:37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

The Church, like Jonah, is sleeping as the storm gathers strength.

The pagans sailors are praying, and Jonah is snoring.

The beggars lay at our gates, longing for a few crumbs of truth while the Church feasts, clad in purple.

Unless we rouse to our duty, judgment will certainly come!

Jonah Is a Symbol of the Lost

I want to conclude with the most basic yet most profound message found in Jonah's story.

Jonah's experience is a message to the lost and to the backslider.

The ones who have heard the Word of the Lord are to go east, but they turn from the will of God and head west, thinking they will find some peace from the convicting voice of the Spirit.

Of course, it is a ridiculous thought to think even for a moment that you can hide from God.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me"

Psalms 139:7-10 KJV

7 Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

The backslider may even sleep for a time bound for judgment, but a storm will come.

God sends the storm to save them.

It may come in the form of financial reverses or a health or family crisis, but a storm will come to get their attention.

One day, they will awake to find they are in the pig pen and come to their senses and pray.

They will make that journey to the Father's house, and as soon as He sees them approach, He will run to meet them.

James 4:8 KJV

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

The classic Moby Dick, by Herman Melville, has a chapter titled "The Sermon."

Within this compelling chapter, beautiful lyrics from an old English sailors hymn regard how God saves the lost the same way He saved Jonah.

"The ribs and terrors in the whale,
Arched over me a dismal gloom,
While all God's sun-lit waves rolled by,
And lift me deepening down to doom.
"I saw the opening maw of hell,
With endless pains and sorrows there;
Which none but they that feel can tell -
Oh, I was plunging to despair.
"In black distress, I called my God,
When I could scarce believe him mine,
He bowed his ear to my complaints -
No more the whale did me confine.
With speed he flew to my relief,
As on a radiant dolphin borne;
Awful, yet bright, as lightning shone
The face of my Deliverer God.
"My song for ever shall record
That terrible, that joyous hour;
I give the glory to my God,
His all the mercy and the power."

The message of Jonah is one of hope and salvation for the lost.

You may feel you have wandered too far from God for Him to hear your prayers.

But remember, if Jonah could catapult a successful prayer from the lowest and darkest place on earth to the Almighty in His Temple, you can as well!

"And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land" (Jonah 2:10 KJV).

He not only gave Jonah another chance, but He had the sea monster beach himself to place Jonah on solid ground.

God is merciful!

You may feel your situation is bleak, but if God saved Jonah from his hopeless circumstances, He can surely deliver you.

Also remember, God saved Jonah and then gave him a job to do.

The Lord has a mission and ministry for everyone, including you.

We come to Jesus in the great invitation, then we go for Jesus in the great commission.

Come to him now then say,
"Here am I Lord, send me"

Isaiah 6:8 KJV

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

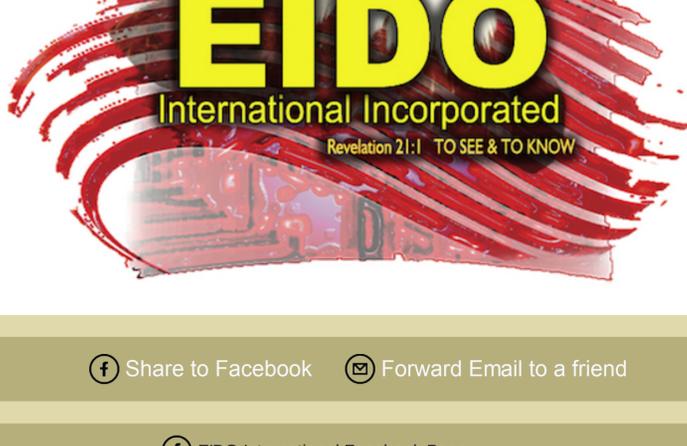
The Sign of Jonah was written by:

DOUG BATCHELOR

Love,

Mwesigwa

[Defaced - Week 70 follows next week]



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