
ISSUE 081: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 79

Issued: 23rd October 2018

Defaced - Week 71

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 18

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

Jonah's Anger and the Lord's Compassion

- Jonah Chapter 4

(Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible [Concise] - Emphases Added)

Jonah 4:1-4 King James Version

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

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore 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.

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

4 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?

Jonah repines at God's mercy to Nineveh, and is reprov'd. - Verses 1 - 4

(Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible [Concise])

What all the saints make matter of joy and praise, Jonah makes the subject of reflection upon God; as if showing mercy were an imperfection of the Divine nature, which is the greatest glory of it.

It is to his sparing, pardoning mercy, we all owe it that we are out of hell.

He wishes for death: this was the language of folly, passion, and strong corruption.

There appeared in Jonah remains of a proud, uncharitable spirit; and that he neither expected nor desired the welfare of the Ninevites, but had only come to declare and witness their destruction.

He was not duly humbled for his own sins, and was not willing to trust the Lord with his credit and safety.

In this frame of mind, he overlooked the good of which he had been an instrument, and the glory of the Divine mercy.

We should often ask ourselves, Is it well to say thus, to do thus?

Can I justify it?

Do I well to be so soon angry, so often angry, so long angry, and to give others ill language in my anger?

Do I well to be angry at the mercy of God to repenting sinners?

That was Jonah's crime.

Do we do well to be angry at that which is for the glory of God, and the advancement of his kingdom?

Let the conversion of sinners, which is the joy of heaven, be our joy, and never our grief.

Jonah 4:5-11 King James Version

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

6 And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

- 7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.**
- 8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.**
- 9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.**
- 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:**
- 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?**

**He is taught by the withering of a gourd, that he did wrong. - Verses 5 - 11
(Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible [Concise])**

Jonah went out of the city, yet remained near at hand, as if he expected and desired its overthrow.

Those who have fretful, uneasy spirits, often make troubles for themselves, that they may still have something to complain of.

**See how tender God is of his people in their afflictions, even though they are foolish and froward.
[Added: froward 'to be stubbornly contrary and disobedient; obstinate']**

A thing small in itself, yet coming seasonably, may be a valuable blessing.

**A gourd in the right place may do us more service than a cedar.
[Definition added: Gourd - noun 1. a fleshy, typically large fruit with a hard skin, some varieties of which are edible. 2. a climbing or trailing plant which bears gourds.]**

The least creatures may be great plagues, or great comforts, as God is pleased to make them.

Persons of strong passions are apt to be cast down with any trifle that crosses them, or to be lifted up with a trifle that pleases them.

See what our creature-comforts are, and what we may expect them to be; they are withering things.

A small worm at the root destroys a large gourd: our gourds wither, and we know not what is the cause.

Perhaps creature-comforts are continued to us, but are made bitter; the creature is continued, but the comfort is gone.

God prepared a wind to make Jonah feel the want of the gourd.

It is just that those who love to complain, should never be left without something to complain of.

When afflicting providences take away relations, possessions, and enjoyments, we must not be angry at God.

What should especially silence discontent, is, that when our gourd is gone, our God is not gone.

Sin and death are very dreadful, yet Jonah, in his heat, makes light of both.

One soul is of more value than the whole world; surely then one soul is of more value than many gourds: we should have more concern for our own and others' precious souls, than for the riches and enjoyments of this world.

It is a great encouragement to hope we shall find mercy with the Lord, that he is ready to show mercy.

And murmurers shall be made to understand, that how willing soever they are to keep the Divine grace to themselves and those of their own way, there is one Lord over all, who is rich in mercy to all that call upon him.

Do we wonder at the forbearance of God towards his perverse servant?

***Let us study our own hearts and ways;
let us not forget our own ingratitude and obstinacy;
and let us be astonished at God's patience towards us.***

***ISSUE 082: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 80
Issued: 30th October 2018***

***Defaced - Week 72
God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 19***

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

My wife & I are blessed to have a 3-year-old grandson who possesses a mind that seemingly operates many years ahead of his real age.

Some months back, without any provocation, he suddenly launched into an articulately detailed & graphic account of Jonah & the "Big Whale" [accompanied with compulsory arm gestures of course] that swallowed Jonah up into its belly for three days & then spat him out again.

I asked him if he thought maybe it was not, in fact, a whale that swallowed Jonah but it might have been just a Big Fish with a belly big enough to fit Jonah in.

This question immediately invoked from him an incisive & very articulate defence of his whale assertion.

For to the mind of a child, what is the Story of Jonah without the Whale!

It was a cherished moment of interaction with a child's mind & its playful yet passionate desire for a compulsory smattering of delusional fantasy within any story.

I was to discover that his defined knowledge on the subject of Jonah & the Whale had come from his Sunday School lesson some months previous.

His final assertion was that Papa needed to get his facts straight & his stride away from me was entirely indicative of a mission fully accomplished.

I believe he moved on with a full assurance that Papa was now a much wiser man!

And indeed it did, but not for the reasons he had perceived in his innocent mind.

This interlude with him occurred around the time that I had just been led, for unknown reasons, into a prolonged look into the Story of Jonah.

Now after eight weeks since Issue 74 & three different writers' sharing on the Book of Jonah, I for one have received quite a startling revelation.

That is the fact that I had never before realised how much there is for all of us to glean from the Book of Jonah!

In our human way of assessment, we can so easily assume it is too short & straightforward a story to hold any great insights for us.

More especially, with it being a favourite Children's Bible Story with the addition of the whale providing the necessary delusional fantasy element to its telling.

Don't we all remember it as a Bible Story favourite in our childhood or the lives of our children?

Furthermore, to be honest with you all, at the time I decided to launch into using 'The Sign of Jonah by Doug Batchelor' I was not wholly confident that I was being led to share it for the right reasons.

This year we have had a virtual deluge of personal drama in our lives & having moved 200kms from where we spent 30 years residing, I was starting to find that with so much going on the weeks were flying by.

Before I knew it, I would find myself arriving at Tuesday again without having or giving much, if any, reflection at all upon the upcoming Issue.

Especially this year, the number of times I sat with nothing & yet God remained ever Faithful to the Call He placed in my heart to produce a timely weekly Sharing Awareness as led by His Spirit.

That particular week I was feeling despondent & somehow seemingly desperate, I flicked through my different notes looking for the leading of the Spirit of God.

In doing so, I came upon the article on Jonah which I quickly reread & in isolation found it a somewhat interesting article which is why I had felt to retain it in the first place.

Then, for no particular reason that I can share & despite a feeling that it seemed out of context to the immediate previous issues & overall subject at hand, I was mildly feeling to use it anyway.

Then I immediately began to wonder if it was more about me taking an easy way out.

Especially, upon realising that in light of the average length of the eido999 messages, it could cover a six week period.

This break, in turn, gave me a personal sense of release in thinking that this could provide me with:

- a) a short reprieve from the pressure I was feeling***
- b) an ability to create a buffer zone to alleviate any future recurrence.***

Of course, as in all such scenarios, some six weeks later I found myself in the same situation other than for the fact of having rested from sharing directly whatever the Spirit of God might have given me.

The ending of the six weeks just happened to fall in the midst of a particularly difficult time of family commitments & other issues prevailing around us.

All this served to do was launch me into a prolonged time of questioning my motives that in turn promoted feelings of maybe I had 'lost my way' & wondering if in doing so had lost the thread of the overall aspects of where it was heading.

Considering that the present subject matter was supposed to be "So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire?"

I am sure you can understand why I was feeling this way.

How is an extended look at the Story of Jonah possibly going to lead anywhere concerning the overall subject matter?

When my 'rest period' ended after the six weeks I started to be somewhat concerned as I felt I had lost the thread altogether & could not find a place to take up from to make a start again.

In myself, I started to think that I needed to extricate myself from 'Jonah' convinced that possibly it had served my need more than God's Desire.

Then on the prior Saturday, I pondered myself into a mild frenzy finding no answers apart from one word that repeatedly took my mental attention from within the turmoil of my mind.

Jonah! Jonah!! Jonah!!! It was as though his name was haunting me now!

That night I was still rudderless in my sea of thoughts & so mentally drained regarding the matter I said to God " if this is was from you then let Jonah be mentioned in Church tomorrow, even just one mention, then I will know it is of you & to continue."

To once again be honest with you I did not hold much hope for an answer as both our Pastors were on holiday together at the time.

The Church Newsletter named a particular woman who was going to share on Sunday & being relatively new in the Church I took more interest in trying to identify who she indeed was.

I told my wife that I felt it was the woman who once before did a short segment of dramatised storytelling, but other than that nothing further dawned on me.

Not even knowing in advance the title of her sharing was to be "A Big Fish, A Lost Son & Amazing Grace" did any bells ring.

Maybe it was my grandson's insistence that it was indeed a 'Big Whale' that caused me to overlook the obvious!

I must have been out of it for I am sure by now you all have guessed what is coming next!

Her first segment turned out to be to be a dramatised storytelling of the entire Book of Jonah - 'A Big Fish' !!!!

When I finally 'awoke from my slumber' as she commenced her drama I chuckled to myself inwardly as I remembered that I told God that even one mention of Jonah would be enough & here He presented the whole story to me!

As if that wasn't enough leading, her dramatisation of Chapter 4 in particular, delivered to me the key to the seemingly lost connection to our current topic & thus opened the way for me again.

I am not sure whether that qualifies as being categorised as being with ' A Resounding Voice', but it came to me in such a way!

I now saw that my quiet fears were indeed unfounded & no new path back needed to be found as we have been on the right track all along!

All of this then led me more confidently into issuing a further two weeks of sharing other people's writing's on different aspects of the Book of Jonah.

God most definitely works in mysterious ways.

Ways we so often fail to understand but of which we need a more in-depth knowledge & understanding, more especially in this season in which we live.

We all need to experience God if we are to indeed truly start to See & Know Him at all.

When someone asks us do we know that person, we say yes even when we only know of them or said hello to them.

Only in spending time with someone, sharing experiences with them, spending hours exchanging our thoughts, moving through our joys & trials together can we honestly say we know them.

It is no different with God; we need to See&Know Him if we are going to understand His Ways to any depth, for without the knowledge of Him they will remain mysterious to us.

Now, let us move on together confidently as we Seek Him for the discovery of what wisdom & revelation He Desires to reveal to us here in this seemingly simple, short Story of Jonah.

ISSUE 083: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 81
Issued: 13th November 2018

Defaced - Week 73

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 20
So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)

An interesting point I found in the Story of Jonah was that when Jonah finally obeyed God's Call & went to Nineveh & finally delivered the message, the Bible records only a few simple words that Jonah spoke.

Amazingly all of Nineveh was to thoroughly repent as a result of hearing them, which then, in turn, caused Jonah to become very displeased.

Jonah 4:1-2 KJV

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

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore 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.

What Jonah told the Ninevites was merely:

"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Jonah 3:4 KJV

Then in Jonah 3:5 KJV we read:

5 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.

Imagine a city so full of evil that God was prepared to move against it, should repent so thoroughly upon hearing those few words from a 'reluctant' Jonah.

So much so that God repented.

Jonah 3:10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Just imagine that for one moment, for Nineveh was not some small village of few people such as found all over Africa, but the Bible says Nineveh was "an exceeding great city". Jonah 3:3 KJV

And yet the entire city responded & repented because of those few words that Jonah, being God's Servant, had spoken.

What True Pastor, Preacher, Teacher, Evangelist or any other type of Minister of God's Word would not desire such to see such a reaction to their Sharing of God's Word as was seen in Nineveh, or anything even remotely like it.

I believe that for most of us we can share of an infinite number of words spoken or written from which no discernable reaction has come to our attention.

How then could these few words possibly cause such a reaction from the Ninevites?

Well, all I can share with you is the one instance where I heard what can only be described as the almost audible Voice Of God that resoundingly spoke into me to "Go to Uganda in October".

It was the 22nd of February 1990 when I was just 15 months old in Christ.

Indeed, it came to pass that I spent October & November that year in Uganda!

It was to be my first trip out of Australia & something I would have previously believed to have been utterly impossible & total foolishness even to contemplate.

By the Year 2000, I was to receive five more Callings to return to Uganda all of which I responded to, one alone, two with my family & two with my wife.

However, none of those Callings was to be received in anything like the same way of that first historically personal Call.

Those five simple Words came in a way that as soon as they were spoken, it was as though finished, completed & done.

It was going to happen, how I certainly did not know!

It seemed as though the only thing now was to wait for it to manifest within the apparition known as passage of time.

For the statement came as a Divine Command!

It came as though it was not something I needed to will myself to Obey, but rather a unique Divine Command that came permeated with all the Obedience it required.

For when man fell to sin, our disobedience defaced the Obedience of Christ that previously consisted within the Image of God.

However, when we received Christ again as Lord, the Image of God was fully restored to our spirit man, as Jesus Came Alive in us!

It was a Command I instantly could See&Know was impossible to ignore for to me it contained no such option within it, having been seeded deep within as swiftly as an arrow to my heart.

Over the years since I have felt the leading of the Lord & heard Holy Spirit speak to me in many different ways, just as we all should do in our walk in Christ.

For God has a multitude of ways, He Speaks into our spirit which all Christians should understand for even The Bible is a Living Word that Speaks to and into us.

But I have never heard that exact Voice again that I heard in February 1990.

Now 28 years later I remain involved daily with Uganda & East Africa & you find me here now producing these messages as a direct result of those five simple words & the Command they embodied.

And apart from the first three years, there has been absolutely nothing in the physical to entice us to continue, instead it has been very much the opposite for 25 years now.

Those five words themselves were simple in as much as they related a command 'go to', defined a destination to reach 'Uganda' & defined a time to go 'in October'.

I am now 68 years old & like everybody else, throughout my entire life, I have received a vast number of commands from so many to 'go' wherever or to 'do' whatever.

Now I challenge you in your mind to try to recall times where you have freely obeyed without even the slightest moment of hesitation?

More especially where you already knew that to obey someone else's command would cost you so much in every area of your life & being.

It is not the natural way of man to obey, that is why we have to teach our children obedience & we all know the result if we neglect to do so.

I would humbly suggest that most instances were always where you heard God's Call clearly in your inner heart through any one of the myriad ways He might employ to speak to us.

Then of course, in our daily spiritual life, we are merely called to obey God's Word to the fullest we can for it is our reasonable service to Christ.

And as each & every one of us should know, God Is Love, He does not force for we are His Children held captive to Christ in His Love, not slaves.

However, Father God has a Divine Plan & at times there are strategic moves He makes which require clear, concise & powerful communication & reception.

Those five words I received came to me in such a manner, consisting with such Power of Blessed Assurance of completion I would fail even to start to explain to anyone who has never received such.

Though it was a simple Command to go, which was the starting of something, yet it somehow seemed its ending consisted within it.

Furthermore, the Bible says that God The Father has known the end from the beginning & He has always had a Divine Plan & Purpose.

Isaiah 46:10 KJV

10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

As I have shared before the Divine Plan is His because He Is God Almighty, but His Divine Purpose is the common domain for Unity in Oneness of the Kingdom of God, Christ the King & His True Church.

For Jesus well knew the Divine Purpose for He taught of it while on earth, the Apostles learnt of it from Him & we The Church continue to partake of its teachings through Holy Spirit Leading.

Jesus told us in Matthew 24:36 KJV -

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

Why would Jesus say 'but my Father only' knows when He would return?

Because it is part of God's Divine Plan which is finished, the result of God's Divine Purpose is being fulfilled through The Saints in Christ Jesus.

For God, The Father is the Master Architect of the Plan Of Salvation, wholly designed to bring His Children Home to Himself.

In Christ, we are Called to True Unity with Divine Purpose; for the Divine Plan is God's Alone.

We need to See&Know more now than any other time in history, to Hear With Obedience, rather than continue our slumbering in contemplation.

The time in the Divine Plan for Awakening Awareness is here in East Africa now with God's Call embodied once again in few words:

Draw Nigh Unto Me.

Love, Mwesigwa

[Defaced - Week 74 follows next week]

***I share here a message received on 1st November from
Pastor Stephen Basalirwa
East Africa Regional Director***

EIDO International Incorporated**31st October 2018****Dear Taata Mwesigwa,****I Salute you along with all the International Board Members of EIDO in Australia in the Precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a hope and trust that you're fine and by His Grace everything is moving on in the Way of Christ.****Also here in Uganda, we are seeing things done by the Grace of God and we lift our hands to Worship Him. Many seasons and times have come to us in the toughest of ways, and we felt like we were being crushed completely but by His sufficient Mercies and Grace, we are not done & it is for only one reason - because He Renews His mercies every morning and we give Him our Praise for that!!!****In all things that have fallen apart in our midst, He has been with us in the boat through each & every circumstance, for He promised not to forsake us at any single time.****We were to raise our voices to call Him for a help at times yet He seemed to be silent & yet He was controlling everything but now at the end of the season, we see His Will done.****And whenever we set down a schedule and it fails to be fulfilled, we may not have been wrong but rather it's God's Will that was being done in our midst.****Therefore, I appeal to every Committed Member of EIDO to lift our hands & bow our knees together for the full month of November 2018.****That at least each one has a 12-hour fasting with prayers one day in every week which falls within this month of November.****This will be a Month of Prayers Dedicating and Committing EIDO and its programs and all the connections/ links EIDO has reached.****We need to ask God to bless us with more Ministers to run with us in this Vision of EIDO and many things are to be done by the leading of Holy Spirit in order to Awaken His Church from its Slumbering.****Through this prayer, I believe the Lord will speak to us of where to go next and how to do it and when? Everything will be Great For His Glory and be expecting more Divinely Directions.****I feel we need this prayer.****It will bring us to be in One Accord as Ministers called and chosen to work together in the Vision of EIDO along too with your Ministry and the Purpose of True Unity Of International Fellowship through which the Lord purposed to bring us together shall be achieved.****In this month, let us look back to see just how far & where the Lord has brought us from with this Vision and a Divine connection has brought us to meet & come together either physically or through Social Media all of which reveals the day God So Loved the world He gave His one & only Son!!****In that, had it not been for Jesus we would never have been connected to each other, so let us Honour God. Let us Thank Him for the Brotherhood we are Blessed with through this Vision Of EIDO which God patterned with One Family and connected many families in Christ Jesus.****The Call from Heaven, Drawing Nigh to your Creator, in the same way God calls you or everybody to Draw Nigh in Unity not leaving a gap in our hearts, God is Desiring to see his Children connected together in Oneness, working together for the purposes of His Kingdom in this we are Kingdom Builders.****Let us recognise what we have achieved by His Holy Spirit using us and yearn to be used even more.****Our Lord needs to Hear that I Am Ready and Willing to be used by His Spirit.****All this will be done through this prayer as we go about closing the year and getting ready for the great works of the New Year 2019.****I appeal to you to realise that I don't mean that we have not been praying, but rather it is a Cry of the Holy Spirit I have heard ringing in my ears.****I'm not trying to order nor convince anybody, but it's a matter of Obeying.****I know the Lord is to re-open our eyes & we shall come to See&Know!****Lord God thank you for this communication.**

**Yours,
Pastor Stephen Basalirwa**

ISSUE 084: SPECIAL EDITION
Issued: 21st November 2018

SPECIAL EDITION
(Draw Nigh Unto Me to resume next week)

**An Open Letter to the Regional Director
EIDO International East Africa .**

My Dear Pastor Stephen Basalirwa,

I Greet you in the Most Precious & Powerful Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Almighty God Our Creator.

In your message to me of 31st October, you spoke of how the Lord has brought you through so many trials & desert places over the three decades that you have stood as His Ordained Shepherd of His Kifampa Flock.

So many situations & leadings that appeared to never find consistent growth or any straight direction, plans that seemingly failed only to now See&Know God was always in control of every situation in Accordance to His Divine Plan & Purpose.

He Led you to reflect back causing you to come to See&Know that you are now standing with new pasture under your feet where once was nothing but burning sand.

In looking back with Holy Spirit, you related how you began to See&Know just what God has really done in your midst & to become acutely aware of just what He has risen you from & is now delivering you to.

To now stand upon a mountaintop from where New Horizons have been opened to your sight humbled enough not to forget nor try to hide your beginnings.

To Give All Glory to The Lord God Almighty. Hallelujah! Amen.

Indeed you have been lifted up to higher places Stephen because the Bible says if He can trust you with a little, He can trust you with a lot.

Despite the fact of our being so many thousands of kilometres away, it has been truly amazing for us to See&Know just what God has Done & is Doing in & around you.

Just to See&Know the areas He is opening up to you Stephen & Esther, the Antioch Independent Gospel Ministries & EIDO International Ministries along with the Pentecostal Ministers of the Gomba District there in Uganda.

I remember, so very well, in 1990 meeting a young single 26-year-old Pastor named Stephen Basalirwa deep in the village area of the Gomba District.

It was at Kifampa, the small village from where you still faithfully serve the local flock as Pastor as well as serving as Bishop to the good number of daughter Churches raised in the surrounding areas.

While now also standing & serving in the Office of Pentecostal Pastoral Overseer of hundreds of Pastors & Churches spread across your local Gomba District.

In 1990 Kifamfa I found you a very young Pastor standing upon a Christ-Centred Hope of faithfully serving God & His Sheep.

Noticeably serving them with the humility & respect they rightfully deserve from any Christ centred man.

In reading your recent message, my memory also reflected back to visiting your little Church at the Kifampa crossroads in 1990.

I remember the Church met in a unique kind of iron storage shed sitting atop a mud brick wall high enough that we all had to clamber up a huge piece of tree trunk & then literally drop in.

Somewhat akin to Ascending into the Greatness of God, for to Ascend in God we actually must descend!

In 1990 Kifampa you shared your faith in believing for a permanent building to be built for the Flock on the plot of land you joyfully took me to see.

A decade later I finally was able to stand & preach in that very building you were envisioning that day & we stayed in the house you also had built there.

There, in 2000 Kifampa, you were sharing your vision for building a much bigger Church building which now stands in Kifampa!

Some few years after our first meeting you also shared with me the architect plans you had drawn up of your vision for a Medical Centre.

In 1990 Kifampa I had watched you dispensing essential basic medical assistance to all those around you from a single cabinet in the front room of Sister Joyce's home.

You had a vision in your heart to extend the medical assistance to the local people but it was not to be for God had a bigger plan & purpose for you, Stephen.

I saw you as a young man so humbly giving all the love & attention he could muster by the Grace of God to the sheep in his charge.

Now I see you Pastoring a much larger flock & being Bishop to all the daughter Churches of Kifampa as well as every Pentecostal Church in the Gomba District.

It was there in 1990 Kifampa I was privileged to witness so many still fledging yet already strong relationships between the shepherd & the sheep he came there in Christ to serve.

Relationships clearly founded upon a genuine mutual love for Jesus & respect for each other obviously fostered greatly by the Fruit of Humility you have always so aptly displayed.

Finally, upon my return some ten years later I found those same relationships not only still existing but beautifully deepened with many remaining intact to this day.

It was there that I witnessed a small band of people, so content to be in the midst of God & each other with you their faithful shepherd.

Today I See&Know a much older & wiser man so humbly giving all the love & attention he can muster by the Grace of God to all the sheep in his charge!

Stephen, I speak not to boost your opinion of me or your self-esteem nor to evoke fleshly temptations in either of us to get what we can for gain.

I am being led to share these words by Holy Spirit Unction for He knows you will not take them to an occasion of the flesh, but rather, to an occasion of The Spirit.

At this time God wants you to See&Know in your heart that:

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 Corinthians 2:9 KJV

The words of your communication to us reveal that you are not a perfect man, for none can be, but rather one who is being perfected in God to become the vessel that Christ in God's Divine Purpose needs all of us to be.

The Lord, in the very midst of so much recent trial & tribulation, has stopped you for a timely moment of reflection to catch a glimpse of The Glory of what He Has Done.

So as to affirm your heart in right position for the journey now beginning, toward His New Horizons!

For God is not a vessel to take us to our horizons but rather we are the vessels He Calls Upon in Christ to take His Divine Purpose to His Destination.

All Honour, Praise & Glory to the Lord God Almighty for where we now see you standing Stephen & all that is being arrayed into position around you.

"For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." Zechariah 4:10 KJV

Matthew Henry's Bible Commentary (Concise)

Commentary on Zechariah 4:8-10

The exact fulfilment of Scripture prophecies is a convincing proof of their Divine original.

Though the instruments be weak and unlikely, yet God often chooses such, to bring about great things by them.

Let not the dawning light be despised; it will shine more and more to the perfect day.

Those who despaired of finishing the work, shall rejoice when they see Zerubbabel giving directions what to do, and taking care that the work be done.

It is a comfort to us that the same all-wise, almighty Providence, which governs the earth, is in particular conversant about the church.

All that have the plummet in their hands, must look up to the eyes of the Lord, have constant regard to Divine Providence, act in dependence on its guidance and submission to its disposals.

Let us fix our faith on Christ, and view Him carrying on his work according to his own glorious plan, and daily bringing his spiritual building nearer to completion.

Stephen, for almost 30 years now I have witnessed from both far & near that you have never been a man to despise small things but rather to embrace them with eyes forever seeing the God Inspired potential within each & every seed.

I remember it was our mutual friend Norman who brought me to Kifampa in 1990 merely for a weekend visit to 'his' Church in the village.

To bring his 'mzungu', a rare enough sight in 1990 Kampala, much less deep in the village.

A fact, if you can remember Stephen, that was fully attested to by the horrified screams from that little girl upon seeing a white man for the first time in her life.

Yet it was to be there while walking with you in 1990 Kifampa that Holy Spirit sowed the seed in my heart that you were to be a 'significant person' in my Life in Christ.

A momentary 'feeling' that quickly filed itself deeply away into the recesses of my spirit.

However, like so many other instances I never took it up in my own strength to actively do anything about it.

For many things are sent by God intended only, in the first instance, to be received, accepted & then to await God's outworking unless He specifically Calls to action it!

If indeed it came from God, then it will happen & if He wanted me to do something about it Holy Spirit would have made it clear to me.

And here we are some 28 years later, Seeing&Knowing that by Holy Spirit Appointment we stand together in EIDO International in True Unity with God's Divine Purpose.

The very organisation I was told, some few months before I first met you there in 1990, that God would cause me to form.

It indeed became manifest in the physical some twelve months after we met & was then known as EIDO & now EIDO International Incorporated.

Then it came to be, following 22 years of a close yet somewhat indirect involvement, you stepped up to assume the role of EIDO Regional Director for East Africa.

A position that on December 1st you will be commencing your 7th year.

In late 2012 you shared with us that Holy Spirit had instilled upon your heart that EIDO needed to have another indigenous leader based in East Africa.

This was one year after I had been forced to fill the position when EIDO International found it necessary to step down its first indigenous Regional Director, a position he had held for some 17 years.

This incident was to be the second most significant setback for EIDO in East Africa, the first & most consequential having been in 1994, with both incidents brought about by the actions of fellow Ugandans.

This was an office that the Lord caused you to freely take up, without EIDO Australia ever canvassing for a replacement Director for East Africa.

A year earlier & unknown to anyone but the EIDO Board here, Holy Spirit had put you Stephen on my heart as the chosen replacement.

Many attempts over a period of some months to contact you about it failed as every time I prepared myself to do it I simply found, for unknown reasons, that I just could not bring myself to do it.

I wondered just what was holding me back for it felt 'so right' to us all.

This puzzled me greatly & made me question whether, somehow, what again happened after so many years of struggle was, in fact, the final straw for me.

I questioned, in my own mind, whether maybe in holding on to the EIDO Vision for so long I did not know how to let go & could not face the truth of it.

However, I knew peace in my spirit that the Lord had laid it on my inner heart, but in the physical, I found no reason why I was failing to take action.

I found no explanation to give the EIDO Board who had heartily sanctioned the approach to you but thankfully they were patient with me.

Each of us, I believe, was still recovering & settling down following the action we recently had to take in regard to the former Regional Director & were, therefore, lacking some assuredness in ourselves.

Then, at what was to become my final attempt, Holy Spirit made it clear to my heart that we must leave it in God's Hand.

I shared with the EIDO Board at our next meeting & we all agreed to leave it in the Lord's Hand & in faith merely Wait Upon Him.

We conceded to the fact that it was not our 'business' to initiate but Believe again in the manner Holy Spirit had taught us throughout the preceding years of EIDO.

In fact, it was to go so far into the recesses of our conscious thoughts that when your sudden communication of late 2012 arrived it surprised us greatly but was received with amazed jubilation & Thanksgiving to God!

In that first communication from you in over a year, you merely shared with me that Holy Spirit had led you to see a real need for another indigenous Regional Director to be based on the ground there in East Africa, rather than be directed from Australia.

You never, in any way, forthrightly implied to us that you were nominating yourself for the role but in knowing your humility & what Holy Spirit had us waiting for, I now acted immediately.

Without any further discussion & the leading of Holy Spirit in my heart, I prepared the Transfer of the EIDO Directorship in East Africa from myself to you & the EIDO Board unanimously authorised it.

Stephen, you were to graciously receive it & humbly set forth to walk in the role because I believe you knew as we did it was a Divine Appointment.

Now it is humbling to think that all this history of being in True Unity with God's Divine Purpose has come to pass despite so many obstacles set along the way.

Indeed, the almost total lack of any kind of real support is far from the least of them, yet they all served to teach us how to live by faith.

And to think Stephen that we parted from each other back in 1990 without any particular hope, plan or purpose that anything more ardent should develop between us.

In looking back, I see it all commenced as I walked with you there in 1990 Kifampa when Holy Spirit so gently planted a prophecy deep in my heart that you would be significant in my future.

Now on that fateful day in my life, the 1st June 1990, when God Revealed His EIDO Vision to my heart I became entombed within its Foundational Spiritual Seed.

When I sent out the EIDO Prayer Prism Booklet in the early 1990's you later shared that you sought God as to whether EIDO was of Him & you were to receive the answer in your heart after six months of earnest seeking.

Thus joining me entombed within that same Foundational Spiritual Seed & we have been joined there over the years with others Called to the forming of its foundation.

For every seed contains within itself everything it needs to come to fullness.

Within the apple seed, in minuscule form is every ingredient that will ever be required to form the entire apple tree & all the fruit it shall produce over its lifetime.

And so it is within the Seed of EIDO.

Stephen, you have now shared that Holy Spirit has caused a moment of reflection in your life & I have found that such Spirit Led reflections usually denote & precede a God Appointed Turning Point.

The few words you used to describe your journey, I believe would have to resound in the heart of any True Follower of Christ.

For they would know there is a stumbling stone set in Zion, and a rock of offense, but those who Believe on him shall not be ashamed.

Stephen, to a substantial extent you have shared & been an integral part of my journey in Christ for almost 30 years now.

Two separate paths that so innocently intersected there on the crossroads of Kifampa Village with the mere intent of a short weekend of international fellowship.

Seemingly to then move on separately toward our different destinations in Christ.

Only to be found today intricately woven & knitted together in Love within the very fabric of God's Divine Purpose for East Africa.

Stephen, the sharing of your Spirit Led Cry to EIDO members to Pray & Fast during November & to Seek God's Direction for EIDO in East Africa was inwardly perceived with tears of joy by me as an instant realisation came of its spiritual ramifications.

I immediately came to See&Know it to be the pivotal tipping point for EIDO in East Africa.

The one I have inwardly by faith given me & not much else believed for & waited on for so many years now.

In that instant, it was as if I came to See&Know the message of EIDO that God caused me to carry into Uganda back in 1990 is now being received & understood in the heart of a rightful recipient, an East African.

Thus germinating the Foundational Seed of EIDO in which we had been entombed.

Stephen, I believe the first root is about to break forth!

For it is God's Time for the root system to truly start its journey of growth & to eventually spread to the four corners of East Africa.

Spiritual roots that will support the trunk & branches of the Spiritual Tree known as the EIDO International Fellowship Of Unity.

Reaching forth & bringing into fellowship those seeking to See&Know God's Desire for us to be in True Unity with His Divine Purpose.

From which God's Spirit shall deliver wisdom & revelation reserved for this End Of The Church Age season we are in.

A Spiritual Tree planted & growing in East Africa producing a unique fruit.

The tree of an international fellowship of unity destined to spread in and through East Africa & its people.

To encapture in His Love those East Africans who would desire to See&Know what Divine Purpose is reserved for them.

And a tree, the branches of which He shall cause to cover the earth, providing its unique fruit consisted within the East Africans He shall send to deliver it.

All designed as but one part of the Awakening of The Church from its spiritual slumber worldwide, to the Glory of God.

Stephen, I believe The Spirit of God has now led you to Stand up in East Africa to Spiritually Assert your God Given Authority as the EIDO East African Regional Director.

A single Spirit Led statement that I believe has broken forth the first root from the EIDO Seed that was delivered to East Africa in 1990.

For as I have said, within God's Divine Plan He has a specific strategic role for East Africans consisting within God's Divine Purpose & His Call to come into True Unity with it.

The start of a Spiritual root system that will transport God's Message To East Africans of His Call for them to come close & listen :

He is Calling for East Africa to "Draw Nigh Unto Me" for He has something uniquely reserved for East Africans who want to hear, to hear.

**And in your communication to me you have declared in relation to EIDO:
"Our Lord needs to Hear that I Am Ready and Willing to be used by His Spirit."**

Stephen, here on this very night I am to complete 30 years in Christ, I share with you that God Has Heard You & because of it so very many are to follow your lead.

A Spiritual Tree of Evangelical Inspiration Directed Overseas is now rooted & shall grow in Accordance with God's Divine Purpose for it in East Africa & beyond.

**Love,
Mwesigwa**

**Written by:
Peter J Roberts (Mwesigwa)
Founding Chairman
EIDO International Incorporated**

**ISSUE 085: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 82
Issued: 28th November 2018**

**Defaced - Week 74
God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 21**

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

Previously we looked at what consisted within that direct Word from God to Jonah that eventually induced such power of conviction upon all of Nineveh.

So much so that it caused God Himself to repent of the evil He had planned to bring upon them.

Now let us take a closer look at what The Bible can reveal about this Jonah?

All that is revealed of him as a man, in fact, exists entirely in the Book of the Bible bearing his name.

In being only a short Book of four chapters, we can quickly skim the surface & come away with a set elementary impression of a man who ran from God, was apprehended in the midst of his fleeing, repented & obeyed.

A story that I believe every one of us can personally relate to if being honest & possibly another reason for not looking deeper.

It is also a story that can engender hope to us when finding ourselves in such a circumstance for it also speaks much of God's Love & Forgiveness toward men.

For in this instance it was poured out not only upon Jonah to whom He gave a second chance to obey but also Nineveh that fully repented because of it.

Until recently this was my rudimentary understanding of the Book of Jonah yet through being drawn into a closer study of the actual scriptures I am now finding so much more is revealing itself to me.

Surprisingly in line with the current overall subject matter at hand.

Firstly we can rightfully assume Jonah as being a Prophet of God for the Book of Jonah can be found among the Books of the Minor Prophets.

Even the secular Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Jonah as being:

"An Israelite prophet who according to the account in the book of Jonah resisted a divine call to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh was swallowed and vomited by a great fish, and eventually carried out his mission."

The embellished Story of Jonah that so many of us first heard of through our Children's Bible or Sunday School forever seems to keep children captivated.

The enhancing of the story by way of identifying the 'big fish' as a whale ensured the captivating of children's imaginations considering the widely accepted fascination with these largest of all sea creatures.

As adults, I wonder whether this general 'familiarity' with the essence of the story of Jonah gained as a child hinders us from taking a truly impartial look at it.

I know it did with me when as an adult Christian I finally read it a little more earnestly.

For in my mind I read Jonah's disobedience to God only as a perceived fear of what Nineveh's wickedness might do to him if he were to stand & speak against it.

And I was to draw not much else from it probably due to my over-familiarity with the enhanced story focused on Jonah's disobedience that found him in the belly of a whale.

Then in seeking God as a young Christian, I was aiming to hopefully bring increase to my obedience not to concentrate on what I knew as a story more of noncompliance.

Another aspect is that when fervently seeking one tends to be drawn to & concentrate more upon the intensive & expansive writings of the Major Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel & Daniel.

Hence the commonly embedded perception of Jonah being a simple story of the man who resisted God & his being dealt with by God in the belly of a big fish.

A contention that is aptly evidenced by the definition of Jonah found in the Merriam-Webster secular dictionary.

Recently, my regard to the Book of Jonah has changed greatly since being led into this prolonged study of this short Book of the Bible.

So the first point we have established is that The Bible places the Book of Jonah amongst the Minor Prophets & even a secular dictionary declares him as such.

However, let us now look at what Scripture reveals that denotes Jonah as a Prophet of God.

The secular dictionary I use here when writing says:

- 1. A person who speaks by divine inspiration or as the interpreter through whom the will of a god is expressed.**
- 2. A person gifted with profound moral insight and exceptional powers of expression.**
- 3. A predictor; a soothsayer.**
- 4. The chief spokesperson of a movement or cause.**

Easton's Bible Dictionary in part says this of the word Prophet:

**Prophet [s] Heb: nabi,
from a root meaning
"to bubble forth, as from a fountain,"
hence "to utter",
Compare Psalms 45:1.**

This Hebrew word is the first and the most generally used for a prophet.

Thus a prophet was a spokesman for God; he spake in God's name and by his authority (Exodus 7:1).

Jonah 1:1-2 KJV

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

**He is the mouth by which God speaks to men
(Jeremiah 1:9; Isaiah 51:16),**

Jonah 3:1-2 KJV

**1 And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,
2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.**

**and hence what the prophet says is not of man but of God
(2Peter 1: 20-21; Compare Hebrews 3:7; Acts 4: 25; 28:25).**

Jonah 3:4 KJV

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

Jonah 3:5 KJV

5 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.

**Prophets were the immediate organs of God for the communication of his mind and will to men.
(Deuteronomy 18:18-19).**

Jonah 3:6-9 KJV

**6 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 sat in ashes.
7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:
8 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.
9 Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?**

The whole Word of God may in this general sense be spoken of as prophetic, in as much as it was written by men who received the revelation they communicated from God, no matter what its nature might be.

The foretelling of future events was not a necessary but only an incidental part of the prophetic office.

**The great task assigned to the prophets whom God raised up among the people was:
"to correct moral and religious abuses, to proclaim the great moral and religious truths which are connected with the character of God, and which lie at the foundation of his government."**

Jonah 3:10 KJV

10 And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Anyone being a spokesman for God to man might thus be called a prophet.

As the scriptures from Jonah interspersed amongst Easton's Bible Dictionary Definition of Prophet above serve to reveal Jonah most certainly was a spokesman for God.

**ISSUE 086: [Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 83](#)
Issued: 11th December 2018**

**[Defaced - Week 75](#)
[God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 22](#)**

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

So we have now established the first fact that Jonah indeed was a Prophet of God.

We also saw that the Book that bears his name is among the writings of the Twelve Minor Prophets.

In being human, there is innate competitiveness within us all that to varying degrees is so readily demonstrated in our words & deeds.

If we look closely enough, we will soon see it infects every facet of our thinking & too often directs our actions.

And it is all linked to a continual need to gain or maintain a personal sense of achievement upon which we, or others, then make assessments of our worthiness.

It is our human nature to see everything by how valuable we perceive its worth or merit to be in our eyes.

We either spend our lives forever trying to increase, hold or maintain a significant ranking in our own or other's sight.

Then when we feel any inability to attain, or a sense of being held back, we can readily fall into suffering varying degrees of lack of self-worth.

Therefore, when any ability or action gains public recognition, we immediately soak in the glory it promotes, even if it has absolutely nothing to do with us.

Who of us has not witnessed or even basked in the rapture of our sports team taking The Cup while correspondingly seeing the instant & overt depletion of self-worth in the opposing team & supporters?

Our team's win has nothing to do with us in reality other than we chose to support that team yet the momentary euphoria overrides all our lacks to suddenly transport us to a great sense of self-worth.

For a time we are on top of the world & wish the feeling should never leave us!

Sport is but one arena in life universally accepted to be based upon open competition to determine who or what is deemed most worthy of the very best.

As was pointed out earlier, human nature is based majorly upon competitiveness in one form or another.

Subtle deception awakened it in Adam & the overt actions of Cain established it in the nature of humankind.

The world sees it as natural, promotes it in a good light & encourages us to be competitive to succeed & achieve our goals.

Even though we all know there is only one winner at the end of any race.

A fact in itself, which can serve to promote its form of decay & destruction in both its outworking & its aftermath.

And the template of which is continually being applied repeatedly in a myriad of different ways & in every form of life known to man.

It is the subtle deception that lies in self that then makes it sin.

The very Teachings of Jesus speak against the promotion of self.

Yet today we are seeing so much self-promotion in the churches all being promoted in the Name of Jesus!

The Bible tells us that Jesus spoke so much to us of denying self, either directly, indirectly or through The Parables & other stories.

He spoke of Oneness in Unity, of His Being One with His Father & we all being parts to His One Body Of Christ.

The root of sin is self, pride its outworking & eternal separation from God its result.

When Satan first approached those made in the Image of God he used subtle deception to cover his real intent to rob, steal, kill & destroy.

He robbed Adam & Eve of their innocence & purity, stole them from the Presence of God, killed their spirit man & destroyed all hope of returning.

Glory to God for the Second Adam who has now provided the way back to anyone who Believes in their hearts that Jesus Is The Son Of God.

In being a lie, the concept of self through beguiling but harmful entrapment, subtly & stealthy works to spread treachery through the competitiveness in & of humanity.

If we, even for a moment, could be totally honest with ourselves just a scratch to the surface of our self-image would start to reveal the truth of this.

The Truth is that even in anything a man might perceive to be the purest form of competition, self still resides at the root of it & in the Light of God's Righteousness that makes it sin.

As with all Truth, a realisation of this does not rob, steal, kill or destroy but instead brings new life & a new way.

A new way for our lives to be led even in the midst of personal competitiveness for it will persist to some level as long as we can still take a breath.

Jesus asks us to deny ourselves & surrender to Him the Perfect One, not to strive for our perfection for it in itself is competitive by nature & therefore still sin.

For it was the disobedience of man that defaced Christ's Image in us.

As True Christians we have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb & we have been restored into the Image of God for Jesus Is Now Alive in us!

We can only truly overcome through the denying of self to the enabling of the defacing of our image through His Obedience now restored in our spirit man.

If we truly desire a deeper Walk In God then our natural competitiveness needs to be surrendered to Christ that His Obedience might begin to erode it!

This natural competitiveness in the world has fostered most of the strifes, unrests & violence to be found & seen in every corner of the earth.

I will leave each one of you to meditate with Holy Spirit upon that as it is far more than could be related in tens of thousands of books much less here.

In fact, millions of books have probably already been written delving, looking & seeking to cure the common ailments of men without finding & treating the common cause only because it hides in the deceit of self itself.

Now I will attempt to get back on track here regarding Jonah by trying to make a summation out of this vast subject that has arisen.

This innate competitive nature in man forever causes us to summarise & regulate everything in order of our perceived superior quality or worth, excellence or approval.

To illustrate what I see in my mind I will try to relate the essence in simple terms by sharing a little parable of my own regarding my younger brother.

When we were young, our father kept a shop in which he had a big plastic bin full of varying types of unpackaged biscuits for sale.

At times, my brother would for morning tea help himself to ten or more of these biscuits.

He would sit down & lay them out in order of taste preference.

Then he would attempt to stack them up one upon the other before taking part in the self-gratifying task of consuming them all.

The first one atop the biscuit stack was always the one least to his liking.

His next least preferred followed with the rest arranged in like manner until his most favoured sat at the bottom.

The above example is a simple illustration of the innate competitiveness of human nature displayed even in such a trivial matter as having some morning tea!

Self, in this case, being his taste buds competed against each individual biscuit in an effort to ensure ever-increasing gain on the way to final victory.

Each & every time, with a lick of the lips & a quick pat of his belly he would get up & walk away satisfied, his face displaying great achievement in a job well done.

That is human nature in a nutshell!

We like to sort & rank our options according to our fleshly lusts & work through them in the hope of our attaining the ultimate desirous ending.

It is one thing to do it when all elements are entirely under our control but quite another to try & repeat the feat in the midst of the multitude of variants we encounter in life.

But if left unabated, self will always serve to ensure that our fleshy desires ultimately direct the paths we take.

Hence why Jesus continuously urged us to deny ourselves through strong appeal, thought-provoking argument, warning or advice.

In fact to 'hear' from God, to be led of Holy Spirit, to learn Spiritual Truths, to be receptive of God's Revelations to us personally all require us to deny our natural human ways of thinking.

The obvious hindrances are the easiest; it is the small deceits deeply shrouded by our ingrained habits or desires that become our personal stumbling stones.

So it is that before we move on to take a closer look at Jonah, I feel we all need to overcome what may have already been our human reaction to him being known as one of The Twelve Minor Prophets.

What if each one of my brother's biscuits bore the name of one of every Prophet named in the Books of the Major & Minor Prophets in the Bible!

The Minor Prophet biscuits would be at the top to quickly get them out of the way to make way for the 'best feed'.

Our human minds have been taught that the bigger the better yet in this instance we need to take a moment to remember that in God we are all equal.

Therefore let us move on fully understanding that minor in this instance is not referring to the Prophet himself or his status in God.

Instead it is regarding the Book of the Bible that bears their name as being lesser or smaller in amount, extent or size.

But most definitely not as we might instinctively perceive it to be implying of being of a lesser importance, rank or stature.

The getting past of this possible restraint in our minds might actually enable us to See&Know something more of why this short book was put there in the Bible for all to read.

ISSUE 087: SPECIAL CHRISTMAS EDITION

Issued: 18th December 2018

Mary Allowed God's Will To Become Hers.

Well, here we find ourselves once again entrenched in what we know as the Christmas Season with Christmas Day rapidly approaching.

Here in Australia, some refer to it as the Silly Season because it heralds a time of increased engagements with a consequential increase in life's pressures, much shopping, planning & preparation until finally, December 25th arrives to give birth to the actual celebration.

To me, it succinctly echoes the season of a woman's pregnancy does it not?

Increased engagements & life pressures, much shopping, planning & preparation until finally, the day of birthing comes!

As Christians, we should be well aware that we are in fact Celebrating A Birth.

Being, of course, The Birth of Jesus Christ Our Lord & Saviour.

Isaiah 9:6 KJV

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

For that is the True Reason For The Season & for us as Christians we mark the day singularly in remembrance of the fact of Jesus having been birthed in the flesh.

We rejoice because The Lord God Almighty, being Our Father in Heaven & in whose Presence we cannot enter alone, allowed His Only Son to be born of the flesh that in Him we may!

For Emmanuel being God With Us was born that day so that any that should declare in their hearts that He Is The Son Of God shall have everlasting Life.

So we Celebrate, on a singularly assigned date, the arrival of Baby Jesus in the flesh who through His Death & Resurrection has now become Our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ!

And now, within the Liberty God granted us, we have the opportunity to Celebrate The Lord Jesus Christ in our lives every single day.

God The Father has a Divine Plan & the Birth of Jesus in the flesh was but one part of the multifaceted outworking of His Divine Purpose that stems from it.

For Jesus was born to die that we might Live!

Of course, we now know it to be the most strategic & necessary part of Divine Purpose for it contained within itself the seed of immeasurable consequence to all that was to follow.

Yet He entrusted its planting to a pure young virgin named Mary by allowing her to See&Know the Divine Purpose for what He asked her to Believe!

For only God The Father can See&Know the Divine Plan.

However, He Calls upon mankind, for those who can hear & Believe, to See&Know their destiny within the Divine Purpose.

Luke 1:26-38 KJV

***26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,
27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.
28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.
29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.
30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.
34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?
35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.
37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.
38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.***

Honestly, can any of us even begin to truly imagine what kind of Love continually compels The Lord God Almighty to place & entrust such Divine Calls of Purpose to mankind?

It overwhelmed Mary & brought her to Praise Him thus bringing its intent to Life!

Luke 1:46-52 KJV

Mary's Song of Praise:

***46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.
50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.
51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.***

The angel Gabriel came to Mary a virgin to announce she would conceive a son she was to call Jesus.

She asked how could it be when she had not been with a man & he told her in brief how & why it would happen.

Then he added that even Elizabeth her relative now in her old age is already six months pregnant, though she was told she could not conceive, & he added that no word from God will ever fail.

Mary agreed in her heart & then declared that the Lord's Will should be done in her.

When it became obvious to Joseph that she was pregnant, he was going to send her away, but an angel came to him in a dream.

He was told to fear not for what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Joseph then received her & what was to come, the essence of which the angel had shared with him.

God's Word does not return void & it will be done but first He looks for the ones who will agree that His Will must be done in them & open their hearts to allow it to manifest in the midst of their lives.

Joseph was about to throw Mary away but when the revelation came he instead cast a net of support over Mary & the unborn child to stand with what was God Ordained & spoken of by the prophet.

Joseph & Mary in their lifetimes saw only a part of the manifestation of what their obedience brought about at such a strategic time, & is still bringing.

God is still Calling to the Josephs who can receive the message to fear not for what has been conceived is from the Holy Spirit & the Mary's who might allow themselves to See&Know.

To be willing to step aside & let God's Will Be Done!

So let us Celebrate & Commemorate the Birth of Jesus this Christmas & let us live out the other 364 days & beyond Seeing&Knowing He Came that we might walk in the Destiny reserved for us within the Divine Purpose of God!

Not what we have perceived it to be, or what someone else has directed us to be, but rather what Holy Spirit has truly caused us to See&Know.

Jesus came & went again, that Holy Spirit might be lighted upon men.

So angels no longer need be sent, as Gabriel was, to show Mary her Divine Purpose, but those in Christ might find their true destiny within God's Divine Purpose & stand steadfast in it as did Mary & Joseph.

Mary Allowed God's Will To Become Hers & We Received The Way, The Truth & The Life!

Just imagine what might happen if we truly did too!

Have a Blessed Christmas & as we Celebrate the Birth of Jesus let us remember what a moment, such as Mary's, of accepted Obedience can bring.

May The Year Of The Lord 2019 be full of Divine Purpose met!

**ISSUE 088: [Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 84](#)
Issued: 5th February 2019**

[Defaced - Week 76](#)

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 23

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

Welcome to The Year of The Lord 2019, the Year of Crossroad. [more coming about that soon].

May it prove to be a year in which we corporately & individually begin to truly discover God Our Father's Plan for us to grow deeper into True Unity within His Divine Purpose.

For me personally, the year started with a very eventful January that resulted in an unplanned break in the production & issuing of these weekly sharings.

In fact, I now find it hard to believe that we are already sailing through February but nevertheless, let us pick up from here & continue on with the journey.

As a refresher, let me point out that the current sub-topic as shown in the header above commenced back on 18th September 2018 in Issue 76.

Since then the actual subject matter, surprisingly to me, began in regard to the Minor Prophet Jonah & somehow has become entirely centred on him.

In fact, that is where we last left off, discovering the true reason why the Prophetic Books of the Bible are referred to as being either major or minor.

We found that any Book of a Minor Prophet, such as Jonah, only references the fact that the Book & its writings are lesser or smaller in amount, extent or size.

Therefore, it is not to be mistaken as our natural mind is lent to, that The Prophet is of any lesser importance, rank or stature.

Further to what came forth last time in Part 75 re the natural competitiveness of man, I would now also like to point out some other natural traits we employ within our human ways of categorising people, situations & events.

Every one of us has a soul which is made up of our Mind, our Will & our Emotions.

Within the 'self-concept' what individually steers a human through life is the Personal Will, having been determined out of the working of the Mind or Emotions or a mixture of both.

And yet in truth, our every determination has to be formed from within the vast & varying limitations of both our mind & emotions.

Therefore we all naturally & readily receive, understand & put to use conceptual frameworks to 'contain or restrain' the unknown or incomprehensible variables of life to personally acceptable levels for the good of our well-being.

For pleasuring, we also are found to use them whenever we find a profitable or practical use within them for justifying our carnal thoughts or actions.

Concepts such as Winner or loser, Victor or victim, Right or wrong, Greater or lesser, Strong or weak, Good or evil, Righteous or unrighteous, Light or dark, Rich or poor, Success or failure, etc. etc.

I am sure we could all think of so many other conceptual frameworks within our daily lives in which we so readily imprison our patterns of thought.

Adam & Eve had been exposed not only to all creativity but also through it to The Creator Himself to fully experience the freedom & liberty found within God's Love & His Purity of Righteousness abounded in them.

There were no limitations for them as they were fully One With God.

For them, there was no loser, victim, wrong, lesser, weak, evil, unrighteousness, darkness, poverty or failure!

Yet were they not subtly beguiled into allowing the containment of their minds that unwittingly enlivened the concept of self that was hidden within the deceit.

Boundlessness nurtured in Oneness With God, Assured in Christ's Obedience within their Trust, now relegated to the containment & framing of minds to the fruit of the knowledge of good & evil, which is all evil!

Eventually, in Accordance to Divine Plan Jesus Came & walked this earth & was seen through natural eyes as being a radical.

Radical only because he spoke & did things unrestrained by the containment & mind framing employed by mortal man.

And his most 'passionately radical' words & actions were directed toward the state he found his Father's House in because of the exercising of it by its leaders.

Now let us follow Jesus & think 'outside of the box' as the world puts it.

So now, in mindfulness of our sub-topic subject matter, let us now take a closer look at this Minor Prophet to see what the Spirit of God may reveal of spiritual longings through the Story of Jonah.

Within a casual reading of Jonah along with the application of the conceptual framework principle, can easily be left with an impression of a man Called of God yet found to be lacking the faith to obey.

His seeming lack then challenged him while being held in the belly of a great fish, where he finally repented & obeyed only to then lament of the final result.

Such an impression, would to many, paint Jonah as somewhat of a 'loser' rather than a hero or winner & be misconstrued to uphold his 'minor prophet' label.

However, in being led to look so closely at Jonah I have come to see him in a whole new light.

1. Jonah was a Prophet of God - for the word of the Lord came unto him.

"Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying," Jonah 1:1

2. Jonah was a man of Great Faith - for he slept as all the others onboard were fearing the great storm.

"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." Jonah 1:5

3. Jonah was a witness of God - in the storm they sought his God who gave him such peace.

"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." Jonah 1:6

4. Jonah was assured in his faith - when challenged he openly declared his God.

"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 1:9

5. Jonah was a man of honesty & integrity - he told them to throw him overboard to calm the storm.

"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." Jonah 1:12

6. Jonah was a Vessel of God - the men now feared the Lord greatly & made vows.

" Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows." Jonah 1:16

7. Jonah was a Man of Prayer - for in the fish's belly he turned to God.

" When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple." Jonah 2:7

Does this not describe what any of us would regard as a Man of Great Faith, a man spoken to directly by God, called as a Prophet of God as attested by his name adorning one of the Prophetic Books of the Holy Bible?

A man who knew & understood the very Heart of God well:

" 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 4:2b

And yet it was in this knowledge of God's Way that something actually caused Jonah to first flee, a journey that ended only in revealing that Jonah's spiritual desires were, at that time, still so very far from God's.

Jonah 4:9-11 KJV [emphasis added]

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

**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:
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?**

I believe, the Book of Jonah actually reveals to us how spiritual longings can & do retard the growth of Spiritual Desire, or submission to God's Will, even in people of true faith.

For the continual application of & reliance on conceptual framework principles inherent to our human nature will always destine us to crossroads that we may find we cannot cross as Jonah did.

**" They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. "
Jonah 2:8 KJV**

**The Answer: Jesus' Prayer of Submission.
Luke 22:42-44 KJV**

**42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.
43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.
44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.**

Lord teach us to let go of our spiritual longings that we might be consumed into God's Spiritual Desires as you did.

**ISSUE 089: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 85
Issued: 12th February 2019**

**Defaced - Week 77
God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 24**

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

Let me begin this week by posing a question to you all.

If you believe as I do in the infallible Word of God, then what Divine Wisdom do you perceive the Story of Jonah contains that warranted the inclusion of this tenth shortest Book in the Holy Bible?

Certainly, the slight twisting of 'a great fish' into the emotive picture of a whale served to provide a wonderful Bible Story for children.

Also for us adults, the transparency of Jonah's disobedience displayed for all to see can serve to somehow make us feel better about our own failings before God.

This short personal tale of Jonah can so easily generate such modest reasonings for its existence but what I do know is that God's Divine Intention in sharing it with us in the Holy Scriptures has to be far deeper than that.

A most poignant fact to ponder is it's a very personal story of Jonah's dealings with God in regard to what quite possibly may have been the one & only such unflattering incident in his life.

Whatever he did for God before this incident, or whatever he may have gone on to do for Him afterwards, God has chosen that we know nothing of it.

For Jonah, the brief story ends with him still embroiled in his personal turmoil & whether redemption came again as it did in the belly of the great fish, none of us knows.

Just imagine, if, for each & every one of us, a small Book in the Bible was reserved to bear our name & the details of just one of our failures before God.

We most surely would not be able to hold the Bible in our hand as we now do, for surely the whole earth could not contain the sheer volume of it.

And what if all our failures were to be recorded in such a manner.

I think the whole universe might struggle to contain it all!

That is why I would contend that even though the Book bears his name it is not primarily aimed at simply revealing Jonah's failings because that is not Who God Is.

God Is Love & He Comforts us with Truth.

His Ways were never, & will never be to pander to our human thinking nor indulge our emotional needs, nor fulfil our expectations, nor to pull us down but rather to lift us up into Truth simply because we belong to Him & He Loves Us!

He sent The Word to us for One Divine Purpose.

To reveal to us The Way, The Truth & The Life.

All the efforts of the Heavens are aligned to the One Divine Purpose to Educate, Motivate & Inspire us as individuals toward being perpetually prepared & led into position for further steps into Truth.

This Divine Purpose will continue for as long as any still take a breath in this life.

The Bible says that the knowledge of Truth sets you free.

John 8:32 KJV

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

The moment we first Believed & received Jesus as Lord, the Son of God, we first knew Truth & every time we come to further wisdom & revelation in the knowledge of Him we take another step:

Ephesians 4:13 KJV

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

It will be when Ephesians 4:13 is made manifest that God's Divine Purpose will be fully fulfilled.

For that will be when God's Children return in the Unity of the Body of Oneness with Christ & through Him to Divine Oneness With God.

Throughout my thirty years of Life in Christ, there is one thing that is assured to always cause my inner being to tremble & my head to shake.

That is simply when a Preacher or Teacher stands & vehemently tirades on about a perceived or actual failure or failings of Apostles, Prophets or other men or women of God mentioned within the Holy Scriptures.

I am not talking about the legitimate sharing of what is written or for the teaching of aspects purposed to help our understanding & the bettering of our walk in Christ.

Rather I am talking about those rare times when a line is crossed for whatever reason & unfounded assumptions & assertions pour forth that go far beyond the scripture & the Truth it contains.

Unfettered they usually degenerate into personal attacks against the character or integrity of the target all of which is seemingly bandied about only in order to feed or boost poor 'spiritual egos'.

I quivered in my seat one day as I listened to a preacher degenerate the character & actions of Elijah the Prophet into a rapidly increasing laughing matter by simply focusing on when Elijah ran in fear for his life.

I lost count of how many times in that one instance that he continued to inflate his assertions far beyond Truth & no leadership stepped in because he was the leader!

Causing others to accept his assertions by focusing on that one time in Elijah's life while giving absolutely no credence to the fact that yes, he ran in fear but also found courage through God in the situation.

My mind was totally consumed in shock & amazement of how any Christian, much less a leader, could speak in such a manner about Elijah who stood in solid obedience & courage before God.

A man who was not to see death but was taken up into Heaven!!

Dangerous ground indeed & a great lesson in our need to be circumspect in all we do or say.

Matthew 7:3-5 ESV

3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye?

5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

In such cases, the inference that attempts to beset the atmosphere is that we are so much better, wiser & stronger now that such things could not possibly happen with us.

Which is the 'twisting' of Truth & only serves to boost 'spiritual egos'.

But who is any one of us that we should think ourselves greater than our brother, for do not each one of us fall so far short of the Glory of God.

Are we not, every one of us, sinners still?

Set free from the penalty but certainly not the failings!

Only last week I came across an article where a Man of God told someone that no matter who we are or what we have done in God we are all still wearing our 'L Plates'.

For no matter how old we are in the Lord, how far we have Walked with Him, or how much we know or understand, we are all still Learners.

A second, thing in my Walk With Christ that has continually bemused me is to occasionally have Church brethren emphatically proclaim how they gave God a piece of their mind regarding a certain issue in their life.

At times plainly expressing they were so angry with God they raised their fist at Him & have then proceeded to physically demonstrate for due emphasis.

I am thankfully well aware that most of these instances were perpetrated by persons of weak or no real faith which in many of these instances has since been well demonstrated.

However, I am also aware that people of faith can become argumentive or even angry at times with God more especially I would think for His seeming non-action regarding their grievance.

So, with those matters now aired, let us next week look further into the reaction of Jonah after God's Reprieve of Nineveh in an attempt to discover what Truth might be hidden in Chapter Four of the Book of Jonah.

[to be continued]

ISSUE 090: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 86

Issued: 19th February 2019

Defaced - Week 78

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 25

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

I closed last week sharing about brethren who have occasionally spoken with me about how they were so angry with God that they let Him know, in no uncertain terms, of what they were feeling.

I do admit that just like everyone else I can get angry over things of life however to direct personal anger toward God is something I myself cannot even imagine myself doing.

I understand that we are free to bring anything to the Altar of our True Spiritual Father through Jesus Christ, In Whom Love & Forgiveness is ours, freely given.

I am also aware that Jesus is the one who can already See&Know every situation & circumstance in my life for what could I possibly hide from Him?

Despite, or more likely because of this knowledge, I cannot perceive myself ever to be inclined to come to God in the manner that these brethren spoke of.

For it is one thing to speak out & share what your feeling even if He already can See&Know the situation, circumstance or emotional state you are in.

However, it is entirely another thing to direct your anger at God as though He is responsible for your situation or because you perceive He has delayed or taken no action in your circumstance.

Thank God that even in the midst of so many seemingly disastrous situations encountered throughout my walk in Christ I have never found myself directing anger at God.

As a man, I was brought up to honour & respect my elders & authorities & therefore if anything I usually find myself directing any anger away consciously toward either others or myself.

Probably, if I could face the truth, I would find it is too often subconsciously aimed at myself.

In this life, I believe it is crucial that we learn to honour & respect, to give worth to others & fear to lose their respect.

And in our Spiritual Life to Respect & Honour, to know the Fear of the Lord, declaring Him Worthy so that True Wisdom might begin its journey in us.

In looking up the word respect my dictionary entry finishes with [emphasis added]:

[From Middle english, regard, from Old French, from Latin respectus, from past participle of respicere, to look back at, regard : re-, re-specere, to look at; see spek - in Indo-European roots.]

During my childhood, I was provided with a foundation for my moral behaviours as somehow I learnt to look back at my parents, my grandparents, my uncles & aunties.

The regard I gave to them in my heart, along with what I found in them, thus enabled me to look at them with all the honour that dignity duly accords to position & so I found Family in my heart.

Similarly, as Jesus Christ came into my life revealing my True Father in Heaven I was drawn to look back at Him through The Word He gave to us.

Then, through an ever-increasing revelatory knowledge of Who God Is, I learnt to regard this now Living God as absolutely pivotal to my being & my life.

This then served to cause me to look at God in all things, giving rise to the Respect [Fear of the Lord] & Honour rightfully accorded to the Divine Position He Alone Occupies.

I am not alone, for this, in essence, is what happens to all True Believers.

Our journeys of reaching some undergirding foundational Understanding are many & varied but the end result is the same for all.

For in the Revealing of Jesus The Way, The Truth & The Life opens to us.

The Way is to look back at God whom Jesus Reveals to us.

"9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" John 14:9 KJV [emphasis added]

Then in giving regard to God & finding Him as the Divine pivotal focal point of your life is The Truth.

"3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

1 Timothy 2:3-4. [emphasis added]

Then it is not just the truth but the knowledge of the truth that brings us to look at God through Seeking His Face which now has become The Life.

"13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13

Any reading of Chapter 4 of the Book of Jonah leaves us with one predominating emotion on display, being, of course, Jonah's anger.

Though Jonah was obviously a Man of God, there is no hiding the fact of what his immediate reaction to God's handling of Nineveh's fate at the time was.

Jonah 4:1-4 KJV

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

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore 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.

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

4 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?

Before we continue our journey further into Jonah's anger I want to share the following article with you all that I found in my early preparation for this issue.

Anger is a form of love

Published March 3, 2018, 10:00 PM

By Fr. Rolando V. Dela Rosa, O.P. [emphasis added]

Reference: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/03/03/anger-is-a-form-of-love/>

Many of us feel guilty for being angry.

But as an emotion, anger in itself is neither bad nor good.

It is our instinctive reaction to whatever threatens something or someone we love.

As Tim Keller writes, anger is a form of love; it is "love in motion."

In today's gospel reading, for instance, Jesus is furious at the merchants and money changers who have turned the Temple of Jerusalem into a marketplace.

"He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen, and spilled the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables" (Jn. 2:15).

But, it was His love for the temple, a place consecrated for God's worship and adoration, that drove Him to such moral outrage.

These days, however, many of us flare up at the slightest provocation.

In fact, we are gradually habituated to anger.

We are angry at almost everything and everyone.

Our blood boils over the traffic mess, uncollected garbage, air and noise pollution, high prices, unbridled graft and corruption in government, unsolved crimes, the plummeting economy, and the growing restlessness and violence in our society.'

We are angry at our powerlessness to stop the drift into uncertainty and moral decay.

Like the lead actor in the movie "Network," we want to scream: "I'm mad as hell and I can't take it anymore!"

Anger consumes energy very rapidly, and if long sustained, may completely drain our strength.

Perhaps this is why there is very little creative work going on within and around us.

We waste our energy working up all sorts of angst and anxiety over situations that are beyond our control, while neglecting or aggravating those that are within our power to address.

Anger can turn even the most reasonable man into a fanatic.

It is hard to deal with fanatics because they are hopelessly one-sided.

They are filled with an almost infallible certainty of their rectitude and of the iniquity of those who disagree with them.

This often results in a morbid factionalism that divides our society.

The proliferation of trolls and paid hacks in social media is a proof of this.

Unrequited anger festers into a vicious hatred that makes us want to destroy our enemy.

But Gandhi once asked: "What is victory if it is measured by the gauge of destruction? Strength does not come from physical power, but from an indomitable will to control our desire to retaliate."

Next time you are tempted to lose your temper over something or someone, take a deep breath and ask: "What is it that I love deeply which is threatened by this person or this situation?" Most of the time, the answer is "Myself."

As the good pastor Jonathan Parnell writes: "If we find ourselves angry about getting snubbed in social media, or being cut off in traffic, or going unrecognized for work, or having an idea shut down, or feeling underappreciated by our spouse — the problem might be that we love ourselves too much." End of Article

Next week we will journey into looking more closely at the anger Jonah displayed in the hope of God's imparting of further wisdom & revelation to us.

*ISSUE 091: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 87
Issued: 26th February 2019*

*Defaced - Week 79
God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 26
So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)*

*In the first three chapters the short Book of Jonah manages to tell a story:
of how one Man of God received a Divine Call,
of how he tried to run from it,
of how God 'arrested' him in the belly of a great fish,
of how he repented there in his confinement,
of how he subsequently went on to fulfil God's Call on his life regarding Nineveh.*

Then in an equally short Chapter Four we first find Jonah exceedingly displeased & angry with God's Will to now relent from destroying Nineveh because of their repentance.

Jonah then approaches God in prayer to verbalise his reasoning for why he fled to Tarshish only to finish his prayer by earnestly requesting that God take his life stating it was now better for him to die than to live.

God's only reply, as any wise Father would do, is to ask him whether he thought his anger is doing him well in any way.

Jonah's reaction was then to leave the city to sit on the east side of it in the shade of a booth he made for his own protection until he might see what would become of the city.

Then, God by Grace prepared a climbing plant (gourd) & caused it to provide Divine protection over him for which Jonah was exceedingly glad.

God then prepared a worm that the very next morning rose to destroy the plant, removing all Jonah's protection from the sun.

As if that wasn't enough God also prepared an intense easterly wind to blow straight at the now fully exposed Jonah.

So forceful was the wind & fierce was the sun that Jonah fainted, wishing within himself to die.

Then God asked Jonah whether he thinks his anger for the gourd is doing him well.

To which Jonah answered it does him well even unto death, & again stated that it is better for him to die than to live

It is then in the final two verses of Chapter Four that God speaks to Jonah beyond the repeated question of whether his anger is doing him well.

He pointed out to Jonah that he could find it in himself to pity a plant for which he neither laboured nor made it grow, which came up quickly & went just as quickly.

In Light of this God then posed a question to Jonah.

Jonah 4:11 KJV

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? "

So now, to me at least, the burning question is what did Jonah find so injurious to his person that he was declaring it better for him to die than to live?

What was the cause or seat of his anger & who or what was he so angry with?

We have seen that Jonah was truly a Man of God, Called to the Office of Prophet & one who knew the Heart of God well.

We also know he was a God Fearing Man living in Old Testament Times.

For under the Old Covenant men could only be visited upon by God's Spirit as & when required in Accordance with the Will & Purposes of God.

For these were the Jews, the Children of God, who were given The Law so that they would know what sin was & yet continually struggled with their flesh to try and obey it, only to eventually prove that man cannot fulfil The Law.

Jesus was sent to fulfil The Law & The Prophets for it was the disobedience of Adam & Eve [mankind] that had defaced the Obedience of Christ consisting in the Image of God dwelling within them.

This, as we know, brought about the death declared to befall them if they were to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good & Evil & were cast out from the Presence of God.

This simply means that Jonah was a man trying to obey & serve while lacking the indwelling Power & Presence of God's Spirit that is freely available to all today.

For just as we need to embrace the times & seasons of the New Dispensation under which we live, we must give equal recognition & respect to those existing during the time in question.

Lack of this, I believe, accounts for so much of the misinterpretation & mistaken meaning of The Truth today & goes some way to explain how at times Christians can be found deriding Men of God spoken of in the Bible.

At its very worst, from my spiritual observations, it is largely upon the misconstruing of Old Testament Scripture that the soft gospel, name-it claim-it, prosperity messages of this Post Modern Era are founded.

Furthermore, at its very least, it can cause even the most well-meaning Christian to have their perception tinted to a barely detectable amount or degree that it only serves to diffuse & somewhat nullify the True Power of the Living Gospel for them.

Now, in getting back to Jonah, I believe the essence for the existence of the Book bearing his name lies more in giving us a short panoramic & insightful look or perspective into man's intrinsic & endless struggle with the True Ways of God.

Isaiah 55:8-9 (KJV)

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

In Chapter 4 Verse 2 Jonah's prayer revealed that it was because of what he knew of God's Character that caused him to flee unto Tarshish following God's Call to him.

Some might wonder, how did Jonah ever think he could hide from God?

However, let us also remember that in a time when the Spirit of God came in visitation upon man rather than indwelling as he now does it might have been somewhat easier to imagine you could.

Whatever thoughts were prevailing in Jonah's mind at the time he soon discovered, there on the ship to Tarshish, that indeed God knew what he was doing.

But in all truth how many times do we, who declare God With Us, act as though The Lord cannot see, even though we know in our heart he can.

It's called disobedience or sin, the making of a willful decision to do what we know in God we should not, or go where we know we should not go.

We often lack an ability to look at something in Truth for the fear that we might just catch a glimpse of ourselves in it, a habit that can quickly develop a self-righteous perspective in us if we are not diligent.

Glory to God that through the Shed Blood of Christ forgiveness is ours, for surely we need it.

We need to know that in any way we may perceive Jonah as failing, we also fail & more!

In Verse 1, before Jonah turned to pray to God, it was revealed that he was so exceedingly displeased with what the Way of God, which he already knew, had brought about regarding Nineveh that for some reason he found himself very angry.

So can we assume that Jonah's anger was directed at God?

Some might say yes it is revealed in Verse 2 as Jonah reminded God of what he spoke of when in his own country which then caused him to flee to Tarshish.

Yet others might say, as I do, that Jonah never directed his anger at God but rather more that he was angry with himself.

Last week I shared an article that contained the following:

"Many of us feel guilty for being angry.

But as an emotion, anger in itself is neither bad nor good.

It is our instinctive reaction to whatever threatens something or someone we love.

Quoted from article shared last week & written by Fr. Rolando V. Dela Rosa, O.P.

Reference: <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/03/03/anger-is-a-form-of-love/>

Now as we wait upon next weeks message let us meditate particularly upon a further quote Fr. Rolando had shared in his article:

"As Tim Keller writes,

Anger is a form of love; it is "love in motion.""

ISSUE 092: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 88

Issued: 5th March 2019

Defaced - Week 80

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 27

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

Regarding family matters, in particular, last week was an unusually busy one that totally consumed my time in doing what needed to be done.

Any desire for conscious thoughts or meditations about the possible ongoing direction of these writings was, by default, inevitably relegated to this weeks agenda.

Then sometime late last week & just for a fleeting moment, Jonah came to mind, yet I found it was superimposed with thoughts of Jesus.

This threw me off balance a bit as it was out of left field to what I was sensing as last week's writing was being finalised.

Later, in a quiet moment, I came to the remembrance of what I had found in the early stages of researching Jonah.

I also then recalled it was referred to in the article 'The Sign of Jonah' written by Doug Batchelor that was shared with you over six issues of these writings [Issues 74-79].

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

The fact to which I refer is that many have spoken or written of Jonah being a foretaste of Christ.

After such a tiring week, yesterday found me in such a state of lethargy that my thoughts had to fight hard to reach the surface of my consciousness much less receive any recognition.

Before retiring for the night I suddenly became aware that the morning was to bring the weekly requirement to produce this message & my mind just simply froze.

I will refrain from naming it as fear but it seemed like a pretty good imitation of it!

At that very time, beyond the name Jonah, my mind was an absolute blank & my first thought at that moment was that this week, this time, it will surely be impossible.

Thank God for the past two years experience of getting these weekly writings out for in doing so I have learnt once again He is Ever Faithful.

It is now almost twenty years since I was last given the privilege to preach at a pulpit or publicly.

Most times when I did, I went to the pulpit with absolutely nothing prepared or even in my mind or maybe with just a seed of thought or a simple perception of a general direction.

Yet God, Always put Word in my mouth. Hallelujah. All Glory to Him.

Now, this morning, I awoke to feel refreshed & in amongst my very first conscious thoughts arose a prompting in my heart as the Spirit of God filled my mind with thoughts of Christ & Jonah, Jonah & Christ.

My one thought was, thank you Lord for your direction, but now I surely need help!

At varying levels, any close reading of the Book of Jonah can bring us to see parallels with Christ but until that fleeting moment last week & now this morning's experience I did not envisage we would be going there yet.

Especially as we finished last week delving into the cause of Jonah's anger.

However, we started on this journey together now two years ago & the only One with a known Purpose for them is God, so let us keep following Jesus!

Talking of Jesus, He, in fact, was the first to mention Jonah in reference to himself, one such scripture is to be found in Matthew Chapter 12.

Matthew 12:38-41 KJV

The Sign of Jonah

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

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

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

"Jonah and Christ

Jesus Christ laid His credibility on the line when He said,

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matthew 12:40)."

If therefore, the story of Jonah is not true then the story of Christ is not true.

If the story of Jonah is fiction, then the story of Christ is fiction."

<http://www.biblelineministries.org/articles/basearch.php?action=full&mainkey=JONAH+AND+CHRIST>

So now let us now take a closer look at comparing & contrasting Jonah & Jesus through the following article written by Kevin Halloran & to be found on the Leadership Resources website:

<https://www.leadershipresources.org/seeing-jesus-christ-in-the-old-testament-book-of-jonah/>

Seeing Jesus Christ in the Old Testament Book of Jonah

When most people think of Jonah in the Bible, they think of the reluctant prophet who ran from God's missionary call and was then swallowed up by a fish.

I think of my Sunday school's flannelgraph of Jonah and the great fish. Who could forget a man spending three days inside the belly of a sea monster?

As great as that story is, only remembering the “fish story” part of Jonah means we miss the larger picture of what Jonah is really about.

Jonah is a book about God’s sovereign control over earthly events, our need to repent of selfishness and hypocrisy, and His loving and gracious heart for repentant sinners.

The themes of this book, like every Old Testament book, point to the main focus of the whole Bible: the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Seeing Jesus Christ in the Old Testament book of Jonah will greatly aid us in understanding Jonah and how Jesus could refer to Himself as, “something greater than Jonah” (Matthew 12:38-42).

Comparing and Contrasting Jonah and Jesus

1. Jonah was a prophet preaching a message of repentance (Jonah 1:2, 3:1-4). Jesus was a prophet preaching a message of repentance (Acts 3:22; Mark 1:14-15).

2. Jonah ran from the difficult calling God gave Him (Jonah 1:3). Jesus perfectly obeyed the Father’s will and went to the cross.

3. Jonah slept on a ship during a storm caused by his own disobedience and offered up his life to save those on the ship (1:4-12). Jesus slept on a ship during a storm, calmed the storm, and would later offer up His life to save those who were disobedient.

4. Jonah claimed to fear the Creator God who had authority on earth (Jonah 1:9). Jesus is the Creator God with the supreme authority over all the earth (John 1:3; Matthew 28:18).

5. Jonah spent three days inside the belly of a great fish because of his own sin. Jesus spent three days inside the belly of the earth because of our sin.

6. Jonah knew that “Salvation belongs to the Lord” (Jonah 2:9). Jesus’ name means “Yahweh saves” and He is the only source of salvation from the Lord (Hebrews 5:9; Acts 4:12).

7. Jonah despised God for showing grace toward repentant sinners (Jonah 4:2). Jesus modelled God’s grace toward repentant sinners (Luke 19:10).

8. Jonah lacked concern for the salvation of people from other nations (specifically the Ninevites). Jesus loved the world so much that he gave his life to ransom people to God “from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9).

9. Jonah was angry enough to die because of God’s grace toward sinners (Jonah 4:3). Jesus was compassionate enough to die because of His love for sinners (1 John 3:16).

10. Jonah cared exceedingly about a plant that provided him comfort (4:10-11). Jesus cared about a whole multitude of people enough to deny himself and His comfort to reconcile them to God (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Are you more like Jesus or Jonah?

God’s grace made Jonah angry and flee from the presence of the Lord.

He didn’t want to share about a gracious and merciful God to a bunch of sinners who didn’t deserve it.

Only after a series of miracles does Jonah decide to obey God, and when God uses Jonah’s actions to save a whole city of people—Jonah is furious.

Jesus is strikingly different than Jonah. He humbly followed His Father’s will and shared His heart for rebels—enough to give His life to save them.

Does that describe you? Do you share God’s heart for the lost, or do you reluctantly and half-heartedly perform the ministry God has given you?

If you find yourself like Jonah, you are not alone.

We can easily become jaded in our evangelism and our heart toward unbelievers—but don’t forget that God’s slowness to anger and amazing grace extends to you as well.

Repent of your Jonah-like attitudes and ask God for His heart for the world and for the strength to carry out the ministry He has given you.

Colin Smith shares the following prayer that you can make yours today:

“Lord, make me less like Jonah and more like Jesus. Save me from being the kind of person who cares more about my comfort, my reputation, and my success than I do about the people You are calling me to serve. Help me to keep all of my dreams on Your altar and be ready at all times to respond with faith and obedience to Your call.”

ISSUE 093: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 89

Issued: 12th March 2019

Defaced - Week 81

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 28

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

Last week we saw that in the seemingly insignificant short Book of Jonah there is to be found so much significant foreshadowing of Our Saviour Christ Jesus.

Now would any of us suppose that at the time of the enactment of those events Jonah was consciously aware of, or even had the remotest idea of this Divine Purpose?

Of course not.

Therefore, in order to try and understand Jonah's true situation at any level, we must first step back from our natural tendency to be judgemental of the actions of others that might cause us to see Jonah's actions purely from one perspective.

Our own peace & wellbeing benefits us whenever something reminds us of the fact, or even reveals to us, that we are all on the same journey in this life & it need not be a constant competing for self-justification.

There are no absolutes in this world & as we ourselves lack righteousness there can never be any in us, only through Christ coming alive in us, who then becomes our righteousness.

How can any of us assume, other than by the receiving or entertaining of deception, that we could ever rightfully demand absolutes in others while in truth there are none in us.

Unrighteousness relegates us all into having to live in a virtual labyrinth of lies & deceptions & we spend our lives subliminally struggling to find a way out of the maze.

Self in us only serves to foster pride which turns aside from transparency to lead us on individual paths that so often cross with varying result.

Is it any wonder then, that at the moment Jesus first revealed Himself to us, we felt the way we did, which then caused us to live in a new way, never to be the same again, for we are now captive to Jesus.

Jesus, The Way, opened up The Truth to us, to reveal the true goal for this existence, with The Life bringing new meaning to it.

In The Infallible Word of God, we received the knowledge of the only Absolute in existence, the Alpha & Omega, that provided us with Jesus The One & Sure Foundation upon which to build a new life in Christ.

The revealing of a certain end to the game of this life served to create a new beginning within our subliminal mind designed to lead us through Divine Guidance step by step out of the maze & into the Light of Truth.

The Bible calls it the transforming of our minds to the Mind of Christ.

None of this is an end in itself but rather just a new beginning, hence why The Bible declares it as being Born Again.

Now, as a Born Again Believer, have you ever wondered how when you have consciously made up your mind you are going to do something you see as the right thing to do, yet as you step out to do it, you do the very thing you determined not to do?

This is because the battle of our minds resides more in the subliminal than the conscious mind.

Let us take a moment to look at my Dictionary's meaning for subliminal:

sub·lim·i·nal adj.

Psychology

1. Below the threshold of conscious perception. Used of stimuli.

2. Inadequate to produce conscious awareness but able to evoke a response: subliminal propaganda.

[sub Latin lmen, lmin-, threshold.]sub·limi·nal·ly adv.

So we see why our subliminal thoughts become to us a labyrinth or maze by evoking responses from a place below our conscious awareness or perception.

I am finding this extremely interesting as some few years ago Holy Spirit revealed through me a tag line to be used for EIDO International:

"Seeking Conscious Awareness of God, His Kingdom & True Unity"

As I received it I knew in my heart it was an encapsulation of everything the Lord had ever revealed to me of the EIDO Vision & Calling over the previous 25 years or so.

God has a Divine Plan & at this very point of this end time:

He is to Educate, Motivate & Inspire willing saints into Conscious Awareness of Him to bring them from His Ordained Past & Present Slumber. Through bringing the subliminal knowledge of Him across the Threshold of Conscious Perception into the light of Conscious Awareness.

I believe that God has nurtured a belief in me that in the Holy Fire of the First Church Apostle Paul was made privy to such a conscious awareness:

Romans 7:21-25 New International Readers Version [NIRV]

21 Here is the law I find working in me. When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

22 Deep inside me I find joy in God's law.

23 But I see another law working in me. It fights against the law of my mind. It makes me a prisoner of the law of sin. That law controls me.

24 What a terrible failure I am! Who will save me from this sin that brings death to my body?

25 I give thanks to God who saves me. He saves me through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So in my mind I am a slave to God's law. But sin controls my desires. So I am a slave to the law of sin.

When Jesus came knocking on the door to our innermost heart, the slightest opening ushered Him in to enliven our spirit man with His Presence.

Now as we continue looking into the Story of Jonah may we allow Holy Spirit to pull that door further ajar to reveal new perspective to us as we allow God's Education, Motivation & Inspiration to touch us.

In order to gain some reflection of the truth of Jonah, we need to try to put ourselves in his shoes to hopefully gain some insight into how he may have seen things at that very time.

In the first instance, as we move on, I believe we need to stop ourselves from allowing ourselves to be like a self-appointed expert on the other side of the boundary fence at a sporting match - judgmental.

Now in keeping to a sporting theme let me create a comparison or analogy here by imagining Jonah as being a well-known International Soccer hero.

In order to see if we might just find similarity in some respects between things (our approach to Sport or life in general) that are otherwise dissimilar (our approach to Church or Christianity).

With Sport, we the spectators fill the Stadiums to actively be seen as supporters of The Game while the actual players are those that have felt the call to be active in the game.

Furthermore, they along with everyone supporting within & around The Game may be deeply involved at a multitude of levels but can any really explain in a clear, precise expression of a few words, exactly why?

When challenged in such matters we usually revert to satisfying or satiating ourselves & others with the succinct answer of "I Love It".

The word LOVE is one that can be deeper than the deepest ocean or as shallow as a puddle.

Its misuse, I believe, is more responsible than any other word known to man for the denying of valid reasoning & thus blinds us to the truth of our actions.

Just as we do not understand the true reality of why each sportsman is playing nor why any of us are supporters, yet we can justify all with simply declaring "I love it".

The simple picture I painted above re the World of Sports was, of course, a puristic view for the reality of what actually drives each spectator & player is hidden within a vast multi-layered tapestry of what's known as human nature.

I believe 'I Love It' or 'Love', is commonly used as a device for the slowing down or stopping of reasoning, so as to deny the existence of our true motivations residing in self or exercised from within our self-interest.

So let us say for instance that during a football game, one of our star players' transgresses a well-understood rule, is penalised & the penalty results in the loss of the game.

This instantly denies or impedes the progress of our self-interest so we react against the player & become the voice of an expert from the wrong side of the fence.

Remember, even should our lips manage to contain, our minds retain!

Therefore, whether spoken out or not we can find ourselves being judgmental without knowing the full facts.

If Jonah was that hero soccer player we would bemoan his performance in that game, judging him to be a failure by letting the 'team' down by not upholding the cause in which we are all called to be involved.

Causing us to lessen his 'hero' status in our sight.

Let us ponder in our own self right now, is this so in regard to Jonah the Prophet?

This life is full of heroes simply because we love to have a hero to look up to & we have heroes in every area of life.

Humanity suffers 'self' so, therefore, we love to take sides & defend our arguments or beliefs.

I believe we make heroes in our heart as compensation for our perceived lacks in life & in a subliminal effort to ward off any personal call befalling us.

As we 'worship' them we elevate them in our hearts to a place far beyond reason so as to validate our personal reasoning that such is far beyond our ability, thus relieving our conscience.

Therefore, they then become our surrogates in an effort to achieve personal appeasement in life without personal involvement.

So when a 'hero' smears the illusion by seemingly failing in some way, we then make judgements in order to exonerate ourselves & keep our fragile self-image intact.

We touched on one aspect of maybe why this is so in Issue 80 where I shared from an article by Irene Sun to be found at the following link:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/jonah-art-of-being-broken/>

Quote from: Jonah and the Art of Being Broken

We teach our children many things.

We teach them to be strong, brave, and swift, yet patient, kind, and gentle.

Rarely do we teach them how to be broken.

Yet brokenness before the Lord is the fount of these very blessings.

Courage and meekness flow most generously from a broken and contrite heart.

So, before we move on next week, let us all Seek God's Face for courage & meekness to flow through us that we might open ourselves to our Educating, Motivating & Inspiring by the Spirit of God

ISSUE 094: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 90

Issued: 19th March 2019

Defaced - Week 82**God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 29****So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)**

Though unwittingly being led into this already lengthy close look at the Story of Jonah the Minor Prophet, much has & is continually being revealed to me.

And hopefully it's the same for you, or at the very least, my hope is that it is providing you with food for deeper thought.

Open yourself to the Spirit of God & let him teach you, for these writings are but a journey that I See&Know God ordained for us to travel together as the Spirit of God educates, motivates & inspires each one of us toward realising a deeper surrender to His Love.

Last week our journey together entered its third year of existence, and due to a lack thereof, I feel to invite questions, comments, thoughts or encouragement in regard to what is being put forth here.

I know in my heart that these messages have been issued only by & through Grace, the Power of God.

Glory to God, as for the most part, for two years now these messages have been issued in a regular & timely manner.

This He achieved despite the fact that early last year we entered into a most difficult personal & family circumstance which continues to create tight time restrictions in which to write & produce the email.

Nevertheless, throughout this experience, I have again found God Forever Faithful to what He Calls & finds in us.

2 Timothy 2:13 ESV

If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

So I leave you with an open invitation to question, comment or share what God may have done in you, or enlightened to you, through the receiving of these messages.

Direct contact can be made anytime by sending an email to: peter@eido999

Also, I would point out to anyone who should feel not to continue the journey with me, that there is an unsubscribe link at the very bottom of this email to accommodate your desire.

Now, let us continue down the path now opening to us.

Personally, in continuing the journey I am finding not just a great deal more about Jonah's actions & possible motives, but about the Divine Purpose that ensured the very existence of the Book of Jonah.

I confess that before this journey began, I had a very simple & rather naive understanding of Jonah's actions, seeing him simply as the Prophet who disobeyed God & ended up demonstrating a seemingly very bad disposition.

In fact, if I were to ask any of you to name an Old Testament Prophet who disobeyed God & went on to display a bout of anger, I know that Jonah would be the overwhelming choice for most, if not all of you.

However, I personally have a whole new appreciation of Jonah & gained a new perspective on what warranted the inclusion of the Book of Jonah in the Holy Bible.

I remember at one stage along this journey I questioned why it was even included in the Holy Scriptures.

Mainly because any quick reading of it appears only to be showcasing one man's disobedience to God, yet we all know such reasoning could never be accredited to the Divine Character or Purpose.

Now, if I were to pose another question, I know that the answer again would have to be Jonah.

The question being, which Old Testament Prophet did Jesus Christ himself choose to draw a parallel to his role of Messiah?

Matthew 12:38-41 KJV**The Sign of Jonah**

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

So now, here through the very words of Jesus, a seeming paradox or contradiction is raised as to what we may have previously thought of the Story of Jonah.

As Jesus is seen here declaring that the Sign of Jonah is the only sign that the evil & adulterous would ever receive.

Imagine, no sign other than the Sign of Jonah shall be given, a sign that bore a Divine Prophetic foretaste of the coming Messiah Jesus' certain actions prefigured through those of Jonah.

Dictionary Meaning:

foretaste, n.

prelibation, handsel, first taste, Archaic. antepast; anticipation, intuition, foreknowledge, presentiment, premonition.

The Sign of Jonah, as we looked at in detail through an article shared from Issue 74 through to Issue 79 & more briefly of late was, a prelibation, a taste beforehand, a Sign from God.

Note, we need to See&Know that though it bears his name this was not a sign of Jonah's making for he knew nothing of what was really being done through him as a Vessel of God.

It was of God's Making, a Divinely Ordained Sign that Jesus referred to as being "of the prophet Jonas:".

In Matthew 12:39 above, Jesus in answer to the certain scribes & Pharisee's request for a sign was telling them that the only sign to be given was already there for them in the Sign of Jonah.

At this point, let us take another look at how Jonah's actions & experience prefigured Jesus to become the only sign to be given to the evil & adulterous:

- 1. The whale and the descent to hell.**
- 2. Jonah sacrifices himself.**
- 3. The cross and the ship.**
- 4. The retching whale and the resurrection.**
- 5. Forty days in Nineveh.**
- 6. Preaching to the Gentiles.**
- 7. Calming of the storm.**
- 8. The withering of tradition.**
- 9. The godly worm in the gourd.**

Indeed, the Minor Prophet was used by God to deliver Major Prophecy by way of a Sign, not through word but rather through, I believe, Spirit Led behaviour & happenings.

Conduct & experiences that together formed a sign, a Prophecy of Jesus the Messiah to come, all enacted from the Will of God & made manifest through the Power of God.

Just as we so often do, Jonah thought he was doing what he felt he had to do & thought his spiritual longings well justified.

Jonah 1 KJV

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

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

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.

Yet I believe, he was in truth being led under an Anointing of the Spirit of God at that time.

Proverbs 16:9

The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

Psalm 139:4 NLT

You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Just yesterday, I sat in Church as one of our Pastor's shared a story from almost twenty years ago of his time in a local Christian Tertiary College here in Adelaide.

**He told us about how one of his favourite Teacher's once posed the following question to all his students:
'What do you think God's Will is for your life'.**

The Pastor shared that being young at the time they were all so very eager to share their fervent ideas of what they were seeing God might desire for their lives.

Pen & paper had been handed to each participant & they exuberantly wrote their answers.

**After reading the Teacher shared with them his one answer for all:
'The Will of God for your life is that you would allow Him to Love You!'**

Wow! In itself, I believe this one thought deserves so much of our attention.

Surely, any meditation upon it with Holy Spirit starts to reveal the Truth & Simplicity of the True Love of God for He Selflessly Loves Us & just wants us to receive His Love Freely Given.

Even in the most wondrous reflection of selfless love that we might see between humans in this life has to, in Truth, be relegated to stand in the shadows of God's Great Love for us!

At this very moment, I am brought to the memory of how I loved my biological father dearly & still do some 46 years after his passing.

Yet I am now also brought to ponder the question of how much did I enact or even give depth of thought to, truly allowing him to love me?

Was it in truth a love more about what he meant to me & what he provided to & for me.

In Truth is not our lives without Christ, and at times even within, predominated in & by self-interest?

We cannot & should not beat ourselves up too much because the reality is that we in ourselves are impure & therefore incapable of anything like the Purity of the Selfless Love of God.

However, it should really make us ask ourselves a question in the Light of it.

How much am I truly allowing God to Love me & upon what am I basing my love for Him?

And would the outworking of the faith given me be found hindered or enhanced by its truthful answer?

I believe that Jonah's surrender to God's Love touching him was sufficient to see him become the chosen vessel for & within The Divine Call to bring a foreshadowing of the Coming Messiah.

A Sign destined to be, as Jesus spoke of, the only Sign to be given an evil & adulterous generation.

Not a sign that Jonah's disobedient actions produced, but rather a Divine Sign that Jonah's receiving of God's Love provided the vessel to carry it to manifestation.

By way of subliminal obedience to the Call of God & deep Spiritual Desire embedded within his heart for the Divine Purpose of God.

In truth, Jonah unknowingly delivered his greatest prophetic message within the steps of each event contained in his story, as recorded in the Book of Jonah.

Being Born Again, the Spirit of God, Emmanuel, God With Us, indwells through Jesus Now Alive in us.

Yet at given times Holy Spirit also visits upon us as we 'feel' his presence surrounding us with Anointing or to bring enlightening of revelation by way of witnessing to the self-same spirit dwelling within us.

Whereas, it is my belief, that in the Old Testament Times in which Jonah lived, at given times the Spirit of God visited upon people of Faith as required to fulfil the Will of God in & or through them.

In allowing God's Love to touch their hearts & lives God's Spiritual Anointing visited upon them in order to fulfil His Will through them at specific times & for specific reasons.

Such a love for God subliminally allowed Jonah to enter & carry on through the journey that unknown to him, manifested the Divine Purpose to produce a prefiguring or foretaste of the Messiah to Come, that Jesus Christ himself described as being the Sign of Jonah.

ISSUE 095: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 91
Issued: 26th March 2019

Defaced - Week 83
God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 30
So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)

Once again we find ourselves returning to look at what might have possibly been the cause of Jonah's anger as described in the final chapter of the Book of Jonah.

Firstly, I would contend that Jonah's anger, just as is often the case with all of us, was in fact, more than anything, directed toward & internalised within himself.

I believe that in light of all the prevailing circumstances that led to this moment, Jonah's anger was birthed out of deep personal bewilderment that was overwhelming him at the time.

Meaning of Bewilderment

be-wil-der-ment noun. 1. The condition of being confused or disoriented. 2. A situation of perplexity or confusion; a tangle:
a bewilderment of lies and half-truths.

A condition most of us, in truth, may silently dread or even fear could possibly befall us should we avail ourselves into a truly close encounter with God, such as Jonah obviously had.

Verse one begins by telling us that Jonah was exceedingly displeased with God's Will enacted toward Nineveh, the manifestation of which now made him very angry.

In the prayer of verse two, Jonah says he fled to Tarshish in the first place because as was his saying before leaving his country, God is fully capable of relenting & repenting of the evil by way of the Divine Graciousness now made manifest in his midst.

This was not a case of Jonah trying to enact the classic 'I told you so', for what true Man of God could ever do such a thing?

Rather, I see it as a desperate plea from a bewildered & tortured mind desperately seeking for some true understanding of what had just happened.

More especially in light of any future ramifications to his world as he might at that point in time have been perceiving it.

Let us be reminded that to be human is to be self-oriented & any touch of God's Truth assures conflict with its very foundation.

In fact, it was such agony for Jonah that he earnestly asked the Lord to take his life as he was now seeing it better to die than to live.

Honestly, how many times have you 'known' something of God, by way of Spirit Revelation & yet found yourself agonising or being bewildered by a manifestation of it far exceeding the boundaries of your limited understanding of its fullness.

I believe we need to take a wider perspective of the prevailing circumstances at the time that Jonah was Called of God to deliver His Message to Nineveh.

So let us digress for a time to look at some points that may have had a lot to do with Jonah's present circumstance revealed to us, the reader, in that final chapter.

Most pertinent was the fact that Jonah was a Prophet of God, an individual recognised as being in contact with God & ordained to speak on behalf of God.

2 Kings 14:25 KJV

25 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 Gathhepher.

Furthermore, the mark or sign of a True Prophet was that the Prophecy he gave as coming from God would need to follow or come to pass.

Deuteronomy 18:21-22 KJV

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

Now, in light of the preceding let us see ourselves standing in the shoes of Jonah for just a moment.

Imagine as a Prophet of God you were being asked by God to go to Nineveh to tell them that in forty days their city would be overthrown.

While in your heart of knowing God, you knew that the Divine Graciousness was more than capable of relenting from what was intended.

Jonah 4:2b KJV

2b Therefore 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.

As seen in the scripture above Jonah revealed this as his reasoning for fleeing to Tarshish instead of going to Nineveh as God Called him to.

I cannot speak on behalf of anyone else, but for me, I find it hard to personally reconcile the fact that this alone could have possibly been Jonah's only reason for fleeing to Tarshish.

If this were to be the only factor involved, would it not, therefore, substantiate any & all accusation that Jonah was, in fact, a disobedient servant having his mind & affection more centred upon himself rather than God.

One more interested in maintaining an image than Serving Truth at any cost.

Throughout our study of Jonah, any such belief has been shown to be contrary to the Truth of the matter.

I do not dismiss the fact that in human terms it may well have been an associated factor to some degree.

However, throughout my pondering on this subject I could never see it as a major factor, let alone the singular one.

Some small research then enlightened me to previously unknown facts in regard to Jonah & the prevailing circumstances surrounding him in the times in which he lived.

Nineveh was the centre of the Assyrian Empire & the largest city in his known world, having as the scripture tells us, a population of one hundred & twenty thousand souls.

Also at that time, it was the focal point of the Gentile world.

It was situated in what is now Northern Iraq along the eastern bank of the Tigris River & its ruins can be found near the modern-day city of Mosul which is located on the western bank directly opposite.

Mosul, known to many nowadays through the terrorism & war in Iraq, is situated some 400km north of Baghdad.

So Jonah was not only being uniquely Called to go far from home to deliver God's Word but also to deliver it to the world's largest gentile city sitting atop the Assyrian Empire, the ruling power of the Gentile World at the time.

Therefore, one would assume Nineveh to be the most powerful city in the world as well as being so engrossed in evil it had God's Attention.

In discovering these facts my spirit still could not find appeasement in them alone, I felt there had to be something more.

Last week, as I continued on, I happened upon an article which put forward a suggestion that in my spirit I found peace with, more of which I will share next issue.

ISSUE 096: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 92
Issued: 2nd April 2019

Defaced - Week 84

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 31

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

Our journey continues in pursuit of receiving a deeper revelation from the short Book of Jonah & what God might reveal to us through it.

Jonah's story in simplicity is one of disobedience, yet adds the mystery of sea creatures swallowing & then vomiting a man alive from its belly, then ends as abruptly as it began, only to have Jesus later liken himself to Jonah!

For those who speak, plead or argue in favour of moderation, or adhere to a conservative approach along with critics of the Bible do not believe the Story of Jonah actually happened as is recorded in Scripture.

However, for us who believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God we accept all to be an accurate & true description of events just as they happened.

We also know that with scripture we mostly do not understand until spiritual revelation is personally imparted to us.

We can also be held back greatly by trying to apply our logic, a practice that can only lead to misunderstandings at varying levels.

My dictionary tells me that a synonym (similar word or phrase) for misunderstanding is, to see through a glass darkly.

1 Corinthians 13:12 KJV

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Hallelujah! For then when we are finally home with Christ All shall be revealed, face to face with God, knowing Him just as He Knows us now.

So now let us continue the journey of awakening to what the Spirit of God desires to reveal to enlighten the glass a little for us, as He lifts us from our slumber.

The Truth that I have seen, through weeks of pondering upon the Book of Jonah, is that no clue can be found there as to why Jonah did what he did.

Unless as alluded to last week, you can simply accept Jonah's statement that he knew what Divine Graciousness was capable of doing, in which case if it did, his Prophetic Integrity would then be ruined.

However, unknown to many just as it had been to me, Jonah the Prophet, the son of Amittai was previously mentioned in 2 Kings which I now quote once again.

2 Kings 14:25 KJV

25 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 Gathhepher.

For apart from where Jesus likened himself to Jonah in Matthew 12:38-41 & Luke 11:29-32, this is the only other scripture to mention Jonah.

It is from this scripture, that the article I spoke of last week suggested something that gave peace within my spirit.

It also furnishes to us the only other facts we know about Jonah.

For in 2 Kings we find a seemingly different Jonah, living in Northern Israel, a Prophet who obeyed & spoke the Word of God given him.

This scripture places Jonah under the reign of King Jeroboam II who the Bible describes as an evil ruler of Israel, just as King Jeroboam was before him.

He did not see himself as being evil, but the Bible says he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, for he did not return the nation to the worship of the God of the Bible.

2 Kings 14:23-24 KJV

23 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 reigned forty and one years.

24 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, who made Israel to sin.

Despite the wickedness of the King, God gave mercy to the Kingdom of Israel & strengthened it under Jeroboam II's reign.

For God spoke unto Jonah the Prophet & he prophesied that the Kingdom of Israel would see victory in its wars & be re-strengthened through the regaining of lost territory.

2 Kings 14:26-27 KJV

26 For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.

27 And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

Indeed it came to pass that they were being victorious in war again & land once lost was returned to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, gaining with it the Syrian cities of Hamath & Damascus.

Jonah would have likely found himself very much accepted in the King's Court after delivering such a welcomed prophecy, especially as it was now being proven true.

Being central to it all, Jonah would have been standing in a position from which he would have felt a real part of the invigorating arising again & renewing of the Kingdom of Israel.

For the Kingdom he loved so much was now winning again in its wars, retaking lands once lost & regaining power in the region.

In such a moment as Jonah found himself, any one of us could easily imagine that he would have felt a heightened sense of love & patriotism for his country.

For he was witnessing it gaining, through God's Blessing upon a sinful nation, a vitality that could easily bring about a steady increase of widening strength throughout the region.

It was to be there in the midst of such fervour & optimism God Called upon Jonah to go to Nineveh & preach against it for its sins were so great that God Himself had taken note of it.

Just try to imagine what thoughts might have been invading Jonah's mind after witnessing the great resurgence of strength arising in his own country.

And now being called to the greatest threat to it, Nineveh, the very centre point of the Assyrian Empire & its most powerful enemy.

Having a heart anxious to see the power & strength of the Kingdom of Israel expanding ever the more, Jonah's first thoughts should have been positive.

For if God were to destroy Nineveh then surely Israel's greatest danger would have been dealt with, thus increasing Israel's power & strength.

On the surface, it should have painted a perfect picture in Jonah's mind.

However, in light of his recent experience of the Divine Graciousness, he found no canvas upon which to paint it.

Jonah 4:2 KJV

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore 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.

With the great warmth & intensity of emotion evoked through what was prevailing in the Kingdom of Israel at that time, I could well imagine that faith's exact opposite, fear, may have made an appearance.

Something we are all well acquainted with, whether recognised or not.

So what could Jonah possibly fear from telling Nineveh that it was to be destroyed in forty days?

There was no repentance in Israel, God simply poured out Mercy upon them for the reasons stated above in 2 Kings 14:26-27 KJV.

Neither King Jeroboam II, nor his people were ever aware of the Great Mercy God had shown them for they never saw or acknowledged their own wickedness before God.

Jonah, on the other hand, would had to have come to the realisation that if God could be so merciful toward Israel in its sinning, He just might be as merciful toward Assyria in its sinning.

The question the article put forth was:

For the betterment of his beloved Israel did Jonah determine that if the warning he was meant to deliver was never to be heard in Nineveh they would not repent & God would be unable to show mercy toward Assyria & have to destroy it?

Thus eliminating Israel's greatest threat, giving promise to a burgeoning power base to assure a secure future for his beloved nation.

ISSUE 097: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 93

Issued: 9th April 2019

Defaced - Week 85

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 32

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

So now let us continue on by presuming that Jonah was in fact consumed by the political & patriotic fervour that must have been rife in the Kingdom of Israel at that time.

For surely he was seeing the power base restoring & expanding in his country & most likely would have greatly desired that it would remain so doing, without any great threat to its security for the foreseeable future.

In the political climate prevailing at the time, he must have been well aware that its greatest threat was from the Assyrian Empire centred in Nineveh.

It was here, in the very midst of this, that God came upon Jonah to Call him to go to Nineveh with a message that in forty days it would be overthrown, for its wickedness had come to His attention.

I think that under such circumstances any of us would reasonably assume that the Graciousness of God being poured out upon Israel was now possibly going to continue on to protect its immediate future through the overthrowing of the greatest threat to its security & continuing progress?

Jonah would have most likely desired such an outcome himself, for the sake of his nation, however, we need to understand that as a Prophet of God he now knew something that the King & nation were unaware of.

That was that the Divine Graciousness now pouring out upon the Northern Kingdom of Israel was totally unwarranted due to its continuing sinfulness.

In fact, the Bible tells us that it was being bestowed because of the very bitter affliction that was upon it was under circumstances so dire as to threaten its very existence.

So the Lord God in being Faithful to His Word mercifully saved them through the hand of their King, even though in the Lord's Sight he was seen as being evil.

2 Kings 14:26-27 KJV

26 For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.

27 And the LORD said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

For the Prophetic Word that Jonah delivered to his people was that God would restore the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, an act that would both strengthen & restore the nation.

2 Kings 14:25 KJV

25 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 Gathhepher.

The nation was living under the evil of King Jeroboam II just as it had under previous Kings, yet the Prophet Jonah was sent forth carrying no call to repentance, just a message of blessed restoration to the Kingdom of Israel.

Therefore all remained blissfully unaware of their sinfulness, joyfully accepting God's unwarranted favour through the restoring of land & power to their nation through knowing victory on the battlefield again, all as had been prophesied of by the Prophet Jonah.

No doubt, in all that was unfolding before their eyes, they were just as oblivious to the powerful manifestation of The Truth that God Stands Upon His Word Forever!

Jonah, however, was the only one to be fully aware at the time, as is made known to us in The Book of Jonah Chapter 4.

Jonah 4:2 KJV

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore 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.

Revealed here, is not only what Jonah had seen of God's Mercifulness in that time before he fled to Tarshish, but also that it was cause for his fleeing.

So what other integral thoughts may have been in the mind of Jonah that helped form his intention to flee from his Call from God to go to Nineveh?

Let us continue to search more deeply for any probable cause that may have justly consisted in the mind of Jonah & his decision to head for Tarshish rather than Nineveh as Commanded.

In being Called by God to tell Nineveh that in forty days it shall be overthrown, Jonah the man would have been acutely aware that such an event would be highly beneficial to the future security & a key to further expansion of his homeland.

All of this certainly would have fuelled a rapidly deepening love & pride for his beloved nation, as one would expect to be the case within any patriotic heart.

For indeed, had he not been the one used of God to deliver God's Word of Divine Deliverance & Restoration to the Northern Kingdom of Israel which, as it ought, was now coming to pass before the eyes of the nation.

However, in being a 'proven' Prophet of God & privy to sensing the very Heart of God, surely he must have now found himself in a somewhat bewildering state of uncertainty.

For in being a Man of God he also would have been acutely aware that he delivered it to a sinful nation, one which in the sight of the Lord was being led by an evil King.

For following the reign of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin, it was now being ruled by King Jeroboam II who was not returning his people to the Worship of the God of the Bible.

So, therefore, he would have instinctively known that the blessed situation in which his beloved nation now found itself, was purely the consequence of Divine Graciousness visiting upon a sinful people.

Yet in now having a personal witness to such an aspect of God's Mercy, Jonah's mind must have now wondered just what might become of the renewed Israel & the newly germinated hope in his heart for an assured secure future for his homeland.

If God could impart such Divine Mercy upon a sinning Israel, then surely such Mercy could be also be imparted by the Divine Graciousness of God upon a sinning Assyria!

Surely, as a man & a patriotic son of Israel, Jonah may have found himself in a deep quandary.

He would have known in his heart that if God was to see that Nineveh is overthrown it would be valuable to his beloved homeland as well as his own heart.

However, what if God were to repent of the evil through the same Divine Graciousness he was presently witnessing being poured out upon Israel, what might then be the future of his nation?

In Jonah 4 Verse 2 above, it reveals that he actually spoke about his apprehensions of what God may do in Nineveh when he was still in his country.

So we know that Jonah did not just flee to Tarshish out of pure disobedience fuelled by simple fear.

But rather, I believe, out of making a personal decision after some fervent meditation upon all aspects of the options available & their repercussions.

At least as far as he could perceive in his mind & heart.

I can hear the roar of those watching on from the other side of the picket fence, that he just needed to Hear, Believe & Obey.

Are we not, even today in this modern world, with all we have available to us, both spiritually & physically, still seeking The Truth that would simply cause us to Hear, Believe & Obey!

Jonah, as I now see him, was just a man the same as us, but one who came to See&Know A Truth that personally became a huge challenge to him, his heart & his thinking because of the repercussions to his nation that he perceived could eventuate should it again become A Truth in Nineveh.

Could it be that his fleeing was, in fact, the result of his meditating upon all aspects of the situation that brought him to a decision to flee despite its ramifications to him personally?

When Jonah embarked on his journey to Tarshish might he have, in fact, been already resigned to the sacrificing of his life for the good of Israel's future?

To be Continued

ISSUE 098: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 94

Issued: 16th April 2019

Defaced - Week 86

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 33

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

When Jonah chose to board a ship for Tarshish rather than travel to Nineveh, he was carrying much more than could be seen by natural eyes.

Deep within his heart, Jonah also carried a soulish determination founded upon certain knowledge.

A resolve birthed from his personal ponderings, as perceived from his unique vantage point, of all the circumstances presently prevailing in his nation.

I believe that for Jonah, the overpowering question was what possible scenario would assure the best immediate result for his homeland.

One that would also ensure an ongoing expansive hope for the future security & further enlargement of the Kingdom of Israel.

Especially in light of his recently received deeper insight into just what God's Mercy & Graciousness is capable of.

Jonah's boarding of a ship for Tarshish rather than head for Nineveh was the resultant manifestation of the determination he made.

His heart's desire resolved to not deliver the warning to Nineveh in direct defiance to God's Command.

A self-willed act that was contrary to the clearly expressed & received Spiritual Desire of God.

So firstly, Jonah carried certain knowledge of his disobedience.

I believe, that as a True Prophet of God, Jonah would have been fully conscious of the fact that his actions would not go unknown to God.

In knowing that Nineveh's wickedness had come up before God, how could he possibly convince himself that his disobedience might now go unnoticed?

Jonah 1:2 KJV

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

He was a True Prophet of God, one having received a direct & specific command to action, the first step of which was to travel to Nineveh.

This was a unique Call, for it was not a prophecy to the Children of God as most were, but rather to Gentiles, whose wickedness had come to the attention of God.

It was a warning to Nineveh, the central city of the Assyrian Empire, the world's most powerful at that time.

As well as being the biggest threat to Jonah's homeland, the Kingdom of Israel.

It would be an injustice to Jonah, for us to assert that he could have been naive enough, to believe that in heading for Tarshish he was gone from God's Sight.

Being the one Called of God to deliver Nineveh's warning, Jonah's intention was never to simply run & hide.

It was his resolve to divert the receiving of the warning so that in their continued ignorance no repentance would be possible thus ensuring the overthrow of Nineveh!

In light of this, how could Jonah ever have perceived anything other than the certainty that his seemingly blatant rebellion would come before God?

Secondly, Jonah carried certain knowledge of full exposure to God's Sight.

As a True Prophet of God he also most surely would have carried the knowledge of another time when a Prophet of God disobeyed the instructions given him. [1 Kings 13:1-32]

That particular prophet was sent with a strong message to King Jeroboam I & faithfully delivered it as he was instructed.

However, he then failed to obey God's instruction to:

1 Kings 13:9 KJV

For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

And the result thereof was:

1 Kings 13:23-24 KJV

23 And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase.

That Prophet faithfully obeyed God by delivering the message to King Jeroboam I but disobeyed the further instructions to not turn back & fast until reaching Judah again.

God then allowed him to be unmercifully slain by a lion, the result of his disobedience to do all commanded of him.

Now here we have Jonah, a prophet in the service of yet another King who also was seen as evil in the Sight of God, King Jeroboam II.

Surely then, Jonah must have expected that by refusing to reach Nineveh his fate was sealed, yet he was resolute in his decision to go ahead to Tarshish.

Thirdly, Jonah carried certain knowledge that death would be the final outcome of his disobedience.

So, in summary, we see that Jonah purposely resolved to set out on his journey to Tarshish rather than go to Nineveh as Called to do by God.

This was despite his belief that his disobedience would not go unseen by God & death would be his one assured destiny.

So the question now is what could have possibly brought about such a resolve in the heart of Jonah?

Pivotal to any possible understanding is the fact that God commanded him to warn Nineveh that it was to be overthrown.

The warning was a sure & imminent prophecy in having specified forty as the number of days before its enactment.

Jonah would have seen that any downfall of the Assyrian Empire would ensure hope for the future security & possible expansion of the Kingdom of Israel.

Furthermore, imagine the outcome should God's intention be to use His Children to overthrow Nineveh?

Surely such a scenario would have crossed Jonah's mind.

His patriotic heart must surely have been enlarged with an even more elevated hope for his nation.

However, to his heart, a unique & troublesome question may have also opened to him from within his mind.

For he was now witnessing the ongoing pouring out of Divine Graciousness upon a still sinning Israel.

This then must have generated a great apprehension to his heart.

For just what level of the Divine Graciousness & Mercy might a sinning Nineveh receive especially should it react to God's Warning & turn from their wicked ways?

What if Nineveh was to respond positively & God's Mercy was to cause Him to repent of the evil.

This was a real issue to Jonah, as he ponderously searched for resolve in his heart of what to do which resulted in his determination to flee to Tarshish.

Jonah 4:2 tells us that in fact, Jonah spoke of such when he was still in his own country.

Jonah 4:2 KJV

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore 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.

For what of the future peace & security of Israel should Nineveh repent?

The warning given him was emphatically sure & imminent but now Jonah was not so assured of Nineveh's prophesied downfall.

Was he, in fact, thinking that since he was the one called to warn Nineveh, then how could repentance come if he were to never deliver the warning.

Wouldn't this then force destruction upon the unaware Nineveh & along with it the powerful Assyrian Empire?

Thus bringing assurance of future peace & security for the Kingdom of Israel, which he dearly loved.

Was he not therefore in his heart & mind, prepared to sacrifice his life for the betterment of his beloved Kingdom of Israel?

Did Jonah, in fact, embark on that journey to Tarshish fully convinced that it was to result in his death, freely giving of his life for the betterment of others.

He may have felt, that in so doing, it was the only way Assyria would definitely fall, thus sparing Israel from further threat & assuring a brighter future for it.

If so, then Jonah's motivation for disobeying God was not birthed in rebellion but rather an act of self-sacrifice for the Kingdom of Israel.

Would such not then become a further prefigurement of Jesus to be found within the full story of Jonah's life.

As I dwelt upon a mental picture of Jonah deciding to embark on such a journey my inner eye began to see Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Luke 22:42 KJV

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. For if it were to be so, did not Jonah's acceptance to embark on such a journey prefigure the journey Jesus accepted there in Gethsemane.

Jesus embarked on the journey to Golgotha to willingly offer himself to Calvary's Tree, a sacrifice for all men & the Kingdom of God.

Did Jonah embark on the journey to Tarshish unknowingly prefiguring the sacrificial attitude of Jesus, to give his life for all men of the Kingdom of Israel?

ISSUE 099: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 95

Issued: 30th April 2019

Defaced - Week 87

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 34

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

When we were children we understood little, for our understanding was limited by being more connected to natural instincts & emotional reactions than knowledge.

We would be attracted to people who fed those instincts for us through outward signs of love, fun, activities, laughter, joy, material or emotional comfort.

On the other hand, we would hold ourselves back from those who seemed to lack any such ability to feed our desires by attracting our attention or affection.

For this was our immaturity borne upon lack of knowledge.

How was one to be wise if lacking understanding, & how could one exercise understanding without first having knowledge?

" When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" 1 Corinthians 13:11 KJV

Growing in knowledge, understanding & wisdom produces maturity manifesting at varying levels throughout the different aspects of our lives.

Maturity & life events can alter our perceptions of certain people, sometimes even totally reversing our assessment of their status in importance to us.

For maturity brings its own challenges, sometimes shifting our needs to places where the only resolve can be found in accepting guidance or help from unanticipated sources.

One instance being when the once despised sober & quiet wisdom of our elders suddenly becomes desirous for guidance under the weight of the reality of life's trials & tribulations.

Respect for our elders & what they have to teach us is a beginning for wisdom.

For the genuine seeking of knowledge is the key to true understanding & the measure of wisdom we generate from it denotes the level of our maturity, for such is life.

However, if we ever come to telling ourselves we know enough or resign ourselves to simply rely on others knowledge or convince ourselves that we know everything, then we have become unteachable.

For even in life there is always more to learn if we are willing.

1 Corinthians 13:12 ISV

12 Now we see only an indistinct image in a mirror, but then we will be face to face. Now what I know is incomplete, but then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

In essence, Spiritual life is not as dissimilar to our life here as we might imagine.

If you reread the above regarding how we as humans come from immaturity to maturity in this life, you can see that it is but a reflection of the path to walking maturely in the Spirit.

The great difference is that spiritual maturity requires us to no longer seek ours but God's Wisdom, Knowledge & Understanding.

Proverbs 9:10 KJV

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

The ISV 1 Corinthians scripture above tells us that "Now we see only an indistinct image in a mirror," whereas the KJV says "For now we see through a glass, darkly,".

Like looking into a fogged mirror, we see but we do not see clearly, for we see in part only.

1 Corinthians 13:9-10 KJV

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

We the Called, both now in Christ & those gone before us, are the collective Body Corporate of Christ, One Body, One Ministry.

All destined to one day be risen as the Body of Christ to become One with Christ.

To Stand as One with Christ before The Lord God Almighty Our Father in Heaven, the image of the mirror now perfectly distinct, the glass darkly now fully enlightened.

Revealing Christ the Perfect Reflection of God The Father, God The Father the Perfect Reflection of Christ, in the Oneness that is God!

And for the redeemed no longer knowing in part, nor prophesying in part for Perfection has come, True Spiritual Maturity reached together in God's Oneness.

Now fully knowing Christ just as He has fully known us.

This will be Eternal Life In Christ!

For now, the True Church of Christ is found in the re-enlivened Image of God within the inner hearts of true believers.

For Jesus Alive in us has resurrected our spirit man from death.

The completeness of our being restored in part until the fullness is seen.

Our lives now should be lived knowing that Jesus is at the centre of everything.

All of humankind was made in the Image of God but it is only through willingly accepting Jesus Christ as Lord & Saviour, declaring Him as being the Son of God, that our spirit man is brought to Life again in Christ.

In receiving Him as Lord of our Life we all became children again.

Made to be children of the Spirit, no matter our level of carnal maturity.

For us, in being the corporate Body of Christ, we need to seek ever burgeoning levels of spiritual maturity through the gaining of Spiritual Knowledge, Understanding & Wisdom from God.

A quest that will never end for the mystery of God to us is deep & unfathomable, forever destined to only ever be an indistinct image until that time when we meet face to face.

For now we have FAITH, HOPE, LOVE.

But the greatest of these is LOVE.

1 Corinthians 13:13 ISV

13 Right now three things remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

All three given to us by God through Emmanuel God With Us.

For because of Jesus we See Faith, See Hope & See Love.

And in God, we will Know Faith, Know Hope & Know Love.

I truly believe that there is a Divine Simplicity in Christ but we, all of us, continue to fall far short of taking hold of it.

For our personal lives in Christ too often shift in unison with reflections of the fluctuations of life around us.

So where do you see the Church as seen in our world today?

Standing at a level of spiritual maturity indicative of readiness to receive Christ?

I end this message as it began:

" When we were children we understood little, for our understanding was limited by being more connected to natural instincts & emotional reactions than knowledge.

We would be attracted to people who fed those instincts for us through outward signs of love, fun, activities, laughter, joy, material or emotional comfort."

The best barometer to check the state of the Church is to honestly assess our own heart.

And hope we find that we are truly letting God Love us!

ISSUE 100: Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 96

Issued: 9th May 2019

Defaced - Week 88

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 35

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

Earlier this week I began the process of availing myself to produce this email, which incidentally is the 100th Edition of these Draw Nigh Unto Me messages.

As we sat chatting after lunch, I told my wife that today is definitely not the day as absolutely no direction had come forth to me all morning.

In myself, I had become somewhat frustrated & given up for the day, believing it to be a sealed deal, so to speak, now that I had declared it.

As she left the room I surprisingly found my heart being turned again to listen for Holy Spirit Leading.

In a rare occurrence, I found myself receiving multiple clear points of direction flowing like a river into me.

Enough in fact for some weeks ahead, & believe it or not, the first step was to share about a dog!

Now let us begin this journey to discover the substance of the directional points given to me.

Until I was fifty-four years of age I lived my life never having experienced love for an animal.

I could accept an animal being around but I could never understand the love so many others obviously had for them.

As a child, my family had an outdoor cat & a budgerigar for a short time, but I never became personally attached to either one of them.

In our marriage home, the only animal we ever had was an outdoor cat we inherited with a house, to save it from being put down.

Therefore animals were something around in the background, but never any real part of my life.

One morning, around this time of year, some fourteen years ago my phone rang & all that changed for me.

It was my daughter telling me that a situation had arisen in her home & the older of her two dogs needed to find a new home, today, or she would lose her new puppy.

My animal loving daughter's impassioned pleas eventually brought me, with great reservations in my own mind, to agree to allow the dog into our care.

My wife had no hesitation as she had a fondness for dogs, having been familiar with them from childhood.

Our daughter, being the last of our children had recently left the family home to live independently.

So a major deciding factor for my decision to agree was that I felt an animal may help facilitate my wife's now unfulfilled motherly instinct to nurture.

Indeed it did, so much so that for the first time in my life I found myself literally living with an animal under the same roof as me.

For her motherly instinct would not let him live outdoors, as he had been doing, so he came straight into the home to be pampered with a Mother's love!

They say that a dog is a man's best friend but I could never have imagined the truth of it before that dog called Seth entered my home & my life.

I soon learnt that though he was unable to communicate with me in words he clearly did in every other way.

He was forever ready to go wherever I went, longing to be with me, always watching over me & ready to jump to my defence if required.

When the quiet times came he would often lay at my feet, maintaining close contact by gently touching his body against one foot as he was not a small dog.

All his actions demonstrated unconditional love toward me, yet I was the one trying to learn how to love him!

Yet somehow he taught me to love him because first, he loved me.

His love was suddenly just there, seemingly taking no time to develop & obviously remaining statically in place irrespective of what I did or didn't do.

He was going to love upon me even if I could not find how to love him!

We all have a common need for love but in being human we so often read that as 'I' need love.

Rather than realising we need to truly love in order to find love.

Which too often makes us feel it is our duty to look for love, often bringing results we did not set out to find & having to live with the consequences.

For with such a mindset, any demonstration of fondness or acceptance directed toward us can so easily be perceived as real in an irrational or unwise way.

Yet somehow Seth's unconditional acceptance defied everything I knew of human relationships.

In truth, there is only one other love I know that it aligns with.

The Love Of God For His Children!

God's Love for me, revealed in Jesus as He came into my life seventeen years earlier!

For my love for God was conceived within the Revelation that First He Loved Me!

Some six & a half years after Seth came to live with us he passed on & I found myself mourning in a way that startled me somewhat.

For me to mourn for an animal was something that previously I would never have thought was even remotely possible.

Seth remains alive in both my heart & memory in much the same way as do my lost relatives & other loved ones.

For indeed he became 'family' to us, another child so to speak.

Yet I never fully knew how much he caused me to love him until I could not stop the emotion that kept welling up in me for some time following his passing.

Unfortunately, wisdom & understanding never seem to come before or during events or happenings in our lives, but inevitably after.

For this very reason it is always wise to give due respect to the wisdom of our elders, but how often do we do it in truth?

Times of mourning can become pools for quiet reflection & many new thoughts & perceptions rise to the forefront that in turn open new perspectives on life & truth.

Such a time came for me following Seth's death & also at various times since whenever I find myself pondering upon the memory of him.

But not so much in the personal sense of remembering where we went or what we did together.

Rather, in the way that accepting this non-verbal being into my personal space unexpectedly touched more than just my emotions.

Hindsight, they say is a wonderful thing for you can turn it into insight.

For the definition of hindsight is the gaining of perception of the significance & nature of events after they have occurred.

Spiritually I have discovered some deeper truths because of knowing the love of an animal & more especially "man's best friend", a dog.

As a Christian, I have always maintained that in God everything happens for a reason in your life & spiritual wisdom grows if you discover any part of it.

In hindsight, the first thing I discovered was that Seth came into my life for more than the reason I saw to accept him into my home.

God had a Purpose, one that is still unfolding here!

Believe it or not, I feel certain in my heart that through all of this Holy Spirit is going to enlighten Truths to us & somehow knit it back together with our study of Jonah.

For I have no intent to simply broadcast how I learnt to love an animal, for millions upon millions already know of that, but rather what spiritual truths have come of it.

Though I enjoyed Seth for his loving fondness & obvious loyalty for me & his companionship, after the mourning & as with any death, the living relationship was over.

I had come to know Seth's love as unconditional, but did I allow him to love me as fully as he might? according to the love he instinctively had for me?

The True answer is no, because in me a concept of self lives, as it does in every other human still breathing, for as long as any of us draw a breath it lives!

In the Kingdom of God, there is no self whatsoever, therefore is it not that the very concept of self is the foundation upon which all sin stands!

1 John 1:8 KJV

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Matthew Henry Commentary on 1 John 1:8

" We must beware of deceiving ourselves in denying or excusing our sins.

The more we see them the more we shall esteem and value the remedy.

If we deny them, the truth is not in us, either the truth that is contrary to such denial (we lie in denying our sin), or the truth of religion, is not in us.

The Christian religion is the religion of sinners, of such as have sinned, and in whom sin in some measure still dwells.

The Christian life is a life of continued repentance, humiliation for and mortification of sin, of continual faith in, thankfulness for, and love to the Redeemer, and hopeful joyful expectation of a day of glorious redemption, in which the believer shall be fully and finally acquitted, and sin abolished for ever. "

It is only with the end of something that hindsight can give life to insight!

It was only in hindsight, after Seth's passing, that I truly saw how unconditional this animal's love had really been toward me, for as he lived self in me set bounds to its clarity.

Insight then revealed self as the one thing that prevented me from full acceptance of the simple purity in which it was given.

For in him I discovered a deeper understanding of the insidiousness of self & how the subtle harmful spreading in a stealthy manner of it is designed to rob, steal, kill & destroy what is good for us.

God's Love Is Freely Given By Grace & Is Unconditional.

He has nothing but good things for us.

Remember, it is God's Desire for you to allow Him to love you!

Let Go & Let God.

END OF VOLUME - Issues 0080 - 0100