



Lazarus and Jonah

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Recently, as I read the word "Lazarus , Come Forth" by Sandy Warner I was struck by the similarities to what the Father was speaking to me through Jonah. I have felt like a candidate to be a Jonah or a Lazarus in recent days. I have felt that my steps and my ways have been confined by the Lord. Even as Lazarus was wrapped in grave clothes and placed in a tomb, and Jonah was confined to the belly of a fish, I have felt confined in my movements and activities.

Sandy Warner spoke of Lazarus having his head wrapped up with the windings of the grave cloths even as I was hearing of Jonah having his head wrapped about with seaweed."Water encompassed me to the point of death. The great deep engulfed me, Weeds were wrapped around my head" (Jonah 2:5).

Sandy Warner gives these insights into the meaning of having the head wrapped up:

The company of "Lazarus" is bound in grave clothes.

"Lazarus" face is bound. He can not see what is going on, even though he knows something radical is taking place, for suddenly God is speaking into his life and he is once again responding. No one can see him either, for even though he is rising up to the Lord's Word, his calling is hidden to himself, and to the world.

He is wrapped with grave clothes symbolic of death and preservation.

"Lazarus" followed the Lord's will even to the point of death to self. In the process of death, in order to preserve "Lazarus" from his own self destruction during the wait, "Lazarus" was allowed captivity, enough to severely restrict his movements.

In my spirit the Father has been making known that great things are afoot. I have not perceived clearly what they are, but I know that things are transpiring out of sight, in realms unknown to the physical senses, that are beyond the scope of anything the world has seen previously. In a very real sense my head has been wrapped and my senses obscured. Part of this is the bringing about of a death to living by what the physical senses report. There is a realm of walking in the spirit that the Father is leading His chosen ones into in this day. Isaiah prophesied of Christ:

Isaiah 11:3

And He will delight in the fear of [Yahweh], and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear...

(NAS)

As God prepares His chosen ones, He too will cut off our dependence upon our physical senses, forcing us to venture out in realms of the spirit. We are being conformed to Christ's image, so it could equally be said of us "he will not judge by what his eyes see, nor make a decision by what his ears hear."

This is a completely new paradigm for most of us. Our whole foundation for living, action, movement, word, and thought is being restructured. This is a

difficult process and at times it produces fear as all that has been familiar and comfortable is removed from us.

It is similar to Abram being called to go to a land that he knew nothing about. After a while all of the familiar landmarks were gone and everything was new and mysterious. The only resource left to Abram to guide him was the voice of God. Interestingly, it was the voice of God that brought both Jonah and Lazarus out of their places of bondage and death. We are told that Yahshua cried out, "Lazarus, come forth!" It was God's word that also brought Jonah forth.

Jonah 2:10-3:2

10Then [Yahweh] commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah up onto the dry land.

1Now the word of [Yahweh] came to Jonah the second time, saying,

2"Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you."

(NAS)

Sandy Warner states that "Lazarus followed the Lord's will even to the point of death to self." Part of this death to self is death to our own understanding and the habit of forming judgments and making decisions based upon what our senses are telling us. For a while it seems that confusion reigns because we hear God's Spirit speaking to us in one way and our mind speaking to us in another manner. We are placed in the grave and confined in our movements until we learn to bring the mind into submission to the Spirit. As Sandy Warner

comments, this is for our own protection.

What is happening is that maturity is being brought forth. This maturity is described in the following scriptures.

Hebrews 5:14

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. (NAS)

Romans 8:14

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are [mature] sons of God. (NAS)

As our heads are wrapped and our physical senses obscured we are coming to the place where we will no longer “judge by what [our] eyes see, nor make a decision by what [our] ears hear.”

The Lord has described the process He has me in as both crucifixion and circumcision. It is both a putting to death of the flesh and a cutting away of the flesh. This process is preparation for promotion in the kingdom of God.

Many of God’s children today know that they have a calling upon their lives. Many have known this from their youth. Moses sensed the calling of God on his life when he was young. When he slew the Egyptian he was attempting to fulfill this calling, wrongly assuming that others would recognize the calling on his life. Moses had not circumcised the flesh, yet, and flesh cannot accomplish the

purposes of God.

It took forty years in the wilderness to bring Moses to the point where God could use him. It took forty years to bring Moses to the end of relying on his own strength, wisdom, and abilities. The wilderness was Moses' grave. It is where his flesh died. At the end of forty years Moses had no confidence left in his own abilities or talents. When God appeared before him at the burning bush Moses told God that he had chosen the wrong man for Moses had nothing in himself to qualify him for the task set before him. He asserted that he could not even speak.

This is the purpose of the watery grave, the tomb, the wilderness; to remove all reliance upon flesh and our innate abilities. God is seeking men and women who confess, "In my flesh dwells no good thing" and "apart from Christ I can do nothing." However, God wants us to add to this a confidence in His ability, so that we also say, "Through Christ I can do all things." When God calls us out of our graves He wants us to come forth dead to the flesh and alive to the spirit.

For a season, the Father allowed many of us to pursue our calling with a mixture of flesh and spirit. The results were not what we desired. After allowing us to see the utter failure that comes from this unwholesome mixture, He then told many of us that promotion was coming to us. This promotion comes only after the flesh has been circumcised.

After God told Moses of his new calling, his promotion, we are told that Moses set out to Egypt. The angel of God met him on the way and attempted to put him to death because he had not yet physically circumcised the flesh. Moses'

wife Zipporah had to perform the circumcision. Outwardly, Moses had to indicate that his flesh was circumcised, that he was no longer relying upon his own strength to accomplish the task assigned to him. Indeed, it was God, not Moses, that delivered the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. Once the circumcision was performed, Moses was able to go forward and be used mightily of the Lord.

As Sandy Warner describes, this preparation is not very pleasant. At times we feel overcome by the stench and misery of our dying flesh. Jonah describes his experience in his watery grave in this way:

Jonah 2:2-7

2and he said, "I called out of my distress to [Yahweh], and He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; Thou didst hear my voice.

3"For Thou hadst cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the current engulfed me. All Thy breakers and billows passed over me.

4"So I said, 'I have been expelled from Thy sight. Nevertheless I will look again toward Thy holy temple.'

5"Water encompassed me to the point of death. The great deep engulfed me, Weeds were wrapped around my head.

6"I descended to the roots of the mountains. The earth with its bars was around me forever, but Thou hast brought up my life from the pit, O [Yahweh] my God.

7"While I was fainting away, I remembered [Yahweh]; and my prayer came to Thee, into Thy holy temple.

(NAS)

If this describes your situation, if you seem to be “fainting away”, then call out to God in your distress. Be assured that he will answer you. Great and mighty things are on the way.

I Peter 5:10-11

10And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

11To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

(NAS)