"He makes the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they are quiet; so he brings them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise God for his lovingkindness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

The Story of Jonah is a very fascinating study. God gave his prophet a command yet the instructions were not followed. Jonah was told to go to Nineveh to preach because their wickedness had reached up into heaven. Jonah, however, goes the complete opposite direction. God’s prophet would learn that those who disobey the Lord are subject to his chastening hand (see Psalms 32:4-5).

When one disobeys God their mind is not thinking correctly. God moves men to corrective thinking through tribulation. First, the Lord causes a great tempest in the Mediterranean Sea to toss the ship that the prophet had boarded trying to escape to Tarshish. When no relief of the storm was experienced the men of the ship cast Jonah into the sea. Immediately, a great fish swallows up the prophet and he spends the next three days and three nights its belly. Jonah experienced the terrifying depths of the ocean while in the fish’s belly. He had water, sea weed, and no doubt many other horrible smelling things that were in the stomach of the great fish all around him. When he could bear his fish prison no more he cries out to God...
for help. Jonah, in his three day ordeal, came to a conclusion

The prophet of God concluded that those that "regard lying vanities forsake their own mercy" (Jonah 2:8). Jonah knew that God was merciful only to those who obey his divine will (see Isaiah 55:1-5; Acts 13:34-39 and Romans 4:7-8). God's grace, mercy, and justification is not given to those who seek to do things their own ways (see Jeremiah 10:23). Jonah came to this conclusion after he had suffered the "affliction" of the tempestuous sea and spending three days and nights in the belly of a great fish (Jonah 2:2).

When the Pharisees of Jesus' day demanded to see the Lord perform a sign he said to them, "39 An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: 40 for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:39-40). The only way the unbelieving Pharisees would come to obey the commandments of God and attain mercy would be through great tribulation as Jonah experienced. Jesus too would experience tribulation at the hands of wicked men so that mercy may be extended to all.

When we are pressed and afflicted to the point of calling out to God we come to see our great need for his divine mercy. We also learn of God's desire for our obedience. May we all have the self control, spiritual desire, and fortitude to continue in this great lesson we learn. So many lessons are learned in the throws of pain yet when God relieves us we return to the wickedness he freed us from. We should all see and fear the mighty hand of God against wickedness and be moved to steer clear of sin.

Continued Next Week ---------------  John C Robertson

---

Psalms 77

Comfort in Trouble from recalling God's Mighty Deeds

1 I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me. 2 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted. 3 When I remember God, I moan; when I meditate, my spirit faints. Selah 4 You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. 5 I consider the days of old, the years long ago. 6 I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart." Then my spirit made a diligent search: 7 "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? 8 Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" Selah 10 Then I said, "I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High." 11 I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. 12 I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. 13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? 14 You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples. 15 You with your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. Selah 16 When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled. 17 The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth thunder; your arrows flashed on every side. 18 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook. 19 Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen. 20 You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.