



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Leadership In The Trenches: Calling Out In Crises

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Kansas, our Nation, and the world today have a host of major challenges that are impacting people collectively and individually. Our series of Capitol study notes has given us a historical perspective, showing that virtually all previous generations have had an abundance of troubles. These summary notes give us a spiritual perspective, showing how individuals may respond to personal and collective threats to their very survival. However, in each of the situations illustrated, they waited until all hope was gone before calling out to God!

INTRODUCTION

Notice that you suffer irregardless whether the crisis is caused by yourself, someone else, or the leaders of your nation (or the leadership of another nation). Jonah writes of his personal experience in dealing with extreme situations. Consider that there may be a spiritual cause and effect to your current dilemma! Prayer and divine intervention will be required.

WHO DO YOU CALL WHEN IN TROUBLE?

Jonah 1:4-5a Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god.¹

God called the prophet Jonah to confront the people of Nineveh about their sin. This was the capitol city of Assyria, notorious for their violence, extreme cruelty, pride, and idolatry (Jonah 3:8). Jonah was afraid to travel to the land of these fierce people. Nor did he care to warn them about God's pending judgment of Israel's enemy. Jonah booked passage on a cargo ship that was headed west, the opposite direction of Nineveh. A great storm beat upon the ship so badly that even experienced sailors gave up hope, calling out to their own deities. Convinced that one of their gods was angry, they cast lots to see which one of them should try to appease their god. The lot fell on Jonah. Apparently he was more willing to be thrown overboard than to confront the people of Nineveh. Either option seemed a death sentence! He was willing to be a sacrifice for a ship's crew but not for the people in a city! How are you at following the Lord's leading?

CALLING OUT TO MY LORD GOD

Jonah 2:1-2a Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, saying, "I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me."²

Facing even more certain death, Jonah called out to his Lord God. Three days later, the great fish vomited Jonah up on a beach near Nineveh. Notice that this fish fetched Jonah, transported him across the sea, and deposited him on location. A fish demonstrated greater obedience than a prophet! This recommitted servant walked through the great city, preaching God's pending judgment. What would cause you to call out to God?

NATIONAL REPENTENCE WORKS

Jonah 3:10 When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.³

To Jonah's surprise, the King and all the people fasted and repented, calling on God for His grace and mercy. Jonah's message may have been even more dramatic when we learn that Nineveh had experienced two plagues and a solar eclipse in the previous decade.⁴ What dramatic signs and testimony are necessary for you to call out to God for yourself, your family, and your nation? Do you think that our current drought, world-wide epidemics, multiple wars, and men ruling as evil despots are signs that we need God's intervention?

A PRAYER

My Lord and My God, please help me to be sensitive to Your gentle reminders and to the profound events in our present age. Chide me to ask for wisdom and grace. Prompt me to intercede for myself, my family, my state, and my nation. Spare us from those dramatic signs that You send to alert disobedient people of pending disaster. I pray in the Name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

¹ The Holy Bible, New International Version. (Biblica Inc.) 1984

² The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. (Good News Publishers) 2001

³ The Holy Bible, New International Version. (Biblica Inc.) 1984

⁴ John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible. (Thomas Nelson) 2006. p1264.