

Jonah; Down-ward instead of Up-ward

Introduction: Joseph was God's chosen-vessel and through his story, we see that God does amazing things in and through those whom love and obey Him and whom go in the right direction. In the story of God's prophet Jonah we see that God's plans and purposes will always go forth even if His chosen-vessel decides to go in the wrong direction. Jonah's decision to disobey God caused chaos in his life and we see that this decision made everything around him go down-ward instead of up-ward.

- Jonah ran down-ward when God called him up-ward; **Jonah 1:1-5** *He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare and went down into it... into the lowest part of the ship.* Like Jonah, God has an up-ward call on your life. Running away from God's call will never take you higher, it will always take you lower. If you run away from God; you're going the wrong way.

Upwards is always better than downwards.

- The heathens looked up-ward and threw Jonah down-ward; **Jonah 1:10-16** *"We pray, O Lord... You O Lord have done as it pleased You..." Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly..."* This group of men who knew not God, cared more for Jonah than he, (God's prophet) cared about thousands of Ninevites. When you run away from God, your priorities become confused and corrupted.

God can use non-believers to bless or to chasten believers.

- Jonah went down-ward to Sheol so the Ninevites would go up-ward to God; **Jonah 2:1-10** *"Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice."* Sheol is a great pit or abyss and is a picture of hell itself. God had a heavenly calling on His prophet but his disobedience caused him to go to a place where God was seeking to keep the inhabitants of Nineveh out of.

Jesus died for the unbeliever; one of which we all once were.

- Jonah went down-ward into anger instead of up-ward into celebration; **Jonah 4:1-11** *Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"* Jonah's disobedience had caused him to sink to such a place that all joy in the Lord had been lost. Anger had replaced everything that God's prophet used to cherish.

For the believer; there is not joy without God.

God's call on your life is a high-calling and obedience to Him and to your calling is a basic requirement. God is not a task master who enjoys punishing the disobedient. But like the Loving Father whom He is, He chastens those whom He loves. You are His beloved, that's why He placed a call on your life. Love your God by serving and loving Him and His people. Today; move up-ward like Joseph and not down-ward like Jonah.