

Jehovah's Obedient Servant

by Charles E. Fuller

The sermon emphasizes the journey of Jonah from disobedience to repentance, highlighting the importance of prayer and God's readiness to restore His children.

Duration: 49:51

Scripture: Exodus 25:22, Jonah 1:17, Jonah 2:4-5, Jonah 3:1-3

Topics: "Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Jonah and how he found himself in a place of darkness and despair. Despite feeling cast out and surrounded by death, Jonah looked towards the holy temple and had faith in God's mercy and forgiveness. The speaker emphasizes the importance of looking to the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, for salvation and redemption. He encourages listeners to pray for souls to be saved and to kneel before God, acknowledging their sinfulness and asking for His mercy.

Transcript

We have heard the joyful sound, Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Spread the tidings all around, Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Christian Heritage Ministry, in cooperation with Fuller Seminary, proudly presents the Old Fashioned Revival Hour, a broadcast of the Gospel with Dr. Charles E. King.

Jesus saves. Without further ado, let's join the choir and quartet for today's broadcast of the Old Fashioned Revival Hour. Sing the wondrous love of Jesus, Sing His mercy and His grace, In the mansions bright and blessed, He'll prepare for us a place, When we'll sing and shout, And we'll walk the field with happy heart.

Wonderful. As we sing through the first time, turn around and shake hands with as many as possible. Glad to see such a splendid audience here today in Long Beach.

Now, all together. Heavenly. Turn around, shake hands.

That's right. What we are going to do. But anyway, I'll forgive if you'll do it as we sing through the second time.

Everybody lift it up right now and sing it out heartily. Sing it across the nation. Sing it through the third time.

And when we come to that word, Hallelujah, will you just raise the roof. A real Hallelujah now. You men with a deep bass voice can certainly help us out on this.

All together. All right. Heavenly Father, I remember.

Heavenly Father, Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do. Do not wait to shed your light afar. To the many duties ever near you.

Where you are. Where you are. Your talent you may surely find a need.

Here reflect the bright and morning star. Even from your humble hand the bread of life may feed. I just want to tell you that my heart is so full today as I seek again to thank you for the many demonstrations of your love and faithfulness which have come to us during this month.

Throughout these 26 years of continuous broadcasting of the gospel, we have had much testing and trial of our faith. The good book says we shall enter in after much tribulation. But we have always been encouraged in the knowledge that we were rich in the friendship of our countless radio friends.

However, we have been literally overwhelmed as the telegrams have poured in from far and near and as the great avalanche of letters has descended upon us both from those of you who have been standing by so faithfully through the years and from those who for the first time realized the part they could have in this ministry by means of a letter. I just want to say from the bottom of my heart, thank you for all of your kindnesses towards us on the Old Fashioned Revival Hour. One of God's days, every dark cloud He will remove And face to face we shall see Jesus' day Victim Jesus soon shall see light Meaning we shall live This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue The angels beckon me from heaven's open door And I can't feel at home in this world anymore Oh Lord, you know I have no friend like you If heaven's not my home, then Lord, what will I do? The angels beckon me from heaven's open door And I can't feel at home in this world anymore Expecting me, and that's one thing I know I fixed it up with Jesus many years ago I know He'll take me through, though I am weak and poor And I can't feel at home in this world anymore Oh Lord, you know I have no friend like you If heaven's not my home, then Lord, what will I do? The angels beckon me from heaven's open door And I can't feel at home in this world anymore Just over in glory land we'll live eternally The saints on every hand are shouting victory Their songs of sweetest praise riff back from heaven's shore And I can't feel at home in this world anymore Oh Lord, you know I have no friend like you The angels beckon me from heaven's open door And I can't feel at home in this world anymore Now, Mrs. Fuller with the letters, so go right ahead, honey, and read from them.

Greetings, friends. I want to read you some good letters. This is Letter Month, and we've received so many letters from people converted over the years who have never written to us before.

One letter says, I was converted ten years ago when one of your sermons touched my heart and I have been happy in the Lord ever since. Another converted five years ago and preparing to go to the mission field. Another converted three years ago and in full-time service.

Well, it is most heartening to have these letters and to know that so many converts go on into lives of great usefulness for God. From Washington, a lady writes, today at the close of your broadcast, I accepted the Lord Jesus as mine and I cannot tell you the burden that was lifted as I knelt before him. I knew things were not right between God and me and there was always fear in my heart as I thought of his coming as I

knew his judgments would surely be upon me but that fear is now gone and I have peace.

From North Ireland, dear Reverend Fuller, this is to let you know the happy hours of fellowship that my two friends and I enjoy when your broadcast comes to us. How we love to hear the old time hymns so beautifully sung and are thrilled by the whole service. A man writes such a good letter from Glasgow in Scotland.

I do like it and I pray that God may bless this man. Dear Dr. Fuller, I feel I cannot express my great joy and benefit received from the Old Fashioned Revival Hour over Radio Luxembourg. It has been my privilege to interest my friends in this broadcast too and I am advertising it in our local newspaper which has a wide circulation in the hope that some of my townspeople may be won for Christ.

Although we have a great religious history in Scotland there is a tremendous apathy today for the things of God. May God bless your radio ministry to our beloved land of Scotland which was once called the Land of the Book. And then an inmate of a prison in Kentucky writes a good letter.

Dear Reverend Fuller, for the past few months I have went with you through each and every step of your service just as if I were present there in the audience. And when you sing Heavenly Sunshine and the quartet and chorus sings I can feel the presence of our Savior. But as your son leads us in prayer I feel his presence so very plain that I feel as though my Savior's hand were on my shoulder and let him lead me into eternal life.

This last letter has a little humorous aspect because of the name of the town from which it comes in Kentucky but it really is a sweet letter to know that the children there have a Sunday school organized by this lady. It says, Dear Brother Fuller, Greetings from Hell-for-Certain, Kentucky. We're certainly not proud of the name of our little community but we are thankful that we know the Savior who is able to deliver us from Hell-for-Certain.

You cannot imagine my joy this last Sunday morning when over my radio came clearly the voice of the old-fashioned Revival Hour. My home is in Linwood, California and many Sundays I have visited the old-fashioned Revival Hour at Long Beach. But never did I dream then that way back here in the hills of Kentucky all alone your program would be such a blessing to me.

The Lord has been wonderful to me. I have started a new little Sunday school here at Hell-for-Certain and with his help these little young'uns are coming to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and Christians are growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord. And that is all for today, friends.

A shade by day, defense by night, A shelter in the time of storm, No fears alarm, no... ..chorus of number 135, Come, every soul by sin oppressed, And remain standing for... Come, every soul by sin oppressed... Remain standing for prayer, please. Our Heavenly Father, we worship Thee today because we know that Thou art the Creator of heaven and earth. That before the mountains were brought forth or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.

And we are so thankful that Thou art yet so concerned with the affairs of each of Thy children that Thy word says that even the very hairs of their heads are numbered. And, Father, we also worship Thee because we know that Thou art absolutely holy and righteous. And we know also that we sinners could not come unto Thee except Thy Son, Jesus Christ, had died for our sins and then risen again for our justification.

How we thank Thee for sending Thine only begotten Son into the world that Thy righteous requirement in satisfaction of justice might be paid when Christ died on the cross for our sins. Today we thank Thee for Thy grace and we pray that we, as Christians, may realize now as never before that the one remedy that we have to offer to this sin-sick world is the person of Jesus Christ Himself. How we thank Thee for Him that He alone can satisfy every need of our hearts, that He alone can comfort those that are sorrowing, that He alone can take away the sting of death, that He alone can give courage in difficulty, and that He alone can satisfy the deepest yearnings and longings of our hearts.

And, Father, today how thankful we are that in this world where the waves of insecurity and uncertainty are dashing in upon us from every side that we have Jesus Christ, the safe and sure anchor for our souls. And so today we pray that those who are tempest-tossed on life's turbulent sea, that they may come to be securely moored to Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior. For we ask it in His name.

Amen. I will say yes to Jesus, Oft it was known before As He knocked at my heart's proud entrance And I firmly barred the door But I've made a complete surrender And give my right of way And henceforth it is always yes Whatever He may say I will say yes to Jesus Yes, Lord, forever yes I'll welcome all Thy blessed will And sweetly answer yes I will say yes to Jesus To all that He commands I will hasten to do His bidding With willing heart and hands I will listen to hear His whispers And learn His will each day And always gladly answer yes Whatever He may say I will say yes to Jesus Yes, Lord, forever yes I'll welcome all Thy blessed will And sweetly answer yes I'll welcome all Thy blessed will And sweetly answer yes Sometimes when my faith would falter to tears Oh, fear Thou not for I'll get thee Never fear Thou not for I'll get thee You're listening to the Old Fashioned Revival Hour brought to you by the Gospel Broadcasting Association from the Municipal Auditorium at Long Beach, California. This is Charles E. Fuller speaking.

Joys are flowing like a river Since the Comforter has come He abides with us forever Makes the trusting heart His home Blessed quietness, holy quietness What assurance in my soul On the stormy sea He speaks peace to me How the billows cease to roll What a wonderful salvation Where we always see His face What a perfect habitation What a quiet resting place Blessed quietness, holy quietness What assurance in my soul On the stormy sea He speaks peace to me How the billows cease to roll Please open your Bibles to the second chapter of Jonah among the minor prophets. In chapter 1, last Lord's Day, we found Jonah, Jehovah's disobedient servant, running away from the presence of the Lord. And in chapter 2, we find Jonah running to God.

And in our last message, based upon the 17th verse of chapter 1, now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. We find and we learn there that Jehovah prepared a place for his sinning prophet. And then beginning with chapter 2, we learn that this prepared place becomes a place of prayer, a place of pardon, a place of praise.

And may we note in passing the close connection between chapter 1, verse 17, and chapter 2, verse 1. Now the Lord prepared. And then dropping down to the first verse of the next chapter, we find these words, Then Jonah prayed. Now the Lord prepared.

Then Jonah prayed. And we find Jehovah's sanctuary for Jonah, the place of safety which the Lord had prepared for his disobedient prophet, becomes a place of prayer. Notice, please, that up to chapter 2, verse 1, that is all through chapter 1, there has been neither a statement nor a suggestion that Jonah had prayed at any time since he had left his native city to go to Tarshish.

The seamen of the boat had prayed. They prayed first to their false gods and then to the true God of whom Jonah had told them. But Jonah himself had, as far as the record goes, remained absolutely prayerless.

Disobedience short-circuits the flow of communion and fellowship between God and his children. And Jonah, the sinning, disobedient prophet, remained prayerless up to a certain point. For how could Jonah pray when he was self-willed, disobedient, determined to persist in walking the stormy path of disobedience? And beginning with chapter 2, verse 1, however, we find a turning point in these words.

Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. And this verse marks the end of Jonah's independence, of his insubordination, of his hard, impenitent heart, and of his prayerlessness. And as we read the record of Jonah's prayer, verses 1 to 3, where it says, And I cried by the reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me out of the belly of Hades, cried I, thou heardest my voice.

For thou hast cast me into the deep, into the midst of the sea, and the floods compassed me about. All thy billows and thy waves passed over me. We find as we read these verses that God's prepared place becomes a place of prayer.

But wait, I want to teach you something in the realm of the spiritual. Before this place became a place of prayer, it became a place of perception and a place of penitence. Let me explain.

It became, first of all, a place of perception. That is, even though Jonah was in the belly of the great fish three days and three nights, all natural light excluded. And in the place of utter, dense darkness, something happened.

The eyes of Jonah's understanding became enlightened. And in that prepared place, Jonah's spiritual eyes were opened to behold spiritual things, eternal realities. For there Jonah saw his true spiritual condition that is one of disobedience, one of utter disloyalty to his Lord, his complete distrust of the Lord's will for him.

And Jonah, like the prodigal son of old, came to himself. His spiritual eyes were enlightened. He beheld himself as unclean, utterly unworthy.

And this perception, this spiritual insight into his true condition led Jonah to a place of real penitence. Isn't it strange how God in the hours of utter darkness, almost at wit's end corners, laid low perhaps by sickness or the loss of some property or the loss of a loved one. Isn't it wonderful how God's true children come out of those dark places and say, I wouldn't have missed those experiences for anything.

Why? Because the eyes of your understanding became open, enlightened, and you beheld eternal realities that you had never seen before. And you ought to thank God that all things do work together for those who love God, for those who are the called ones. He may have you in a prepared place now of utter darkness as far as this world is concerned.

Thank Him that the eyes of your understanding will be enlightened and you will come back to a place of deeper realization of communion and fellowship. And so Jonah, after he saw these things in the realm, all the spiritual was led to a place of real penitence. Jonah acknowledged his sin and he became truly a penitent soul.

And he had real sorrow for sin, real repentance now to turn to God. And as soon as he confessed his sin and as soon as the obstacles to real prayer were swept away, Jonah praised. He praised the effectual fervent prayer of one restored to the path of communion and fellowship.

Oh, how beautifully God deals with His own. You take the book of Judges. Repeatedly through that book runs a minor refrain seven times.

And in that book of Judges we find these words regarding the children of Israel. They did evil again in the sight of the Lord. And the Lord's anger was expended against Israel.

And He permitted Israel to be sold under a foreign king for so many years. And they were under taskmasters that were cruel. And then when they cried, God heard their prayer, raised up a deliverer or a judge, military leader.

And then victory was assured. And God gave them rest so many years. You take in the 107th Psalm.

I call it the book or the chapter of the then experience. Then Jonah prayed. But will you notice in the 107th Psalm how it says, And let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

It goes on how He gathered them out of the lands from the east and from the west and so forth. Hunger and thirsty their souls fainted in them. Then they cried.

And in verse 6, 13, 19 and 28, you find this refrain. Then they cried. Then they cried.

You read the 107th Psalm. That's the great then chapter of the Bible as it was in the days of Jonah. Then he prayed unto the Lord.

Again in the 51st chapter of the Psalms, David had a then experience. He sinned and he said, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness. Wash me, purge me.

I acknowledge my sin. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be made clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter in snow.

And then dropping down to the 13th verse after a prayer of restoration, of joy, of salvation, he says this, Then will I teach transgressors thy way and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Thank God for the then experiences. And as the quartet was singing, I will say yes to Jesus.

It took me back when Dan was young near death's door. And I was about ready to give up the ministry when God spoke to me in a then experience. And I said I will say yes to Jesus.

Thank God for the dark hours, for the prepared places, for the places where you see eternal realities and see things as God sees them. All right, you are perhaps in God's prepared place today, a disobedient child. I want to tell you, God is waiting patiently, waiting for you to come to that then experience.

Then Jonah prayed, May the eyes of your understanding be soon enlightened and may you have the then experience and be restored to fellowship and to communion. Thus we learn that true prayer comes after confession of sin and obedience to His Word. For if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another in the blood of Jesus Christ.

God's Son cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to cleanse us from our sins. And so forth.

And if we love Him, we will keep His commandments. And if we abide in Him and His words abide in us, we can ask whatsoever we will and He will answer our prayer. Disobedience, sin, short-circuits God's power from on high until one becomes a Pharisee, a hypocrite having a form of godliness but no power.

And I say to you today, repent, return, be restored to fellowship. Then one's prayer life starts anew. Well, this prepared place which became a place of prayer became also a place of pardon.

Here is a very rich spiritual goldmine. And may we dig deeply in verses 4-8 of Jonah's second chapter and bring to the surface some of the eternal golden nuggets from God's great treasure cove. Jonah's prayer is filled with references to God's holy temple at Jerusalem.

Time will not permit me to go into it except to say that when King Solomon gave the prayer of dedication after the beautiful temple was finished with its brazen altar and its labor and its table of showbread and the blood-sprinkled mercy seat and the Holy of Holies, we find in 1 Kings 8, many references, and also 2 Chronicles 7, many references, Solomon dedicating God looking towards this place, in this house, towards this house. In other words, the temple at Jerusalem represented God's presence upon earth. Here then we find Jonah down in the belly of the fish's belly for three days and three nights.

Notice what it says. Fourth verse, Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight, yet I will look again towards the holy temple. What does it mean? Simply this, that he was looking by faith to the brazen altar upon which the sacrifice was burning continually.

The little lambs without spot and blemish had been sacrificed in the bloodshed. And there upon the brazen altar he saw the Lamb of God by faith which taketh away the sin of the world. He saw the laver, Christ the Word, washing clean.

He saw the table of showbread, the altar of incense, the golden candlestick. And he saw the blood-sprinkled mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. That place where God said to Moses, There at the blood-sprinkled mercy seat I will commune with thee.

And Jonah in utter natural darkness, with the eyes of his understanding enlightened, he said, I will look again towards the holy temple. Notice the words of faith. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul.

The depth closed me round about. The weeds are wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains.

The earth where there are bars was about me forever. Yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption. And he had faith that he would be brought from the dead, so to speak.

And when my soul fainted within me, I loved this. I remembered the Lord. And my prayer came in unto thee, into thy holy temple.

And God accounted Jonah's faith, righteousness, and he restored his disobedient sinning servant. And Jonah prayed looking by faith to the place of propitiation, the one meeting place between God and man. And Jonah believed that God had heard his prayers and God had pardoned him because God had

promised to do so.

Now notice, that temple of old, a foreshadow of Christ, where this site of Calvary, He is the Lamb of God. He is the labor. He is the bread of life.

He is the light of the world. He is the altar of incense. He is the blood-sprinkled mercy seat.

And I say to you today that we have this assurance. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation for our sins, the meeting place, the one and only meeting place between sinful man and a holy God, the one mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus.

And there we have at the right hand of the Father an advocate with the marks of Calvary, our representative, our pleader, our attorney. We come and confess our sins. He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I close. Verse 9, I'll only have time to mention. It becomes a place of praise.

Notice it. But I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving follows restoration.

I will pay that I have vowed. In other words, I will be obedient, Jonah says. I'll go where You want me to go.

I'll say what You want me to say. I'll do what You want me to do. In chapter 3, we see the once-sinning servant going to Nineveh in a city of 600,000 brought to repentance because he came back God's way.

God heard his prayer. Received him. Sent him out to bring a wicked city to the Lord's feet.

Let's bow in prayer. Everyone with bowed heads in this fine, visible audience today and friends in Radio Land, pray with us now that souls will be saved. If you conceal my longing to be free, look to the Lamb of God.

He, to redeem you, died on Calvary. Look to the Lamb of God. To the Lamb of God.

Outside of Christ in the radio audience, will you look to Christ today? Look to the Lamb of God and be made whole. God bless you. Kneel where you are and say, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and save me for Christ's sake.

Oh, may this message sweep across the nations to the Lamb of God today and be saved. Continue in prayer. We'll have a short altar service at the...

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