

The Baptism of the Prophet Jonah

Let us pray:

Father God, open our eyes, ears and hearts this morning to the story of your prophet Jonah. May the repeating of this story lead us into a truth that can transform us and free us. I ask this in the mighty name of Jeshua ben David, Jesus the Christ, the son of David, Amen.

I want to open the Book of the Prophet Jonah to you this morning.

And why do we want to open the Book of the Prophet Jonah?

First of all, the book has been an indisputable part of the Hebrew Canon since time immemorial. The Canon is those books which have proven over a long time to be inspirational and transformational and which give a useful and accurate idea about both God and Creation, and have thus come to be almost unanimously accepted as the Word of God. Many books in the Bible have not had universal support for inclusion in this exclusive library, but not so Jonah. Therefore, we have it on good authority that this book will give both a useful and accurate idea about God and Creation and prove inspiration, and God willing be transformational.

Secondly, it was a book familiar to our Lord Jesus Christ. Please turn to Matthew 12:38-41.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. "The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here."

Surely, if Jesus read this book, that should be a higher recommendation than a New York Times Book Review Award, should it not?

However, despite all this, Jonah has had some really bad press over the ages and I suspect that not only the unchurched, but many devout Christians and Jews have come to also consider the book to be infantile and frivolous. No doubt this is probably because it has the style of an adventure story, particularly the sort written for young children. The somewhat fantastic elements of divine storms and giant fish are very hard to take seriously by most people, even the most devout Jews and Christians. You say a Big Fish swallowed Jonah where he lived and breathed for three days, before being conveniently spit out on the beach? Oh, really! Of course, there's a whole group of sincere and reasonable people who insist that it all really did happen, which possibility cannot be dismissed out of hand if we believe in the omnipotence of God.

However, with all due respect to both groups, they really badly miss the point by largely misunderstanding the Bible's two forms of truth. Obviously, there is a great deal of what we might call historical fact contained in the Bible, and more and more is discovered every year by archeologists and historians which substantiates and verifies these facts. However despite our obsession in this age with this form of truth, we must come to see that truth has a much wider scope in the Bible. For example, the Hebrew word for truth, *emeth*, really means something more like something which has been widely believed for a long time, something faithful and reliable. In the New Testament, the word translated as truth, *aletheia*, really means that which is revealed. As an example, you may be surprised to learn that there is not a shred (or shard) of evidence that the Jewish people ever lived in Egypt or left there and wandered in the Sinai desert. Considering that they were supposed to be in Egypt for some 300 years and in the desert for another forty, this is very surprising. And yet, no serious person really discounts the

“fact” of these events, since after some three thousand years and the effect of belief in the real occurrence of these events on the history of the world, surely it hardly matters whether they really happened or not.

Perhaps a simpler way of explaining all this is to distinguish between “relational” truth and “transformational” truth. Relational truth limits itself to the simple “objective” relationship between events and things in time and space, while transformational truth attempts to explain how events and things transform our being and our behavior. In this sense, a story which describes potentially true relationships and events, can be transformationally true, even if these “events” and “relationships” are not “relationally” true per se. That is they never “really” happened.

For example, a parable is not “literally” true, but “contains” truth. And what would be the point of insisting that the parable of the unforgiving servant was a “real” story that “really” happened, if we are not transformed by our revulsion to the behavior of the forgiven servant? Or the parable of the Sower, and not heeding the call to get involved effectively in the harvest?

Thus on the one level, Jonah is an utterly fantastic story which can only be “really” true if we suggest that God can do all these things, since they could never be imagined to have taken place without God’s extreme intervention. However, can this story contain a truth that despite its rather extraordinary story line, has the potential to explain reality and in doing so transform our reaction to it.

In the final analysis, the story of Jonah only becomes transformational for us if we ignore the question about its literal truth, and consider it as a parable. Therefore, as in a parable, we must not think of Jonah as someone who lived and died a long time ago and had certain adventures on land and sea, but as ourselves.

First of all, however, the story sets out certain truths at the beginning which before we get to that, let’s look at the underlying truth contained in the story, a truth that we simply take for granted today.

For example, in the very first two verses, a whole world view is laid out.

The word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai saying, “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.”

From this we learn that (1) there is a God, (2) that God speaks, (3) that God speaks to His prophets, (4) that God is concerned about unrighteousness even among His enemies and the enemies of His chosen people, and (5) that God intends to intervene against wickedness through his chosen people and his prophets.

When the text says that their wickedness has come up before me, the phrase “before Me” in Hebrew (על פני) means literally “in My face.” Thus we might also say that we learn that God sees, hears and perhaps smells.

God’s call to Jonah comes in the words “Arise, Go.” The word for arise in Hebrew is Qum, and it effectively divides the entire book into two sections, before and after the Big Fish. It is an extremely interesting word and occurs in the book of Genesis no less than fifty times. It has a double meaning, a literal one, to arise, and a more figurative one, to become established or to enter into a covenantal relationship.

This week, I will be taking you through the first Qum section, and on November 20, 2005, my colleague Vicki Frappollo will be taking you through the second section. To greatly oversimplify, the first section has to do with the Salvation of Jonah and the second with the Sanctification of

Jonah. In other words, it will be my job to get you saved, and Vicki's to explain what you do next. In the first half, we learn that Jonah is incapable of rising into this relationship to do the will of God until he learns to submit to God.

Let's start with a question. Does the Word of the Lord concerning wickedness come only to His prophets? Is not unrighteousness obvious to all humans? After all, in Genesis chapter 3, we learn that the first man acquired the "knowledge of good and evil." Surely this awareness of unrighteousness is the common inheritance of mankind. We are also reminded of St. Paul's statement in Romans chapter 1:18-25:

For God's wrath is revealed from Heaven on all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, holding the truth in unrighteousness, because the thing known of God is clearly known within them, for God revealed it to them. For the unseen things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things made, both His eternal power and Godhead, for them to be without excuse. Because knowing God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful. But they became vain in their reasonings, and their undiscerning heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became foolish and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into a likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things. Because of this, God gave them up to impurity in the lusts of their hearts, their bodies to be dishonored among themselves, who changed the truth of God into the lie, and worshiped and served the created thing more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

So it would not be unreasonable to believe that the awareness of unrighteousness comes not only to Jonah, but to all of us. And according to St. Paul, we surely are receiving the call to Arise and Go. However, in verse three, we learn that the response of Jonah to God's concern about unrighteousness is also very, very human:

But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going to Tarshish, paid the fare and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

All commentators make note that Tarshish, said to be on the coast of modern day Spain, is pretty much in the opposite geographical direction from Nineveh. However, there is much more to this. We read in 2nd Chronicles (9:21) (see also 1 Kings 10:22)

For the king had ships which went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

And also again in Jeremiah 10:9,

Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple— all made by skilled workers.

As well as in Ezekiel 27:25

The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares. You are filled with heavy cargo in the heart of the sea.

Tarshish, thus, was known in the texts referred to by the author of the story of Jonah as a land of earthly wealth. And earthly wealth is for earthly security. Jonah not only went in the opposite direction physically, he also went in the opposite direction spiritually. He headed straight for the land of worldly wealth and security. Should we in the church be critical of Jonah? Oh, we can raise money for the church for missions, but we do not want to be missionaries. We can ship our gold and silver out from our secure port in Tarshish, but to go to Nineveh, well that's for others.

Jonah fled from the call to respond to unrighteousness and set his life course to the acquisition of earthly security.

In verses 4 and 5, we learn the consequences of such reliance

The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up. Then the sailors became afraid and every man cried to his god, and they threw the cargo which was in the ship into the sea to lighten it for them. But Jonah had gone below into the hold of the ship, lain down and fallen sound asleep.

While we may ponder whether God really sends storms to punish people. I know my mother always considered New Orleans to be a very wicked place and was careful about us when we visited there as a family many years ago.

But consider this: if you've followed my argument that the author of the Jonah story wants us to see Jonah as typifying the spiritually dysfunctional person, it is no leap to understand that this is the sort of personality whose self-centered insecurities lead almost inevitably to behavior problems – defensiveness, contentiousness, insubordination, uncooperativeness, stubbornness, selfishness, carelessness of others close to them, hostility towards perceived competitors, and in some cases drunkenness to assuage the pain of the resulting loneliness and alienation. And as their behaviour wreaks havoc all around them, they themselves, like Jonah, remain below decks, and asleep.

So a book which begins with a call to one man to address the unrighteousness of many has concluded with the unrighteousness of that one man.

In Verses 6-17, we see how Jonah enters the path to healing and deliverance from his condition.

⁶So the captain approached him and said, "How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish."

⁷Each man said to his mate, "Come, let us cast lots so we may learn on whose account this calamity has struck us." So they cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.

⁸Then they said to him, "Tell us, now! On whose account has this calamity struck us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?"

⁹He said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the LORD God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land."

¹⁰Then the men became extremely frightened and they said to him, "How could you do this?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.

¹¹So they said to him, "What should we do to you that the sea may become calm for us?"--for the sea was becoming increasingly stormy.

¹²He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will become calm for you, for I know that on account of me this great storm has come upon you."

¹³However, the men rowed desperately to return to land but they could not, for the sea was becoming even stormier against them. ¹⁴Then they called on the LORD and said, "We earnestly pray, O LORD, do not let us perish on account of this man's life and do not put innocent blood on us; for You, O LORD, have done as You have pleased." ¹⁵So they picked up Jonah, threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped its raging. ¹⁶Then the men feared the LORD greatly, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

¹⁷And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

We note from the text that each man on Jonah's ship has his own plan for ending the storm. However, the calming of the storm will be beyond the capabilities of the particular deities of those around him. It will require before all else (1) honesty on the part of Jonah that he is the sole cause, the responsible agent, for the storm, and (2) he will have to give his whole being over to God.

One of the keys to unlocking the secrets of the Bible is to always ask oneself if what you are reading is normal or does it represent a normal response to a situation or question.

(Nicodemus, the Paralytic). For example, if you've just discovered that you've made some mistake and want to set things right, what would be your response. Put yourself in the place of Jonah. Wouldn't it make much more sense if he said to the Captain, "Say, Captain, let's turn this old boat around and head back to Joppa so I can get to Nineveh." What sort of idiocy is it that possesses Jonah to ask to be thrown overboard? What possible good could he expect from this? Why not ask them to turn the ship around and head back to Joppa so that Jonah can go to Nineveh after all? There can be only one possibility. Jonah recognizes that his inability to respond to the call to go to Nineveh is radical and goes to the heart of his being. It will require a cleansing, a washing, a turning, a repentance, a conversion. It will require a baptism.

Sandra asked me a week ago whether the Trinity was mentioned in the Old Testament. The answer is that all the personalities of the Trinity are present. Similarly, we might ask, does the ritual of baptism exist in the Old Testament? The answer is a definite yes. The passing through the Red Sea and the passing through the Jordan into the promised land are types of baptism. This is witnessed by John the Baptist, who took the ritual baptism which was and required of converts to Judaism, removed it from the Temple in Jerusalem, and took it down to the Jordan River, where Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land. There are several other examples. This is also attested to by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:1-13:

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.¹

We should carefully note that Jonah asks the sailors to throw him overboard. Is this normal? What not just grab a life preserver and jump? Think about this: can you baptize yourself? Doesn't baptism require a baptizer? In fact doesn't baptism require a baptizing community? Jonah could not just jump overboard, as this would appear to be an act of suicide. But this is not to deny that Jonah's immersion involved the possibility of death. Clearly, all parties knew this. But we know that our baptism is also a baptism into death. To with St. Paul in Romans 6:1-11:

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him,

¹ **Entire context of 1 Corinthians 10:1-13:** 1For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. 6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. 13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7for he who has died is freed from sin.

8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.²

Now we come to the famous Big Fish. The Dag Gadol. Leaving aside the issue of whether this literally happened, what would it be like inside such a creature, what would be the characteristics of such a place? First of all, it would be very dark. We read in Genesis 1:2 that in the beginning, darkness was over the deep and the wind of God was hovering over the waters. This is condition at the moment of the beginning of time, and the condition of Jonah as he faces his new creation. It is at this moment that God speaks let there be light.

In 1 Kings 19:1-13 we read about the prophet Elijah, who also ran away, and ended up in a cave in "Horeb, the mountain of God":

9 And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." 11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. 13 So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"³

² **Entire context of Romans 10:1-23:** 1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

³ **Entire context of 1 Kings 19:1-13:** And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. 2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." 3 And when he saw *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there. 4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life, for I *am* no better than my fathers!" 5 Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise *and* eat." 6 Then he looked, and there by his head *was* a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. 7 And the angel of the LORD came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise *and* eat, because the journey *is* too great for you." 8 So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. 9 And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." 11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; 12 and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. 13 So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice *came* to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Thus caves and fish are places where God communicates with his prophets.

In another example, in 1 Samuel 22, David also runs away and enters a cave:

1So David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's household heard of it, they went down there to him. **2**Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Now there were about four hundred men with him.

So caves and fish are also places of refuge and new beginnings. Places of refuge and of salvation. Places where God communes and communicates with his prophets.

As we know, the Lord Jesus also entered a cave. No wonder our Lord was familiar with this story.

And thus, we have come from a theme of saving a whole city, to the cleansing redemption of one individual.

Inside the Big Fish, Jonah prays a prayer in the form of a Psalm (2:1-10)

1Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the stomach of the fish, **2**and he said,

"I called out of my distress to the LORD, And He answered me
I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; You heard my voice.

3"For You had cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas,
And the current engulfed me All Your breakers and billows passed over me.

4"So I said, 'I have been expelled from Your sight
Nevertheless I will look again toward Your 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 You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.

7"While I was fainting away, I remembered the LORD,
And my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple.

8"Those who regard vain idols Forsake their faithfulness,

9But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving
That which I have vowed I will pay Salvation is from the LORD."

10Then the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah up onto the dry land.

This watery theme is actually a common theme in the Psalms. For example:

Psalm 18

"I love You, O LORD, my strength."

2The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,
My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge;

My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

3I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,
And I am saved from my enemies.

4The cords of death encompassed me,

And the torrents of ungodliness terrified me.

5The cords of Sheol surrounded me;

The snares of death confronted me.

6In my distress I called upon the LORD,

And cried to my God for help;

He heard my voice out of His temple,

And my cry for help before Him came into His ears.

7Then the earth shook and quaked;

And the foundations of the mountains were trembling
And were shaken, because He was angry.
8Smoke went up out of His nostrils,
And fire from His mouth devoured;
Coals were kindled by it.
9He bowed the heavens also, and came down
With thick darkness under His feet.
10He rode upon a cherub and flew;
And He sped upon the wings of the wind.
11He made darkness His hiding place, His canopy around Him,
Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.
12From the brightness before Him passed His thick clouds,
Hailstones and coals of fire.
13The LORD also thundered in the heavens,
And the Most High uttered His voice,
Hailstones and coals of fire.
14He sent out His arrows, and scattered them,
And lightning flashes in abundance, and routed them.
**15Then the channels of water appeared,
And the foundations of the world were laid bare
At Your rebuke, O LORD,
At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.**
**16He sent from on high, He took me;
He drew me out of many waters.**
17He delivered me from my strong enemy,
And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.
18They confronted me in the day of my calamity,
But the LORD was my stay.
19He brought me forth also into a broad place;
He rescued me, because He delighted in me.
20The LORD has rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me.
21For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
And have not wickedly departed from my God.
22For all His ordinances were before me,
And I did not put away His statutes from me.
23I was also blameless with Him,
And I kept myself from my iniquity.
24Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,
According to the cleanness of my hands in His eyes.
25With the kind You show Yourself kind;
With the blameless You show Yourself blameless;
26With the pure You show Yourself pure,
And with the crooked You show Yourself astute.
27For You save an afflicted people,
But haughty eyes You abase.
28For You light my lamp;
The LORD my God illumines my darkness.
29For by You I can run upon a troop;
And by my God I can leap over a wall.
30As for God, His way is blameless;
The word of the LORD is tried;
He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.
31For who is God, but the LORD?
And who is a rock, except our God,
32The God who girds me with strength
And makes my way blameless?
33He makes my feet like hinds' feet,

And sets me upon my high places.

34He trains my hands for battle,
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35You have also given me the shield of Your salvation,
And Your right hand upholds me;
And Your gentleness makes me great.
36You enlarge my steps under me,
And my feet have not slipped.
37I pursued my enemies and overtook them,
And I did not turn back until they were consumed.
38I shattered them, so that they were not able to rise;
They fell under my feet.
39For You have girded me with strength for battle;
You have subdued under me those who rose up against me.
40You have also made my enemies turn their backs to me,
And I destroyed those who hated me.
41They cried for help, but there was none to save,
Even to the LORD, but He did not answer them.
42Then I beat them fine as the dust before the wind;
I emptied them out as the mire of the streets.
43You have delivered me from the contentions of the people;
You have placed me as head of the nations;
A people whom I have not known serve me.
44As soon as they hear, they obey me;
Foreigners submit to me.
45Foreigners fade away,
And come trembling out of their fortresses.
46The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock;
And exalted be the God of my salvation,
47The God who executes vengeance for me,
And subdues peoples under me.
48He delivers me from my enemies;
Surely You lift me above those who rise up against me;
You rescue me from the violent man.
49Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O LORD,
And I will sing praises to Your name.
50He gives great deliverance to His king,
And shows lovingkindness to His anointed,
To David and his descendants forever.

Psalm 42

1As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God.

2My soul thirsts for God, for the living God;
When shall I come and appear before God?
3My tears have been my food day and night,
While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"
4These things I remember and I pour out my soul within me
For I used to go along with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God,
With the voice of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival.
5 Why are you in despair, O my soul?
And why have you become disturbed within me?
Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him
For the help of His presence.
6O my God, my soul is in despair within me;
Therefore I remember You from the land of the Jordan
And the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

7Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls;

All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me.

8The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime;

And His song will be with me in the night,

A prayer to the God of my life.

9I will say to God my rock, "Why have You forgotten me?

Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"

10As a shattering of my bones, my adversaries revile me,

While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

11 Why are you in despair, O my soul?

And why have you become disturbed within me?

Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him,

The help of my countenance and my God.