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Then the LORD Commanded the Whale, and it Vomited Jonah Out Onto Dry Land **2: 10**

Then the LORD commanded the whale, and it vomited Jonah out onto dry land DIG: What mandate did Elisha give Naaman in Second Kings 5:10-11? What was Naaman's response? What did Naaman's suggestion of a different dipping point imply that he felt about Elisha, about God, about himself? What does scene three as a whole say about God?

REFLECT: Did you ever try to circumvent God's instructions or do them halfway? What did this look like in your life? What do you see about this principle in Yeshua's example in John 4:34 and Philippians 2:8? What represents Joppa in your situation?

Seven miracles have already happened in this short narrative: **(1) God** caused a violent storm **(1:4)**, **(2)** had the lot fall on **Jonah (1:7)**, **(3)** calmed the sea when **the rebel prophet** was thrown overboard **(1:15)**, **(4)** commanded **the great whale** to swallow **Jonah (1:17)**, **(5)** resurrected **Jonah** in the belly of **the great whale (2:6b)**, **(6)** had **the great whale** vomit **Jonah onto dry land**, **(7)** and perhaps greatest of all, melted **the reluctant prophet's** heart (as seen in **his** prayer of thanksgiving) **(2:2-9)**.⁷¹

For Jonah, there'd be no getting out of God's will and there'd be no shortcut to Nineveh.



Reflection on what scene three as a whole says about ADONAI: The prose narrative now continues. The contrast between the sublime words of the poem and the undignified deliverance of **Yonah** from the whale could not be greater. **And the LORD commanded the whale, and it did exactly as it was told and vomited Yonah onto dry land (2:10).** Scripture does not say where **the whale** deposited **the wayward prophet**, but it is reasonable to believe that **Jonah** was right back near **Joppa (1:3)** where **he** began.⁷²

Not only must **Yonah** have been amazed that **he** had been resurrected, but **he** must have been startled when **he** got **his** bearings and realized that **he** was right back at square one with the same command **he'd** fled before. **For Yonah, there'd be no getting out of God's will and there'd be no shortcut to Nineveh. This is the storyteller's ironic view of the one who thinks he can escape YHVH.** And yet this irony, with all its exaggeration, is slyly absurd rather than cynical. **He** hadn't gotten a full ride to the shores of Assyria courtesy of the "Sperm Whale Express." Full, detailed obedience would be required. This incident brings the first half of the book to an abrupt end.⁷³

There are many biblical examples that show people who tried to take a shortcut when it came to obeying **ADONAI**. **Avraham** had an illicit relationship that yielded Ishmael instead of waiting on **God's** timing and the child of promise. **King Saul** kept some of the best spoils of the Amalekites instead of destroying everything as **HaShem** had instructed him. There was a rich young man (see my commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click II - The Rich Young Ruler**) who wanted to achieve salvation by doing everything *but* what **Yeshua** required. In fact, it seems even the Adversary knows the incredibly disastrous effects taking shortcuts can have because he even tried to get **Messiah** to take the easy road (see my commentary on **The Life of Christ Bj - Jesus is Tempted in the Wilderness**).

In **Second Kings 5:1-19** we meet **Naaman**, a **man** who learned an important lesson about

the details of obedience. **He was commander** of the Syrian army and highly **regarded** for the battles **he'd** won. You'd think a man in charge of a vast army would appreciate the gravity of meticulously receiving and following instructions, but **he** wasn't willing to do so **himself**.

Naaman was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy. When **he** learned that a **prophet in Samaria** might be able to heal **him**, **he** got a **letter** from **his king** to **the king of Isra'el** requesting help in the matter. While the request for healing overwhelmed **Israel's king**, **Elisha** was determined to show **Naaman** that **there was a prophet in Isra'el (Second Kings 5:8)** and that **the God of Isra'el** could heal. **Naaman** came to **Elisha** and received some specific instructions.

But **the Syrian commander** was **angry** because **he** had several problems with **Elisha's** instructions. **He** didn't like what **he** was told to do, how **Elisha** told **him** to do it, or where **he** was told to carry out the instructions. In fact, **Naaman** had **his** own ideas about how **he** should be healed and they didn't have anything to do with what **Elisha** had told **him** to do! **He** even suggested a better method to procure **his** healing (**Second Kings 5:12**).

Elisha told **him** to wash **himself seven times in the Jordan River and his flesh would be restored (Second Kings 5:10)**. But **the rivers of Abana and Pharpar** were in **Naaman's** hometown and **he** knew **them** to be cleaner **than all the waters in Isra'el**. **He** was disgusted to think that someone of **his** stature would have to **dip himself** into **the dirty Jordan**. **He** didn't think it would do **him** any good and **he went off in a rage**.

This was exactly what **Yonah** did. But there was no shortcut for **the runaway prophet**, and there would be no shortcut for **Naaman**. **Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you . . . wash and be cleansed. So the mighty Syrian commander went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy (Second Kings 5:13-14)**. Like **Yonah** and **Naaman**, we meet up with instructions from **the Lord** that don't fit with what we had in mind or seem to be unnecessarily inconvenient. What they needed to learn is what we need to learn; full obedience to **the Word of God** makes a difference. The work **God** is trying to accomplish in you requires your full participation. You will find the rewards when you submit completely to what **He** asks and do the tasks how and where **He** asks.

Our human nature, however, tries to find another route to accomplish what **God** requires that won't take as much effort or energy as we will **have** to expend to obey **ADONAI**

completely. Yet **Joppa** - the place of decision and the crossroads of obedience - seems to be the starting point of most second chances.

Jonah was back at **Joppa** and had to devote **himself** fully to **HaShem's** will. No shortcuts could navigate the 550 miles to **Nineveh**. He had to put one foot in front of the other and trust **YHVH** for the rest. Now was the time to obey **God** fully and completely.⁷⁴

Do you feel a sense of hopelessness? Do you think, "Does **God** have any use for me?" Do you feel like you have turned your back on **God** for so long the **He** can't hear you any more? That **He** doesn't want you anymore? Well I have news for you. **ADONAI** is a **God** of second, third, fourth, even **seventy times seven times** chances (**Mattityahu 18:22**). This limitless number shows that **God's** forgiveness is boundless. The number **seven** is often used as a biblical metaphor as the number of completeness. Perhaps **Yeshua** had in mind the Torah passage that speaks of Lamech's unlimited vengeance (**Genesis 4:24**), in contrast to the unlimited forgiveness. True forgiveness does not count up the offenses. **God** gave the reluctant prophet a second chance even though **Jonah** disobeyed **Him**. It didn't matter what **his** motives were. **Yonah** disobeyed **Him**. And **God** gave **him** a second chance.

*Dear Holy and Loving Heavenly **Father, You** are awesome! To be given a second chance is so remarkable because you are so great. Praise **You** that **You** see the heart and know when a person really is sorry and want to turn away from their wrong - then **You** forgive. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (First John 1 :9). You also see when the heart says that they love You and the person does good deeds, but really loves only himself. How sad that they will miss out on heaven because of their selfish heart. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord!" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?" Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness" (Matthew 7:21-23)! How important to love You from our heart (Matthew 22:37-39). How wonderful heaven will be for those who love You. It will be eternal peace and great joy praising Your holy name forever! In Yeshua's holy name and power of His resurrection. Amen***