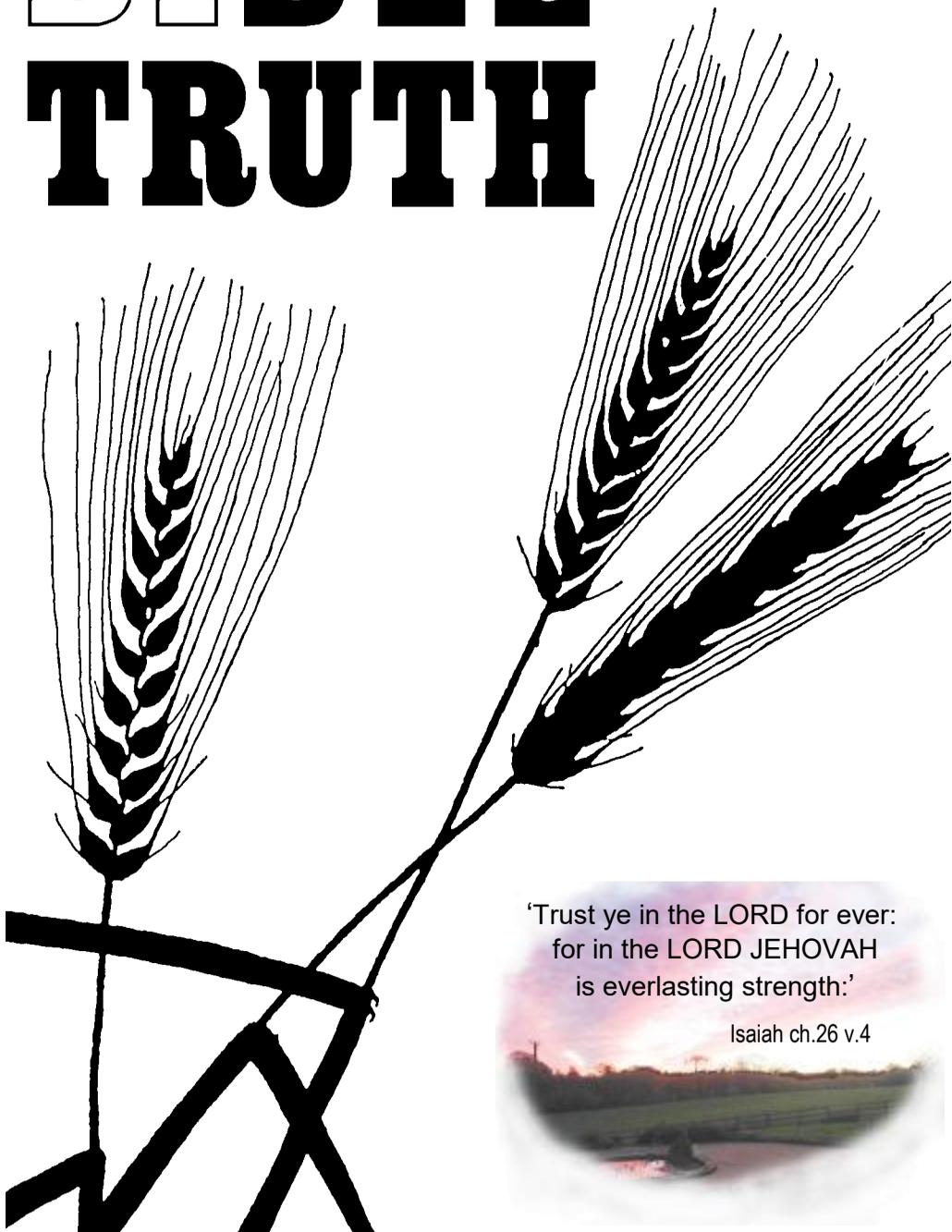


BIBLE TRUTH

No. 302
September/December
2021



'Trust ye in the LORD for ever:
for in the LORD JEHOVAH
is everlasting strength.'

Isaiah ch.26 v.4

JONAH

by the late Ray Johnson

From his pamphlet
FRAGMENTS No.7



The Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees and Sadducees that,
'A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas ...'.
Matthew ch.16 v.4

Jonah was a prophet of the Lord God of Israel and he had given the word of the Lord regarding the restoration of the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, accomplished by Jeroboam (see 2 Kings ch.14 v.25). Jonah of course is best understood from the book of that name, the reluctant prophet or the unwilling evangelist. How many evangelists today would envy if not his ministry then the results Jonah had?

There Jonah was in the sides of the ship fast asleep and the ship was in the midst of a terrible storm. If I am not mistaken, scripture records only one other 'man' who was asleep in a ship in a terrible storm at sea. What an assurance in God, what confidence that though Jonah had a difference of opinion with the Lord, the Lord would be gracious as well as just and would not allow his life to perish. Of course to the shipmaster this faith was unknown, he awoke Jonah to call on his God, which Jonah was reluctant to do for he was fleeing from the commission God had given him. The story is well known, lots were drawn and the lot fell upon Jonah, he related to them who he was and that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, and to calm the sea they would have to throw him overboard. Though they were very unwilling to throw him into the sea they eventually had no alternative and did so.

The sea then ceased from her raging, just as Jonah had said it would, the whole ship's company feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered up a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

Who else has ever boarded a ship and left it with the whole of the crew worshipping God?

Yet that is not the end of the story, for the voyage was not in the original schedule, this reluctant evangelist, the prophet of the Lord after crying unto the Lord from the belly of hell, was after three days and nights, vomited out of the fish, on to dry land, and went to fulfil the task he was first called out to do.

‘And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.’

Jonah ch.3 v.4

There had been no bill posting announcing his visit, no great evangelistic mission, no great heart stirring sermon, only these eight words, all that way just to say those eight words. What would be said today if that is all a minister said? The result though, what about the result?

A hundred and twenty thousand souls repented in sackcloth and ashes. What a revival !

‘And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?’

Jonah ch.4 v.11

Jonah was not pleased with the result, this is just what he had told the Lord would happen. These people were enemies of Israel, were eventually to take the Israelites captive and deport them into other lands, Jonah would have been happy to see them overthrown. This is why he had fled from the face of the Lord, but the Lord's will had been worked out in the end.

Now there is a parallel here? Israel had been given a commission to proclaim the good news of the kingdom to all the nations around her, but she failed to fulfil the task and became as the nations who had been driven out of the land for her sake. The kingdom has since been overthrown by the Assyrians and Israel has been lost among the nations (the sea of humanity), for three days and three nights on the Lord's measure of a thousand years for one day. She is shortly to be restored to full kingdom glory under the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Lord Jesus Christ in the new age which is now beginning to dawn. One, one thousand year day further on, that is in the ages of

ages that follows, the kingdom of God will be proclaimed in a living witness as never before seen on this earth, which was the original purpose of God with the nation. Nevertheless the Lord has used Israel in her disobedience and her chastisement, (just as He used Jonah in his disobedience), as His witness in the earth fulfilling all the prophecies regarding her in these last days, though the majority of Israel, (the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic people), are ignorant of them.

Proving beyond any shadow of doubt that the Lord God does as He will among the nations of men.

Ray Johnson 1925 - 2021

We were sorry to bid farewell to Ray at the ripe age of 96 on 18th June. He was one of the longest serving supporters of our Fellowship and we give thanks to God for his generosity in sharing his resources with us. He was well known in the AOG churches of the Hull area where he distributed our literature and brought several people to our mailing list thereby.

In earlier years he and his wife Nora were welcome visitors to our London meetings as well as to our colleague organisations' residential conferences. Some members may remember his regular biblical pamphlets called *Fragments*, several of which we were pleased to publish in this *Bible Truth* magazine from time to time.

In 2019 he was said to have 5 grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren, and several great great grandchildren. Truly the family fulfilled God's calling to Adam, Eve and Noah, as well as Isaac's commission to Jacob,

'And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;'

Genesis ch.28.v.3

Our heartfelt condolences and grateful thanks go to Janet his daughter as well as other members of the family for allowing him to be shared with us.