

THE WINGS OF THE WIND

In my mind I can still see the picture in my childish zipper Bible: the Lord with a fierce countenance riding on an angel with massive wings, riding the strong currents of the wind. God says in both Psalm 18:10 and II Samuel 22:11, *“And He rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.”* This was the Scripture my children’s Bible was illustrating. It made an awesome impression on my youthful mind. God controls the winds. The Bible says in Psalm 107:25, *“For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.”* From our point of view there is a mystery associated with the wind, Jesus said, *“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit”* (John 3:8). Throughout the Bible we see God sending a message along with the wind.

1. We may go against the wind.

Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh: *“Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken”* (Jonah 1: 1-4).

When we wander from the will of God, we are going against the wind. No matter how hard we try to get out of the mess we have gotten into, we will get nowhere until we submit to the will of God for our lives. The Bible says, *“Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them”* (Jonah 1:13). In James 1:6, God points out, *“...For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.”* You’ll be like a rag doll on the sea of life should you decide to fight God’s plan for your life. Gamaliel warned, *“...Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God”* (Acts 5:35,38,39). Mark this truth down: if anyone fights against God, He will always win!

The Bible says, *“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God”* (Psalm 9:17). In the book of Daniel, God prophesied through his servant

that very truth, “Then was the iron (Rome), the clay (the material man is made from), the brass (Greece), the silver (Media-Persia), and the gold (Babylon), broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Daniel 2:35). God has no problem taking the wind and blowing the nations that forget him into a mere memory: “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing” (Isaiah 40:15).

No one individually or corporately dare go against God; it is going against the wind! Jonah should have known venturing toward Tarshish far away from God’s plan for his life would have been a dangerous proposition, for God’s word says, “Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind” (Psalm 48:7).

2. We may be tested in the wind.

Jesus ordered the disciples to go to the other side of the lake, “And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away” (Matthew 14:22). Keep in mind this trip was designated for the disciples. “But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary” (Matthew 14:24). Once the wind hit the disciples, they could no longer successfully navigate: “And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them...” (Mark 6:48). This was a test. How would they respond? Remember God controls the wind; circumstances are never out of His control. I love what was said earlier in John’s telling of this story. “And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what he would do” (John 6:6). Although this statement was in reference to the feeding of the multitude, it pertains to this event as well. Jesus always knows what to do! The disciples are set up now for the test: “...And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew” (John 6:17b, 18). Have you ever been caught in the “great wind” unable to see your way out? Listen to the words of Jesus when He and Peter got into the boat after their walk on the water: “But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went” (John 6:20,21). There was a miracle that happened that seemed to have gotten lost between Peter walking on the water and the Lord calming the sea. The Bible says, although they were not near the land, as soon as Jesus was in the boat, they were at the shore. Things move when Jesus is onboard! Jesus asked Peter at this event, “...O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” (Matthew 14:31b). The test was seeing if we will we trust God even when the winds have knocked us off course and threaten to take us under. The trust should have kicked in the moment Jesus instructed them “...to go before him unto the other side...” (Matthew 14:22b). If Jesus says go to the other side, you’ll make it to the other side. Behind every command of God He places His omnipotence!

In one of Paul's journeys he was clobbered by a hurricane force wind, "And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;...But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon" (Acts 27:7,14). The Bible says once this violent wind hit them there was only one thing to do: "And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive" (Acts 27:15). In the disciples testing on the Sea of Galilee and Paul's testing on the Mediterranean we see these stormy winds were ordered by the Lord to pull out faith in the face of trials. What do we do? We "...let her drive..." until Jesus steps into the boat!

3. We should surrender to His wind.

The disciples were tested and tried for three and one half years, and now the command of our Lord is, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Too often we attempt to do the Lord's work without the Lord. We are not designed to serve Him without His power. When David was running for his life from Saul, God gave him this vision: "And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind." (Psalm 18:10; II Samuel 22:11). God came to the rescue on the wings of the wind! The Devil thought he had Jesus. When Christ died on the cross, all Hell may have rejoiced, but the glee was soon over when Jesus rose again from the dead! And then the Devil did not deprive the disciples of Jesus in Christ's death, because once the disciples obeyed the Lord and waited until they were empowered and filled with the Holy Spirit, Christ was now with them until the end of the world and beyond! What did they need do? Surrender to the wind of His Spirit! "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2).

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.