



Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,  
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.  
But with unhurrying chase, 10  
And unperturbèd pace,  
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
They beat—and a Voice beat  
More instant than the Feet—  
'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.'

This last line, 'all things betray thee, who betrayest Me' is especially evident in Jonah's story, for when Jonah is not loyal to God's call and runs away from it, everything goes wrong for him – the storm on the sea and being swallowed by the whale. This can be a signal that God is calling a person. The person tries to do other things, tries to follow a career or a relationship to avoid God's call, and nothing seems to work. God says when he opens a door no one shall close, and when he closes no one shall open. This is often how God directs us in our decisions, an opportunity arises and the door is wide open or vice versa and the door is closed tight. Yet, despite the compelling evidence that God is calling, he does not take away one's freedom. One can simply ignore the invitation and force one's plans through. The most insidious way of resisting God is to assure him that you sincerely want to obey his will whatever it might be, but you insist that his call should be "clear and unambiguous". Jonah's approach of a loud protest to God is better than turning one's back on the call. If you begin to fight God, enumerating all the obvious reasons why you should not become a priest or religious, God will fight you back, and there is usually always a small part of a person's heart that wants to see God win and oneself overcome by God.

Thompson's poem also conveys the persistence of God like a hound chasing the scent of a runaway. We may ask, 'Why do his feet follow after with unhurrying chase, and unperturbed pace?' 'Why does God pursue so ardently?'

Blessed Elizabeth of the Trinity explains that God created us 'in his image and likeness', this was his dream – to be able to contemplate himself in his creature, to be able to see there all his own perfections and all his own beauty beaming forth as through a pure and flawless crystal.

The soul then allows God to reflect himself in her. To delight in us, to find joy in us, to see his dream fulfilled in us: this is what God pursues so fervently. And for some whom God elects to follow him undividedly, God exchanges our earthly mortal dreams for his dreams for us.

We see this marvelous exchange of dreams and aspirations at the beginning of the gospel according to Mark where Jesus calls his first disciples. The story begins with Simon and Andrew, James and John as fishermen, with their dreams of material prosperity and perhaps, as the detail of the hired workers suggests some attainment and enjoyment of wealth already. Then Jesus calls them to himself and we observe that those dreams are put aside as they drop their nets to follow Jesus. Their dreams: to be simple fishermen. God's dream: that they be fishers of men, and have authority to bind and loose in heaven and on earth. Their dream: to be simple Galileans with enough to eat. God's dream: for them to hear, to see, to look upon, and touch with their hands the incarnate God. To be taught the mysteries of God by God himself.

But even after accepting God's plan for their lives, the disciples sometimes failed. As in the case of Jonah, despite their mistakes, God continues to call them. There can be the tendency in those whom God calls to react as Peter did, "Depart from me Lord for I am a sinful man." One may ask, why does God call imperfect men, why does God call me deficient as I am?

The pope offers some helpful words in this regard. On the evening Pope Benedict XVI was elected and greeted the people from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, he said: Dear brothers and sisters, after the great Pope John Paul II, the Cardinals have elected me, a simple, humble labourer in the vineyard of the Lord. The fact that the Lord knows how to work and to act even with insufficient instruments comforts me.

If the Lord calls you be assured that he knows how to bring good from us despite our flaws. God challenges certain men and women: dare to exchange your earthly dreams for God's dreams.