

Joanne Carraway

When the Lion Roars

These many years later and I shudder from the memory! My husband, kids and I had gone to a Burger King for lunch following Sunday church. Since I exited the car first and they were still listening to the radio, I heard "IT" first. That deafening sound was unmistakable as to what "it" was: The authoritative, superlative, inimitable roar of a mature African male lion-- NEARBY! I instinctively jumped back inside the car to save myself and alert my family!

"Lion loose...lion loose...stay in the car!" I shouted. My husband and kids looked at me quizzically and defiantly continued to open the doors of the vehicle!

"Shut those doors!" I commanded. "Didn't y'all hear me? There's a lion loose!"

"Really now, Joanne. This town doesn't even have a zoo," my husband said sarcastically as he disobediently stepped outside the car. His "disobedience" was short-lived, for in about three seconds the king of the jungle let out another reverberating roar. That's when blood flow ceased to David's face and he turned a "whiter shade of pale" as he skillfully catapulted into our vehicle!

He eased the car around the side of Burger King to locate the beast. To our great relief, the magnificent animal was contained in his own viewable, circus boxcar that was next door as a promotional event for a furniture store.

Perhaps it was the unexpectedness of his roar, or the location, or the fact I had never heard one before, but never will I forget it. His roar left me powerless!

In reading Hosea, I was reminded of my "lion" experience. God sent this Old Testament prophet to warn Northern Israel that He was about to judge the nation's sins:

"...for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants...because there is NO TRUTH, NOR MERCY, NOR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD in the land. By SWEARING, and LYING, and KILLING, and STEALING, and COMMITTING ADULTERY, they break out..." (4:1-2)

God specifically told Hosea to tell the people that the instrument of His judgment would be the terrorist empire of Assyria, who would take them captive. Yet, because of His Love for His covenant people, there would be a day of restoration when they would return to Him. In that day, God says He will judge their enemies with His roar and those enemies shall tremble:

"They (God's people) shall walk after the Lord: He shall ROAR LIKE A LION: when He shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west."
(11:10)

Again, in the book of Joel, the majestic roar of "The Lion," superior over all His enemies, is noted:

"The Lord also shall ROAR out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." (3:16)

The Lord Jesus Christ is "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah." Over 2000 years ago, He roared out of Zion and He uttered His voice from Jerusalem in a most unexpected location: Upon a cross on Golgotha's Hill. Such was His roar that day, that the heavens and the earth did shake, just as Joel had predicted. When "He who knew no sin became sin for us," He roared, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The Greek text indicates His outcry was superhuman and could be heard for an incredible distance!

Jesus Christ, our sacrificial Lamb, was also our triumphant, true Lion King! His overcoming "roar" at Calvary meant He had rendered powerless our enemies of sin, death, hell, and the grave!

Have you personally "heard" His unmistakable roar ? It is still reverberating, even now, and will continue for all of time and eternity! Now that's a roar worth remembering!

www.joannecarraway.com