

The Sign of Jonah

“Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to Him, “Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.” He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three day and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Matthew 12:38-42)

Greetings to you in the most precious name, the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! *“While we wait for the blessed hope- the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own; eager to do what is good.” (Titus 2:13-14)* – We would not fail to write to you about the grace that we receive in believing Jesus. Our heart is filled with joy and peace, for we are assured of our destiny, for our name are written in heaven and our place is ready and prepared.

The message brought to you by the Scriptures above is about the confrontation between Jesus and a group who claimed that they know and follow God. They came to Jesus and asked Him to give them a sign so that they will believe in Him. They said, *“Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.”*

Well, Jesus till now have done many miraculous things: He healed the blind and made them see, He opened the mouth of the mute and made them speak, He healed the paralytics and made them walk, He healed the leprous, He calmed the storm and the raging sea, He drove out demons from possessed-people, He raised the dead and brought them back to life again, and many more. Yet after all theses, there are still many people who do not believe that Jesus is from God. They don't believe in Him and still ask for more signs of miracles to see. Hence, really they deserve what Jesus said about them: *“A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign!”* they who would never believe, after all that they heard and saw the miracles and mighty acts of Jesus, they are wicked and adulterous. But still Jesus gave them a sign- the sign of the prophet of Jonah. With this sign, there is profound teaching:

1. ***Jesus was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth:*** Jesus indeed died on the cross. In our behalf He died to pay the penalty of our sins. Jesus died on the cross and was buried in the tomb. He remained in the heart of the earth and then He rose from the dead on the third day to give eternal life to everyone who believe in His name and receive Him as Savior and Lord.
2. ***Jesus is greater than the prophet Jonah:*** Jonah was one of the prophets of God. God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh: *“Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.” (Jonah 1:2)* Jonah at first runs away from God because

Nineveh people are obstinate, and Jonah was unhappy to go to them to warn them to repent. So because of his disobedience the Lord disciplined him. Jonah was thrown from the ship into the sea and was swallowed by a huge fish, and he was inside the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. But from inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord His God, and the Lord commanded the fish and it vomited Jonah out to the dry land. So Jonah went to Nineveh and preached the message of the Lord. Indeed the people of Nineveh called urgently upon God. They gave up their evil ways, they repented from their sins, and the Lord had compassion on them and did not bring the destruction He had threatened.

The people of Nineveh believed to what Jonah had told them though Jonah was just a prophet. Jesus is greater than Jonah; He is not just a prophet. A prophet may sin because prophet is mere man and might fall into sin. But Jesus is without sin because He is a man and God as well. As the Bible declared, *“He is the image of the invisible God.” (Colossians 1:15)* The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law wanted to stone Jesus. *“But Jesus said to them, I have shown you many great miracle from the Father, for which of these do you stone me?” (John 10:32)* *“We are not stoning you for any of these,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.” (John 10:33)*

My dear and beloved: Is there a mere man who can make the dead alive again? Is there a mere man who can calm the raging sea and storm? Who can multiply few fish and bread and feed thousands of people? Who can heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, make the mute to speak, or the paralytic to walk? Jesus has done all these things. No mere man can do all these miracles unless He is the true God. He made the heaven and earth, and then came to the earth that He made to save us.

Jesus gave to the people who do not believe in Him a sign of greater value than the entire miracle He had done. He gave them the sign of Jonah; Jesus proclaimed and He died and stayed in the heart of earth three days and three nights, and then He rose up on the third day. No mere man can say and do this, unless He is God.

My friend, Our prayer fro you after message is, may you will not be stubborn anymore but you will believe in Jesus to be saved; so on the Day of Judgment you will be justified by His blood that was shed on the cross, to free you from sin and to give you life everlasting. We encourage you to pray to God the Father in the name of Jesus: *“Heavenly Father, I come before You in the name of Jesus who died for me on the cross to give me eternal life. Oh Lord, forgive me my sins. Today I surrender everything to You and I open my heart to You, Lord Jesus. You are my Saviour, my Lord and my God, I believe and pray in Jesus’ name, Amen.”*