

Three days and Three nights

Matthew 12.40 “For as Jonah was **three days and three nights** in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**” Jesus speaks in a form of Parable to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. They were demanding to see a miraculous sign from him on the heels of their accusations saying “It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.” Jesus had just restored a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute so that sight and talk was now very much apparent. “Could this be the Son of David?”—the crowd cried in astonishment! The religious leaders were incensed and their minds filled with evil thoughts. Jesus went on to say in Luke 11.29-36 that as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, an evil and corrupt city, so also will be the Son of Man to this generation. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.

Jonah wallered around in the stinking and rotting conditions of a Whale’s “belly of hell” (Jonah 2.2—KJV-BRG). The conditions were deplorable and unimaginable especially since Jonah is the only man to have ever lived inside of a fish and be able to give a written report that has lasted thousands of years! This event had to happen for the people of Nineveh to have opportunity for salvation.

The Psalm of David, 16.10, has been widely known as a prophecy of Jesus’ death. Peter certainly understood the meaning as he preached in Acts 2.31 that “Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.” Later, Peter gained even deeper insight by the Holy Spirit ; “He (Jesus) was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom he (Jesus) went and preached to the spirits in prison (hell)...” 1 Pet 3.18-19.

Jesus suffered hell on earth by enduring the cross and despising it’s shame for you and me. If that wasn’t enough, Jesus then went to the stinking and rotting conditions of hell in the heart of the earth and preached to millions from the days of Noah. Only one man has ever gone to the gates of hell for three days and three nights and been able to give a written report that will last for eternity.

Just like Jonah, the Whale, and Nineveh, **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth** had to happen to Jesus for all people of the world to have opportunity for salvation. Paul explains, Jesus, who descended to the lower earthly regions of hell, is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens to fill the entire universe (Eph 3.10). The people of Nineveh are watching this generation.... The One who arose from the grave on day three and who now sits at the right hand of God is watching this generation....the choice now remains for every soul on earth. Choose Jesus, dear friend, before eternity becomes reality!