

Signs

Luke 11:29-32

Is this a *sign*?

"When the crowds were increasing, he [Jesus] began to say. 'This generation is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, but no sign will be given to it...'" (Luke 11:29)

- An evil generation? How so? Consider how Jesus' opponents explained away his previous miraculous signs: they said his exorcisms were done by the power of the devil, and that his healings on the Sabbath proved that he was a lawbreaker.

"... no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." (Luke 11:29)

- What's this? Well, first, a quick refresher on the Book of Jonah...

Let's now read our entire passage (Luke 11:29-32).

- 'You don't need another sign, nor do you have a right to demand one.'
- Yet you will receive the sign of Jonah. But what exactly is this?
 - The Resurrection, right? "For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." This is correct, but this quote is from Jesus elsewhere (Matt 12:40).
 - But what about our passage in Luke? Here Jesus says something different: "For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation." (Luke 11:30)
 - Jonah *became* a sign! And Jesus *will* be a sign, too.

- But *how* did Jonah become a sign to the people of Nineveh? Two major options:
 - They knew about his miraculous salvation and resurrection from the great fish! Jonah was a walking miracle and they knew it.
 - Jonah was a preacher like they'd never seen or heard before. Fearless. *No one* talked that way in Nineveh!
 - Or perhaps it's both. Maybe the 'resurrection' and preaching mission of Jonah is one giant sign...

"Then he [Jesus] opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.'" (Luke 24:45-47)

- The OT Scriptures predicted three events: (1) The suffering of Christ, (2) the Resurrection of Christ, and (3) the following proclamation to all nations of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
 - *Sound familiar?* The same three events were foreshadowed in Jonah's life: (1) His suffering and 'death', (2) his resurrection from the belly of the fish, and (3) his bold preaching to a foreign nation, resulting in their repentance.

The sign of Jonah! Given to everyone, if only we will receive it.