

# Jonah and Christ

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But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas 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. (*Matthew 12:39-40*)

We have already seen that the Lord Jesus Christ went to heaven (paradise) the moment He died on the cross, and that the thief who believed Him would join Him shortly. So then, what is the meaning of the above verses since the word of God cannot contradict itself?

If we look at the context of the statement, we find that the Jews were seeking a sign. Now, we should understand that signs are physical manifestations that are supposedly used to confirm or deny the truth of something we cannot see. However, as the Scripture makes plain in many other places, signs can be duplicated and mimicked. Signs are not a legitimate means of determining whether or not that God is doing something. Rather, the appropriate means is by use of the instrument of faith.

This explains why the Lord Jesus Christ told them they were an "evil and adulterous generation." However, in keeping with their desire for some physical sign, the Lord did tell them that they would receive the sign of Jonas, or Jonah, which consisted of the Son of man being three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Now, in keeping with the context of the statement, of which

signs are physical, and Jonah's being swallowed by the whale is physical, we should understand that physically, the body of the Lord Jesus would be in the earth three days and three nights.

This is confirmed by many Scriptures which I will not quote as it should not be necessary. Thus, the context of this is strictly physical and contains no spiritual implication, other than declaring that the scribes and Pharisees had no faith.

Now, why is the word "heart" used? Since I do not have access to an unabridged Koine Greek Dictionary, I cannot say for certain. However, I can state that the "definitions" given in both Young's and Strong's (both of whom opposed the Authorized King James Version) are neither complete nor adequate for determining the reason why this particular word was used at this point. I do know that in each and every language the vast majority of words have more than one meaning and it is entirely probable that this is the case with this word as well.

One additional note: It is unreasonable to assume that the Lord Jesus Christ's body somehow sank into the heart of the earth to preach in some physical "holding tank" since the Scriptures do not contain any such fanciful notions. This notion is more like mysticism or fantasy than Scripture.

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