

## Title: A Sign of Jonah

Grant Hill, Garden Gathering, 3/31/24

We know we celebrate a big God. Today is obviously the day we remember the biggest moment in the life of Jesus. He is alive. He is alive. He encouraged us, saying, "Blessed are you that have not seen me, yet you know me." You have not seen Him, yet you still know Him.

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is of Abraham when he is resting under the trees on his property, and he looks up and sees three men walking. He gets up and runs to those three men. He recognizes one of them from afar off, and when he comes, Abraham bows down before Him and says, "My Lord, my Lord, why is it that you have visited me?" It is an interesting passage, because how in the world did Abraham know what God looked like? He either has encountered Him or his spirit man knew Him, or both.

That is what we want. If Jesus was to walk into the room, our desire is that every heart would turn and say, "Jesus is in the room." But, every time that we are gathered here, He is here. He is here. He is in the room. How do I know? Because I know His Spirit. I know His Spirit, because He put His Spirit in me. His Spirit bears witness with Him when somebody speaks with the same Spirit of God. We can say, "Yes, that is of God, because it rings true with me." I am testing the spirit of the prophet, to know whether he is of God or not. Anyone who comes in the spirit of a prophet and does not proclaim that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, is not of the Spirit of God. So, it says in First John, chapter four. This is a Berean principle.

Paul went to Berea and preached the gospel like I am preaching to you. The Bereans made sure that everything Paul said lined up with the scriptures. They went and looked it up. It is called a Berean principle, because they were making sure that what this person was preaching was lining up with the Spirit of God. They did an amazing thing. They did not criticize, doubt, or become cynical. They said, "Okay, he is lining up *with scripture*, and I believe. Their spirit met with faith. That is what it takes. You still have to choose. I can tell you the truth all day, but you have to choose to say, "It is my truth. This is my truth. This is my Savior. This is my Lord. This is my master. This is my life. No longer my own, but Him alone."

### 1 Corinthians 1:17-25 ESV

*"For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God, through wisdom it pleased God through the folly of what we preach, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to Gentiles. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."*

Today, we recognize that the gospel of Jesus is folly to the mind. It is folly to logic. It is folly to the Greek mindset. In the book of Zechariah, it says that, "the sons of Judah will make war against the sons of Greece." That actually has never happened in the natural realm. The Jews have never fought a war with the Greeks. So, what are we talking about? We are talking about

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in the spirit realm, the sons of praise, Judah, will make war and strike the Greek mindset or the logic of the world and your mind. The logic of this is how you do things.

1 Corinthians 1:22 ESV

*“For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles (everyone else).”*

I have talked about this, but it is important that you understand this today. It is important that you understand the power of God in the repentance that comes today, because repentance is changing the way you think. That is what the word means. It means “I was thinking this way, and my thoughts directed my actions *another* way.” “Out of the heart, the mouth speaks.” So, as I am thinking, that is what I am going to do. I will choose to do this. But, if God can say, “Stop thinking that way, repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” You stop thinking the way you are thinking and think this *other* way. That is true repentance. That is the true power of God that He is calling for you today. To stop thinking about yourself, stop thinking about your family, and stop thinking about this nation, the way that you have been thinking. Turn and repent, and think about it this way, which is My way. “My thoughts are not your thoughts and My ways are not your ways.” Turn and think My way. Turn and think My thoughts. That is repentance.

1 Corinthians 1:26-31 ESV

*“For consider your calling, brothers; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of Him, you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”*

You can see yourself in this I hope. You can see how I was foolish. I was weak. I was not of noble birth, but God has used me and He will use me. It is revolutionary. The peasant is now called a king of the Earth. The fatherless now have the best father. The orphans now have the best family in God. The rejected are now accepted all the time and never forsaken. This is us. This is you when you say yes to Jesus. It takes away all of that shame and guilt of. “I grew up with nothing, I am nothing, and I have nothing.” Jesus says, “Yes, I became nothing for you. I became nothing to replace you. I became the worm on the cross, to pay for what you were, so that you can become what I am. The King, the High Priest, the Intercessor, the Prophet, the Teacher, and Evangelist.” The Spirit of Jesus in me is advancing the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now He calls you His ambassadors and to be His government officials on the Earth. Wow, isn't this amazing? This is the gospel of Jesus. This is the gospel of Jesus. It is good news. It is good news. The Jews demanded signs. They believed in God. The Jews believe that they serve the one true God. Yet, when He was bringing new revelation, they wanted a sign to force their heart to believe the new revelation. That God was in front of them, that God was walking, that God was not just on Mount Sinai, and God was not just in the temple. He was in front of them as Jesus in the flesh, and the Word made flesh. They consistently asked Him to show them something, because they did not want to believe what they were seeing. They were consistently challenging the new revelation of Yahweh.

John 2:18-22 ESV

*“So the Jews said to Him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “It has taken us forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” But He was*

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*speaking about the Temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.”*

There is the key. The foolishness of what He said, is the power of God for us who believe. The folly of what Jesus spoke to them was the power of faith for salvation. You see it? Wow. This did happen. Jesus did die. He died on a cross innocent of all sin. But, because He was innocent of all sin, He could then be a sacrificial Lamb. God could put the sins of the world on Him. He could take the payment of blood that was necessary for payment for our sins. Because when you sin, you have to pay with blood. Nobody's blood is pure enough to pay for the full payment of that sin. So, all you have left is death.

But, then One came, His name was Jesus, and He walked on the Earth, innocent and pure. His blood was pure enough to pay for all the sin. Wow! God, His very own Father, came and put the burden of sin on Him and made Him carry it.

We read of a similar thing with Abraham. Abraham put the burden on his own son, to carry it up a mountain. When they got to the top, Isaac asked, “Where is the sacrifice for the for the altar? Where is the lamb or the goat for the sacrifice, father?” Abraham said, “God will provide.” The very moment that Abraham was to strike his own son, and sacrifice him, God called out and said, “Abraham, Abraham, I see your faith and your heart. Look up Abraham!” When he looked up, he saw a ram caught in the thicket. God provided. God will provide.

There was a prophecy that there would be a day when God would have to do what Abraham did and strike His own Son. God did what Abraham was called to do. He struck His own Son on the cross. Right after Jesus cried out, “Why have you forsaken me?” In the moment that happened, the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom with the breaking of God's heart. The Father had to strike His own son, who did not do anything wrong, to pay for people that He wanted to love.

The Son wanted a Bride and the Father paid the price for her with the death of His own Son. But, thanks be to God, when they put Him into the grave, the Earth could not hold Him. The Spirit that was in Jesus, that was put into the ground, could not stay there. The power of the Holy Spirit had to erupt out. The purity of Jesus's blood was necessary for the Earth. But, the purity of the power of the Holy Spirit could not stay. It was like a rocket that bursts through, and it opened up the tomb on Easter Sunday. That is what we celebrate today. He breathes again, and He lives again. It did not just raise Him up as a spirit man, it raised up and quickened His mortal body. It says the very Spirit of God is in you, if you believe, to quicken your mortal bodies. Paul even says, “That I might obtain if possible even in this life, the resurrection of the dead. That before I even die, I would have the glorious body of Jesus Christ. He was going after something that sounds like foolishness to you. But, it is the power of God to those who believe.

Jesus said, “I will destroy this temple and raise it up in three days.” The temple He was talking about was His own body. That explains something, because now He is in this room. But, it first starts off in your room, in your house, and your temple in your body. You are the temple of the living God. It says, “I am the temple of the living God.” That is why the devil attacks the inner parts of you. All sins are done on the outside the body, but sexual sin is done inside, against the temple inside the body. It pollutes and corrupts the inside, to make you feel not worthy of the call of God. It desecrates the temple within you. That is why the devil has been attacking with sexual sin and using it since the beginning. Even against the best men in the Bible, as King David and King Solomon. It attacks them.

Matthew 12:38-41 ESV

*“Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him and said, “Teacher we wish to see a sign from you.” Constantly, the Jews seek signs and the Gentiles seek logic and wisdom. “But, He answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 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. The men of Nineveh will rise up at judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”*

He is in the room. He is in the room. Something greater than Jonah is in the room. Do you know what the whale did? If you don't know the story of Jonah, here is a quick version of it. God told Him to go to a town called Nineveh, with 120,000 people and preach that God was going to judge and condemn you unless you repent and turn, and change the way you are thinking. Stop thinking this way, and think My way. Well, the issue is that Nineveh was the capital of a great empire that was at war with the nation of Israel. They hated Israel. They were not going to listen to a Jewish prophet. So, Jonah ran the other way. He got on a boat. A storm hits the boat. The sailors are very worried and trying to figure out which God is angry at them. They figure out that it is the Jewish prophet in the bottom of the boat. They asked Jonah what should we do. He said, “Throw me overboard.” But, they say, “We cannot kill you, because then your God is going to get even more mad.” They rowed as hard as they could to get the boat out of the storm, but accomplished nothing. Jonah says, “I am telling you, throw me into the water.” So they threw Jonah into the water and he was swallowed by a big fish. The seas became calm, and they made vows and sacrifices that very moment to serve the one true God of Jonah.

Jesus is saying, “I am going to give you a sign, the sign of Jonah. The sign to the Jews is that Jonah was in the water three days and three nights. A whale came and swallowed him up and vomited him out of his mouth, after three days and three nights. The same way, the Earth spit Jesus out. It could not hold Him in. The earthquake happened. The stone sealed the tomb shut. The soldiers were there. The angel was going to meet Him and is seeing Jesus coming up out of the depths. The angel comes down to meet Him, and the Earth shakes and bursts Him out. The sign that the Jews wanted.

Jonah wakes up and he is on dry land. If you read the account, it is more likely that he died. Then in the spirit realm, Jonah is interceding and asking God to raise him out of sheol. In the spirit realm, God preserved his body by allowing a fish to swallow it, so it would not rot for those three days. Then God resurrected Jonah from the dead, which is what the Jews were looking for, a sign of a resurrection from the dead. The whale spit him out and then God let him resurrect from the dead. Jonah then gets up and runs to Nineveh. He is still a Jewish prophet. But, something happened.

Something else happened scholars believe in that the sky went dark in the time of Jonah in a solar eclipse that happened in the city. The Assyrians see a solar eclipse as sign of an impending doom and a collapse of the empire. Here is this Jewish prophet preaching on the side of the roads. He went preaching a day's journey into the city. That is how wide it was. Saying, “The Lord is going to condemn you like Sodom and Gomorrah unless you turn and repent. Stop doing what you are doing.” Then the sky goes dark, and they say, “Who was that prophet that just said that? What does he want us to do?” They turned and repented, and God relented. God relented.

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The story of Jonah is similar to the story of Jesus in that obviously, He has been dead three days and nights, but dead and buried in the Earth and then popped up. But, when Jesus came forth, He brought a gospel of repentance, *with* the steadfast love and mercy of God. He does not set us free to condemn us and put us into more bondage. He sets us free to be free. There are no stipulations on the freedom that Jesus gives you. He believes that if you knew how much He loved you, you would always love Him. Jesus believes that if you knew how much He paid for your sin, you would follow Him all the days of your life. You would not have to be dragged through religion. You would not have to be dragged to the word. You would not have to be dragged to sit here. He believes, that if you really knew Him and saw Him face to face, you would say, "Wow, God, I am never going to leave you. I gave you my yes, because I wanted to and I love you, because you have loved me first."

What is amazing is that we do not really know what happened to Jonah after this incident. We do not know. In the same way that Jesus, after He rose from the dead, preached this gospel. We are now in the age of the Gentiles, as it says in Matthew and Luke. The Jews do not see it. We do not know if the Jews saw Jonah after he went to Nineveh and preached this gospel of repentance and the people turned and repented. In the same way, Jesus rose from the dead and those who believed, saw Him for those forty days. They preached that gospel, and those who heard were "cut to the heart," it says in Acts chapter two. But, besides that, they do not see Him. The Jews do not see Jesus. Wow, "not a sign will be given to you, but the sign of Jonah, and something greater than Jonah is here."

In this moment over our nation, He is calling us to this time. He is giving us our own sign of Jonah. He really is. On April 8, we will have a solar eclipse that will hit the United States. I have these slides up here. As you see, the solar eclipse will be in the constellation Pisces, the fish. We know that the sun moves in constellations, and there is a lot of evil that goes with astrology and zodiacs. I am not talking about that. But, God says in Genesis that He gives us these signs. He gives us the sun, the moon, and the stars for signs. When He comes over a nation and marks it with a solar eclipse, the shadow marks and curves over nations to look up and to look out from where you are. Where you are looking insular, look up. Look up from what you are doing, and wake up. That is what happened to Nineveh. There is a preacher who is preaching, "repent," and then the sky goes dark. The sky goes dark and they can hear God all of a sudden.

The same thing is happening to America. April 8, there will be a solar eclipse, that will hit Eagle Pass, Texas first. It will go through Mexico and it will go dark in Eagle Pass, Texas first, and strike through the middle of Texas as it makes its way up to Maine. The eclipsed sun will be on the elliptical of Pisces, the biggest constellation that would be recognized as "a fish in the sky." The god of Nineveh was the fish god, Dagon. The constellation right below Pisces is the constellation Cetus which is a whale. The sign of Jonah.

Jupiter will be the biggest planet that we can see to the left of the constellation. Jupiter will be within the constellation Aries which is a ram. Jupiter gets its name because it has always been recognized by civilizations as the "King" star. Jupiter is the biggest planet in the solar system. We have always recognized that it is the biggest and brightest star and it moves. It has been called the King star for years. The King star is where the ram is in the sky. The day that there is a sign of Jonah, the same god as Dagon the fish, that the Ninevites worshipped *appears* and right below it is a whale, Cetus.

So, "repent, come out of what you are doing America and come to the Lord. Go to the King. Get out of the fish, and get out of idolatry of yourself. Get out of your ways, and go to the King. Go to the Ram who was slain. Go to the Ram who was slain, America. It is the sign of Jonah.

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I will spit you out and revive you again. America is sinking sand. America is sinking. Below is a whale that can rescue us. It is the Holy Spirit that can raise you up again." This was quoted as we talked about this on Wednesday. "America cannot live without the Church. The Church will go on without America." If America were to crumble and fall, the Church will still be here. We are everlasting. The blessing is forever. It does not matter what government we live in. The Church will still go on. But, if America is to survive from this point forward, it has to have the Church to be what it is, and what it has been called to be, and has been asked to be since the Constitution and since the Declaration of Independence. God has given this nation a sign right after Easter. The sign of Jonah. Only the One who was raised from the dead can pull us out of it. Amen

Jonah 4:1-2 ESV

*"But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry." What was he upset about? That God forgave them, and that God relented. God did not destroy them. There will be a lot of countries mad at us if God pulls us out of this. This Jewish prophet was one of them. He is saying. "God, I knew you would do this. I knew you would forgive them." We need that mercy from God. How do we know that?*

*"O Lord, is this not what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and relenting from disaster."*

He says, *"Nineveh is still around because of you."* Yes, God forgives. You have to see America right now as Nineveh. That solar eclipse will go over seven towns named Nineveh in the United States in the two hours and thirty minutes that it passes over. God is calling on America to see us as Nineveh. That eclipse is in their god and their idol god Pisces. Go to the King, the ram who was slain, and be saved.

Stand up and let's praise the Lord for what He has done. Thank you God for what you have done. What a blessing and what a miracle. You are the miracle working God. You have shown us this great mercy, God. So Lord, we ask for mercy. You are the God who relents from disaster. You have relented from our disaster. You have not judged us according to our sins, but you have given us grace and mercy and loving kindness. We seek your face, Lord. We thank you for the sign of Jonah here over our land. "No sign will be given to you, but the sign of Jonah." It is foolishness to those who think that was folly or what a goofy preacher. But, it is power to those who *receive* the gospel of salvation. It is the power of God to hear the Spirit. We honor it. In Jesus's name we pray, amen.