

WEEK 8 — OUTLINE

The Greater Jonah

Scripture Reading: [Jonah 1:1-2, 17](#); [2:10](#); [3:2](#); [4:11](#); [Matt. 12:38-41](#)

DAY 1 »

I. As a prophet, Jonah is a type of Christ, the greater Jonah, in His death, burial, and resurrection [Jonah 1:17](#); [2:10](#); [Matt. 12:38-41](#)):

- A. Through His death on the cross Christ nullified death and destroyed the devil, who has the might of death [2 Tim. 1:10](#); [Heb. 2:14](#)):
1. Christ nullified death, bringing it to naught, doing away with it, abolishing it, annulling it ([2 Tim. 1:10](#)).
 2. In [Genesis 3:15](#) God promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent; in the fullness of the time the Son of God came to become flesh by being born of a virgin so that on the cross He might destroy the devil, bringing him to naught ([Rom. 8:3](#); [Gal. 4:4](#); [John 3:14](#); [12:31](#)).

« DAY 2 »

3. In His work on the cross Christ caused the rulers and the authorities to be stripped off, to be made a display of openly, and to be triumphed over in the cross by God [Col. 2:15](#)).
4. [Matthew 27:51-53](#) describes the effectiveness of the Lord's devil-destroying crucifixion:
 - a. "The veil of the temple was split in two from top to bottom" ([v. 51a](#)); this signifies that the separation between God and man has been abolished because the flesh of sin (the flesh being signified by the veil) taken by Christ in its likeness ([Rom. 8:3](#)) has been crucified ([Heb. 10:20](#)).
 - b. "The earth was shaken" ([Matt. 27:51b](#)); this signifies that the base of Satan's rebellion was shaken.
 - c. "The rocks were split" ([v. 51c](#)); this signifies that the strongholds of Satan's earthly kingdom were broken.
 - d. "The tombs were opened" ([v. 52a](#)); this signifies that the power of death and Hades was conquered and subdued.

e. “Many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised” (v. 52b); this signifies the releasing power of the death of Christ.

B. After Christ was buried, He went in the Spirit as His divinity to the spirits in prison (the rebellious angels) to proclaim God’s victory, through His incarnation in Christ and Christ’s death in the flesh, over Satan’s scheme to derange the divine plan [1 Pet. 3:18-19](#); [Matt. 12:40](#); [Eph. 4:9](#)):

1. While the Lord Jesus was being put to death in the flesh, His Spirit as His divinity was made alive, enlivened, with new power of life, so that in this empowered Spirit He made proclamation to the fallen angels after His death and before His resurrection [1 Pet. 3:18-19](#)).
2. Christ proclaimed the victory achieved by God, that is, that through Christ’s death on the cross God destroyed Satan and his power of darkness ([John 12:31](#); [Col. 2:15](#); [Heb. 2:14](#)).

« DAY 3 »

C. The resurrected Christ is the living One; He is “living forever and ever” and has “the keys of death and of Hades” [Rev. 1:18](#)):

1. The Lord Jesus entered into death, but death could not hold Him, because He is the resurrection; Christ died, but in resurrection He, the living One, will exist forever and ever [Acts 2:24](#); [John 11:25](#)).
2. Christ’s resurrection was His victory over death, Satan, Hades, and the grave, and the keys of death and of Hades are now in His hand; death is subject to Him, and Hades is under His control ([Rev. 1:18](#)).
3. In the church life today we are no longer subject to death and Hades, for Christ nullified death on the cross and overcame Hades in His resurrection ([2 Tim. 1:10](#); [Acts 2:24](#)).

« DAY 4 & DAY 5 »

D. The unique sign given by God is “the sign of Jonah the prophet”—the sign of the crucified and resurrected Christ [Matt. 12:38-41](#)):

1. After the prophet Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days, he came out to become a sign to that generation for repentance ([Jonah 1:2, 17](#); [3:2-10](#)).
2. Jonah is a type of Christ, who would turn from Israel to the Gentiles and who would be buried in the heart of the earth for

three days and three nights and then be resurrected, becoming a sign to this generation for salvation [Matt. 12:40-41](#)).

3. As the One greater than Jonah, Christ in resurrection is the unique sign for today ([vv. 38-41](#)).

II. Jonah is a type of Christ announcing the gospel of peace [Jonah 1:1-2; 3:2](#)):

- A. In Hebrew the name Jonah means “dove,” indicating that God wanted Jonah to go out like a dove to preach the gospel of peace; thus, Jonah typifies Christ preaching the gospel of peace to the Gentiles [Matt. 12:41](#)).
- B. Christ Himself is peace, on the cross Christ made peace, and in resurrection Christ came to announce peace as the gospel [Eph. 2:13-17](#)).

« DAY 6 »

- C. Christ came forth from Hades in resurrection, and in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit for the preaching, the spreading, of the gospel to all the Gentile nations, as seen in the book of Acts [2:27a; Eph. 4:9; 1 Cor. 15:45b](#)).
- D. In His resurrection Christ, as the greater Jonah, prepared and charged His disciples to preach the gospel and disciple the nations for His propagation so that the church may be produced ([Matt. 28:18-19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48](#)).

III. The book of Jonah indicates particularly that God is not the God only of a certain people; He is the God of all peoples [1:2; 4:11; Rom. 3:29](#)):

- A. The Jews thought that they were the unique people of God; they considered themselves the firstborn son with the right to be the first to enjoy all that is of God ([Exo. 4:22; Luke 15:11-32](#)).
- B. Because the Jews responded to God wrongly, the Gentiles, not the Jews, became the first to enjoy God in His salvation [Matt. 21:18-32; Acts 13:45-48; Rom. 11:11, 17, 25](#)).
- C. The book of Jonah indicates that while God was angry with Assyria, He would still be gracious and compassionate toward a great and sinful city such as Nineveh ([1:1-2; 4:11](#)).
- D. God’s economy is to do things through Israel, His suffering people, and the nations, the consuming “locusts” [Joel 1:4](#)), to extend His salvation to all the peoples on earth ([Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8; John 3:16; Rev. 22:17](#)).

<< WEEK 8 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Heb. Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He **2:14** also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil.

2 Tim. ...Our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life **1:10** and incorruption to light through the gospel.

In **Matthew 12:38-41** Christ is unveiled as the One greater than Jonah. When the scribes and Pharisees asked for a sign, the Lord Jesus said that no sign would be given “except the sign of Jonah the prophet”**v. 39**). As a prophet, Jonah is a type of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, p. 2799)

Today's Reading

Since the Lord destroyed the devil, who has the might of death, we who were held in slavery through the fear of death have been released by Him. Death reigned over us (**Rom. 5:14**), and we were under its slavery, continually fearing death. Since the Lord destroyed the devil and nullified death **2 Tim. 1:10**, we now have no more fear of death and are released from its slavery. **Heb. 2:15**, footnote 1)

Due to the sin of Adam, the head of the old creation, everything is under death. In His work on the cross Christ tasted this death, a death on behalf of everything. This is the reason we say that Christ's death was an all-inclusive death....In **2 Timothy 1:10** Paul tells us that through His work in His death Christ nullified death. The Greek word translated “nullified” also means make of none effect, bring to naught, do away with, abolish, annul, discard. Through His devil-destroying death, Christ nullified death, making it of none effect. To nullify death does not mean to remove death but to make it of no effect. Death

will not be removed until it is cast into the lake of fire after the millennium ([Rev. 20:14](#)). Death will be the last enemy destroyed by the Lord [1 Cor. 15:26](#)). Although death has not yet been removed, it is nonetheless a fact that it has been nullified through Christ's death on the cross. *The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 773-774)

The seed of the woman is the incarnated Jesus Christ, who as the very God was born of the virgin Mary to be a man, as prophesied in [Isaiah 7:14](#), fulfilled in [Matthew 1:23](#), and confirmed in [Galatians 4:4](#). Thus, the promise here indicates that God Himself would come to be a human seed to bruise the head of the damaging serpent. Ultimately, the seed of the woman is enlarged to include the overcoming believers, the stronger part of God's people, signified by the man-child in [Revelation 12:5](#) (see footnote 2 there). The man-child, the corporate seed of the woman, includes the Lord Jesus, the individual seed of the woman. [Psalm 2:8-9](#), [Revelation 2:26-27](#), and [Revelation 12:5](#) indicate that the Lord Jesus as God's Anointed, the overcomers in the churches, and the man-child will rule the nations with an iron rod, thus proving that the Lord Jesus, the overcomers, and the man-child are one. The Lord as the leading Overcomer ([Rev. 3:21](#)) is the Head, center, reality, life, and nature of the man-child, and the man-child as the following overcomers is the Lord's Body. ([Gen. 3:15](#), footnote 3)

The bruising of the serpent's head by the seed of the woman is the destroying of Satan, the one who has the might of death, by the Lord Jesus through His death on the cross ([Heb. 2:14](#) and footnote; [1 John 3:8](#)). While the Lord was destroying the serpent on the cross, the serpent bruised His heel, that is, wounded Him by nailing His feet to the cross [Psa. 22:16](#)).

Through the Lord's death on the cross, Satan, the old serpent, was judged, cast out ([John 12:31](#); [16:11](#)). That judgment will ultimately be carried out by the overcomers as the man-child, the corporate seed of the woman [Rev. 12:9](#) and footnote 1). ([Gen. 3:15](#), footnote 4)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 270; *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 19-20

<< WEEK 8 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

**Col. Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display
2:15 of them openly, triumphing over them in it.**

**1 Pet. For Christ also has suffered once for sins...on the one hand
3:18-19 being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in
the Spirit; in which also He went and proclaimed to the spirits
in prison.**

[In [Colossians 2:15](#)] we see that in His work on the cross Christ caused the rulers and authorities to be stripped off, to be made a display of openly, and to be triumphed over in the cross by God. The rulers and authorities spoken of in this verse are the angelic rulers and authorities. The Greek word for “stripping off” can also be rendered “putting off.” The Greek word for “make a display” means show or exhibit in the sense of putting to an open shame. God openly shamed the evil angelic rulers and authorities on the cross and triumphed over them in it. *The Conclusion of the New Testament*, p. 774)

Today's Reading

[[Matthew 27:51-56](#)] reveals the effect of Christ's crucifixion. [Verse 51](#) says, “And behold, the veil of the temple was split in two from top to bottom.” This signifies that the separation between God and man was abolished, because the flesh (signified by the veil) of sin taken by Christ [Rom. 8:3](#)) had been crucified ([Heb. 10:20](#)). The words “from top to bottom” indicate that the rending of the veil was God's doing from above. Because sin had been judged and the flesh of sin had been crucified, the separation between God and man was taken away. Now the way to enter into the presence of God is open for us. What a wonderful effect of the Lord's death! His death was not martyrdom; it was an act of redemption....[Matthew 27:51](#) also says that “the earth was shaken and the rocks

were split.” The shaking of the earth signifies that the base of Satan’s rebellion has been shaken, and the splitting of the rocks signifies that the strongholds of Satan’s earthly kingdom have been broken. Hallelujah, the Lord’s death tore the veil, shook the base of Satan’s rebellion, and broke the strongholds of Satan’s kingdom! What a death! Praise the Lord for His death! Because God’s righteousness was fully satisfied, Christ’s death could be so effective.. [Verses 52 and 53](#) say, “And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And they came out of the tombs after His resurrection and entered into the holy city and appeared to many.” The opening of the tombs signifies that the power of death and Hades has been conquered and subdued, and the raising of the bodies of the saints signifies the releasing power of the death of Christ. (*Life-study of Matthew*, pp. 812-813)

[*The Spirit* in [1 Peter 3:18](#) refers] not [to] the Holy Spirit, but [to] the Spirit [as the essence of Christ’s divinity ([Rom. 1:4](#); cf. [John 4:24a](#))]....The crucifixion only put Christ to death in His flesh, which He received through His incarnation ([John 1:14](#)), not in His Spirit [as His divinity]. His Spirit did not die at the cross when His flesh did. His Spirit was rather made alive, enlivened, with new power of life, so that in this empowered Spirit He made a proclamation to the fallen angels after His death in the flesh and before His resurrection.

After His death in the flesh, Christ in His living Spirit went (probably to the abyss—[Rom. 10:7](#)) to these rebellious angels to proclaim, perhaps, God’s victory through His incarnation in Christ and Christ’s death in the flesh, over Satan’s scheme to derange the divine plan.

Christ did not preach the gospel to the spirits in prison; He made a proclamation to them. He proclaimed to those rebellious angels God’s victory over Satan through Christ’s incarnation and death. At that time, Christ had not yet been resurrected. It was after His death that He went to that particular place, in His empowered Spirit, to proclaim Christ’s victory. Perhaps He said, “You angels followed Satan to rebel against God. But through My incarnation and death, your leader, Satan, has been conquered.” This proclamation is a shame to Satan and his followers, but it is a glory to God. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 217-219)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 72; *Life-study of 1 Peter*, msg. 24

<< WEEK 8 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since **2:24** it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

Rev. And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living **1:18** forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

In [Revelation 1:18](#) we see that the Lord is “the living One,” the One who “became dead” and who is “living forever and ever.” The Lord suffered death and lived again. He entered into death, but death could not hold Him ([Acts 2:24](#)), because He is the resurrection ([John 11:25](#)). Christ died, but in resurrection He will live forever. Resurrection is the lengthening of the Lord’s days. He will exist forever and ever in His resurrection. Jesus Christ today is the living One, the One who is in resurrection. For Christ to dispense life, He must be the living One since a dead person can never dispense life to others.

The importance of His being the living One is that He is living in us. He is living forever and is living in us. *The Conclusion of the New Testament*, p. 4153)

Today’s Reading

[The Lord] wants us to leave every kind of death and rise up to be the living church. The living One within us can never be dead. His church should be neither dead nor deadened; instead, His church must be living all the time. We must learn to enjoy Christ as the living One. His living forever is His testimony, for the testimony of Jesus is always related to the matter of being living. If a local church is not living, it will not have the testimony of Jesus. The more living we are, the more we are the testimony of the living Jesus.

We have a living Christ who has overcome death. Our Christ, who is the

resurrected One, is living in us and among us. He is living forever and ever. What a living Christ we have in the recovery! In the recovery all the churches should be as living as Christ, full of life and overcoming death.

In [Revelation 1:18](#) the Lord also says, “I have the keys of death and of Hades.” Due to the fall and sin of man, death came in and is now working on earth to gather up all the sinful people into Hades. Death resembles a dustpan used to collect the dust from the floor, and Hades resembles a trash can. Whatever the dustpan collects is put into the trash can. Thus, death is a collector, and Hades is a keeper. In the church life today we are no longer subject to death and Hades, for Christ abolished death on the cross and overcame Hades in His resurrection. Although Hades tried its best to hold Him, it was powerless to do it ([Acts 2:24](#)). With Him, death has no sting and Hades has no power. We must be the same as Christ. In the church life the keys of death and Hades are in His hand. It is impossible for us to deal with death; we simply do not have the ability to handle it. Whenever death enters, it will deaden many. But as long as we give the Lord Jesus the ground, the opportunity, and the free way to move and act among us, both death and Hades will be under His control. However, whenever the Lord Jesus does not have the ground in the church, death immediately becomes prevailing and Hades becomes powerful to hold the dead ones. We should praise the Lord that Christ has the keys of death and of Hades. Death is subject to Him, and Hades is under His control.

Christ’s resurrection was also His victory over death, Satan, Hades, and the grave ([2:24](#))....Christ, the Son of Man, was not only vindicated by God and was proved to be a success in His achievements, but He was victorious over death, Satan, Hades, and the grave, all of which are a great concern and trouble to us. The Son of Man overcame death and destroyed Satan ([Heb. 2:14](#)). The keys of death and of Hades are now in His hand ([Rev. 1:18](#)), and He is victorious over the grave. Such a Christ is walking in the midst of all the local churches in His recovery, taking care of them as the golden lampstands. *The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 4153-4156)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 364, 407

<< WEEK 8 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 12:39 But He answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

41 Ninevite men will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something more than Jonah is here.

Because the Pharisees could not argue with the Lord Jesus, they changed the subject seemingly from the negative side to the positive side. [Matthew 12:38](#) says, “Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” Because they could not defeat the Lord Jesus by arguing, to save face they changed the subject from one thing to another; they asked the Lord for a sign. This was a subtle proposal. A sign is a miracle with some spiritual significance. The Jews always seek for signs ([1 Cor. 1:22](#)). Once again this gave the Lord the opportunity to reveal to the whole universe something further concerning Himself. (*Life-study of Matthew*, p. 417)

Today's Reading

If you had been one of those Pharisees, would you not have been bothered by the Lord's reply [in [Matthew 12:39](#)]? The Pharisees seemed to be saying, “We want you to show us a sign, and you call us an evil and adulterous generation. Before this, you called us a brood of vipers. We recognize that you are a good teacher. Teacher, show us a sign. Show us a miracle with some significance.” The Lord Jesus seemed to say, “Yes, you will see a sign. Although you are not an honest generation nor a pure generation, but an evil and adulterous generation, there is a sign for you—the sign of Jonah.”

The Lord Jesus proceeded to tell them the significance of the sign of Jonah.

In [verse 40](#) He said, “For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.” This was to be a very meaningful sign to them. “The heart of the earth” is called the lower parts of the earth ([Eph. 4:9](#)) and Hades ([Acts 2:27](#)), where the Lord went after His death. Hades, equal to Sheol in the Old Testament, has two sections: the section of torment and the section of comfort ([Luke 16:23-26](#)). The section of comfort is paradise, where the Lord went with the saved thief after they died ([Luke 23:43](#)). Hence, the heart of the earth, the lower parts of the earth, Hades, and paradise are synonymous terms, referring to the one place where the Lord stayed for three days and three nights after His death and before His resurrection.

In [Matthew 12:41](#) the Lord continued, “Ninevite men will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something more than Jonah is here.” The Greek word rendered *more* in [verses 41 and 42](#) is *pleion*, meaning better in quality and larger in quantity; hence, more. It differs from *meizon*, the word for *greater* in [verse 6](#), which means greater in external size or measure....[Christ was] buried in the heart of the earth for three days and then [He] resurrected, becoming a sign to this generation for salvation.

In [verse 41](#) the Lord seemed to be saying, “The Ninevites repented because of the sign of Jonah. Yet you, an evil and adulterous generation, which will see such a sign as that of the Son of Man buried in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights, will not repent.” The Lord’s word in [verses 40 and 41](#) was not an ordinary word; it was a prediction. Before the Lord was buried in the heart of the earth, He prophesied in this way, telling the Pharisees that He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. I believe that the Lord Jesus told them this in His mercy. He seemed to say, “I give you a prediction of My death and burial. This shall be a sign to you, just as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites that caused them all to repent. I predict this now so that when you see it, you may repent.” *Life-study of Matthew*, pp. 417-419)

Further Reading: Life-study of Matthew, msg. 34; *Christ versus Religion*, ch. 3

<< WEEK 8 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace.

17 And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near.

[In [Matthew 12](#)] the religious people came to the Lord Jesus asking for a sign, a miracle. They wanted Him to perform a miracle to prove that He was of God. He answered them in this way: “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet” ([12:39](#)). Jonah was a prophet who spent three days and three nights buried within a great fish in the waters of death. After three days he came out. This was a type of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus indicated to the religious people that their generation would see no sign except the unique sign of the crucified and resurrected Christ....The sign that is needed today is not a wonder or a miracle; it is the sign of a crucified and resurrected person. (*The Kingdom*, p. 227)

Today's Reading

As the One greater than Jonah, Christ preaches glad tidings to the nations....[In [Matthew 12:41](#)] we see that Christ, as the Prophet sent by God to His people ([Deut. 18:15, 18](#)), is greater than Jonah the prophet. Jonah turned from Israel to the Gentiles and was put into the belly of the great fish. After he had remained there for three days and three nights, he came out to be a sign to that generation for repentance ([Jonah 1:2, 17; 3:2-10](#)). This was a type of Christ, who would turn from Israel to the Gentiles....As the One greater than Jonah, Christ in resurrection is the unique sign for today. *The Conclusion of*

the New Testament, p. 2800)

Among the books of the Minor Prophets, Jonah stands alone..[Jonah 1:1-2](#) is the introductory word to this book....Jonah in Hebrew means “dove” [v. 1](#)). This signifies that God wanted Jonah to go out as a dove to preach the gospel of peace.

The central thought of the book of Jonah is that God cared for and saved even the most evil Gentiles in His pity on men and cattle....In the book of Jonah, the revelation concerning Christ is in Jonah’s being a type of Christ....Christ is revealed in Jonah’s typifying Christ preaching the gospel of peace to the Gentiles ([3:2](#); [Matt. 12:41](#)). Jonah was a prophet who turned from Israel to the Gentiles. In this he was a type of Christ, who turned from Israel to the Gentiles ([Luke 4:25-27](#); [Matt. 21:43](#)). (*Life-study of Jonah*, pp. 1-2)

Speaking of Christ, [\[Ephesians\] 2:14](#) says, “He Himself is our peace.” The word *our* refers to both Jewish and Gentile believers. Through the blood of Christ we have been brought near both to God and to God’s people. Christ, who has accomplished full redemption for both Jewish and Gentile believers, is Himself our peace, our harmony, in that He made both one. Due to the fall of mankind and the call of the chosen race, there was a separation between Israel and the Gentiles. Through Christ’s redemption, this separation has been removed. Now the two are one in the redeeming Christ, who is the bond of oneness.

At present, there is still a separation between Israel and the rest of mankind. But according to God’s economy, this separation has already been removed. In the eyes of God, it was taken away by the redemption of Christ on the cross. Now the Christ who has removed this separation is the bond of peace between Israel and the Gentiles. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, p. 197)

God created man as a collective entity ([Gen. 1:26](#)). The corporate man created by God was damaged through man’s fall; hence, there was the need for God to produce a new man. This was accomplished through Christ’s abolishing in His flesh the ordinances and through His creating of the new man in Himself....By Christ’s abolishing in His flesh the separating ordinances, that is, His slaying the enmity, and by His creating the Jewish and the Gentile believers into one new man, peace was made between all believers. [Eph. 2:15](#), footnotes 8 and 9)

Further Reading: The Kingdom, ch. 23: *Life-study of Ephesians*, msgs. 22-24

<< WEEK 8 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

Jonah And I, should I not have pity on Nineveh, the great city, in
4:11 which are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people
who cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and
many cattle?

Acts ...You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea
1:8 and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Christ is revealed also in the type of Jonah's staying in the great fish three days and three nights (**Jonah 1:17**). This typifies Christ's staying in the heart of the earth three days and three nights (**Matt. 12:40**). Christ died and entered into the heart of the earth. He came forth from there in resurrection, and in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit (**1 Cor. 15:45b**) for the preaching, the spreading, of the gospel to all the Gentile nations, as seen in the book of Acts.

As we have pointed out, Jonah here was a type of Christ, who was sent by God to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, with Jonah's staying in the great fish three days and three nights typifying Christ's staying in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. (*Life-study of Jonah*, pp. 2-3)

Today's Reading

In His work in His resurrection Christ prepared and charged the disciples to preach the gospel and disciple the nations for His propagation that the church may be produced. **Luke 24:44 and 45** say, "...All the things written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and Psalms concerning Me must be fulfilled...." The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms are the three sections of the entire Old Testament, that is, all the Scriptures (**v. 27**). The Lord's word here unveils that the entire Old Testament was a revelation of Him and that He was its center and

content. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, p. 804)

In [Jonah 4:11](#) we see God's pity on the most evil city of the Gentiles; He cared even for their cattle. Nineveh was built by the evil man Nimrod in Assyria ([Gen. 10:8-11](#)). Assyria was the country that invaded and insulted Israel about 713 B.C. ([Isa. 36](#)), after the time of Jonah. God had pity on such an evil city.

In [Matthew 12:40](#) the Lord Jesus told the Pharisees, a group of "Jonahs," that He would be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights, just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, for the extending of God's salvation from the Jews to the Gentiles. This indicates that God is not only the God of the Jews but also the God of all the nations. The Jews thought that they were the unique people of God. They considered themselves the firstborn son ([Luke 15:25-32](#)) with the right to be the first to enjoy all that is of God. But because the Jews responded to God wrongly, the Gentiles, not the Jews, became the first to enjoy God in His salvation.

The book of Jonah indicates particularly that God...is the God of all peoples. After Christ's resurrection and ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in [Acts 13](#) God told Paul and Barnabas to go to the Gentiles ([vv. 46-47](#)). They were not like Jonah; rather, they took God's commission and went and preached the gospel throughout Asia Minor. Then the Spirit led them to go from Asia to Europe, to Macedonia ([16:6-10](#)). The book of Jonah shows us that while God was angry with Assyria, He would still be gracious and compassionate toward a great and sinful city such as Nineveh. This indicates that God's economy is to do things through these two factors—the consuming factor and the suffering factor—to extend His salvation to all the peoples on earth.

God's economy to manifest Christ implies the extending of His salvation in Christ to reach even the distant, great, evil cities of the Gentiles. I consider Russia as today's Nineveh. What we are doing in Russia is altogether under the span of God's economy. I believe that we will receive much blessing because this is according to God's economy. Thus, the consuming locusts are still consuming, the suffering Israel is still suffering, and the Lord is still going on in His recovery. (*Life-study of Jonah*, pp. 6-7)

Further Reading: Life-study of Jonah, msg. 1; *The Conclusion of the New Testament*, msg. 74

<< WEEK 8 — HYMN

Hymns, #62

- 1 Dear Lord Jesus, we adore Thee,
“Seed of woman” Thou became;
Of the virgin wast begotten,
Called e’en with a human name.
Taking thus the human nature,
Thou as man the serpent trod;
By the Cross his head Thou bruised
And fulfilled the plan of God.

Lord, we see Thy glory,
Shown in human beauty,
Full of splendor, manifested
In humanity.
- 2 As a man, by incarnation,
Flesh and blood didst Thou partake
To destroy the devil, Satan,
In our stead and for our sake.
With the name of Jesus given
And Emmanuel callèd too,
Thou becam’st our precious Savior,
Bringing us salvation true.
- 3 Thou, “Last Adam” wast entitled,
And wast called the “second man”,
Head of all the new creation,
Better than the first man.
On this earth in life and conduct
Thou indeed wast Son of man;
Now in heaven with this nature
Thou dost still appear as man.
- 4 In the time which God appointed
Thou wilt come, dear Lord, again,
With the glory of the Father,
Still appearing as a man.
Even on the throne of judgment
Son of man Thou still wilt be;
And with this, our human nature,
Thou forevermore wilt be.