

Luke 11:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

Analysis

For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation (καθὼς γὰρ ἐγένετο Ἰωνᾶς τοῖς Νινευίταις σημεῖον, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου)—the comparative structure establishes typological correspondence between Jonah and Jesus. Jonah became a *sēmeion* (sign) to Nineveh through his three-day entombment in the fish followed by emergence to proclaim judgment. Jesus identifies as **the Son of man** (Daniel 7:13-14). The 'sign' isn't another miracle but Jesus's death, burial, resurrection—ultimate validation of messianic identity.

Matthew's parallel explicitly states '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 12:40). Yet this 'evil generation' will reject even resurrection testimony.

Historical Context

The book of Jonah was well-known in Second Temple Judaism, often interpreted as depicting God's mercy toward Gentile repentance. Jesus's use of Jonah as a type prefiguring himself would shock his audience—comparing himself to the reluctant, rebellious prophet while commending Gentile Ninevites. This foreshadows the gospel going to Gentiles when Israel largely rejects it.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the 'sign of Jonah' (death and resurrection) surpass all other miracles as validation of Christ's identity?
2. What does Jesus's choice of a Gentile city (Nineveh) as an example of repentance reveal about Israel's unbelief?
3. Why might the greatest sign (resurrection) still fail to convince those determined not to believe?

Interlinear Text

καθὼς	γὰρ	ἐγένετο	Ἰωνᾶς	σημεῖον	τοῖς	Νινευίταις		
as	For	was	Jonas	a sign	G3588	unto the Ninevites		
G2531	G1063	G1096	G2495	G4592		G3536		
οὕτως	ἔσται	καὶ	ὁ	υἱὸς	τοῦ	ἀνθρώπου	τῇ	γενεᾷ
so	be	also	G3588	the Son	G3588	of man	G3588	generation
G3779	G2071	G2532		G5207		G444		G1074
ταύτη								
G3778								

Additional Cross-References

Jonah 1:17 (Parallel theme): Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.