

Luke 11:29-32

²⁹ As the crowds were increasing, Jesus said, “This is a wicked generation. It demands a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah. ³⁰ For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation.

³¹ The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and now One greater than Solomon is here. ³² The men of Nineveh will stand at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now One greater than Jonah is here.

Berean Study Bible

1

Sign to Salvation. Luke 11:29-32

Do you want a sign? 11:29-30

A sign demanded. 29 “demands a sign”

A sign granted. 30 “Son of Man... a sign”

Can you handle a sign? 11:31-32

Escape judgement with wisdom. 31 “judgement... wisdom”

Escape judgement with repentance. 32 “judgement... repented”

2

Read the signs! Luke 11:29-32

Sign: Danger ahead. 11:29-32

Warning: wrong sign. 29 “wicked... demands a sign”

Welcome: right sign. 30 “Son of Man will be a sign”

Sign: Delight ahead. 11:31-32

Turn to Jesus for wisdom. 31 “judgment... condemn... wisdom”

Turn to Jesus in repentance. 32 “judgment... condemn... repented”

3

Call the next witness. Luke 11:29-32

Bring in the evidence. 11:29-30

Guilty of ignoring commands. 29 “demands a sign”

Guilty by ignoring facts. 30 "Son of Man will be a sign"

Bring in the witness. 11:31-32

Guilty of rejecting wisdom. 31 "wisdom"

Guilty of rejecting repentance. 32 "repented"

4

How to create problems for yourself. Luke 11:29-32

Problems I start with. 11:29-30

Problem of innate sin. 29a "wicked"

Problem of false expectations. 29b "demands"

Problems I stay with. 11:31-32

Problem of smart instead of wise. 31 "wisdom"

Problem of knowing but not doing. 32 "repented"

5

Get off the downward spiral. Luke 11:29-32

Recognise the downward signs. 11:29-30

Your problem starts off internal. 29 "wicked"

Your problem becomes external. 29 "demands"

Reject the downward signs. 11:31-32

Your solution is wisdom. 31 "judgment... condemn... wisdom"

Your solution is repentance. 32 "judgment... condemn... repented"

6

Stop being the problem. Start being the solution. Luke 11:29-32

My internal problem. 11:29-30

My problem is innate. 29 "wicked"

My problem is ingrained. 29 "demands"

My eternal problem. 11:31-32

My problem is judgement. "judgement... judgement..."

My problem is justice. 31-32 "condemn... condemn..."

My only solution. 11:29-32

My problem is solved by Jesus. 29 "sign of Jonah... greater than Jonah"

My problem is solved by repentance. 32 "repented"

7

Can't you see it? Luke 11:29-32

The sign you need from Jesus. 11:29-30

Jesus tells you all you need to know about yourself. 29 "wicked... demands"

Jesus tells you all you need to know about Himself. 30 "Son of Man" = Messiah

Jesus tells you all you need to know about your future. 31-32 "judgement"

The sign Jesus wants from you. 11:31-32

Jesus wants you to know who He is. 31-32 "greater than... greater than..."

Jesus wants you to know how to act. 31 "wisdom" = practical knowledge

Jesus wants you to know what to do. 32 "repented"

8

Trade in your problem for your solution. Luke 11:29-32

Here is your problem. 11:29

The problem is where you are. 29 "the crowds"

The problem is who you are. 29 "wicked"

The problem is what you do. 29 "demand"

Here is your solution. 11:29-32

The solution is when. 29-30 "sign of Jonah"

The solution is who. 30 "Son of Man"

The solution is now. 31-32 "wisdom... repented"

9

Don't stop until its solved. Luke 11:29-32

The problem I start with. 29 I am "wicked"

The problem I'm stuck with. 31-32 I face "judgement"

The problem that's signed for. 30 "Son of Man will be a sign"

The problem requires solving. 32 "repented"

10

Call the next witness. Luke 11:29-32

Every generation has a witness for God. 11:29-30

Our generation needs a witness. 29 "This is a wicked generation"
Our generation wants a witness. 29 "demands a sign"
Our generation has a witness. 30 "the Son... sign to this generation"

Every generation needs a response to God. 11:31-32

Our generation needs wisdom. 31 "wisdom... One greater is here"
Our generation needs repentance. 32 "repented... One greater is here"
Our generation needs us. Acts 1:8 "You will be My witnesses"

11

Look! There's the sign. Luke 11:29-32

You asked for a sign. 29

God knows your heart. 29 "wicked"
God knows your limits. 29 "demands a sign"

You were given a sign. 30

They got a sign. 30a "Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites"
We got a sign. 30b "Son... a sign to this generation"

You respond to the sign. 31-32

Respond with wisdom. 31 "condemn... wisdom... greater..."
Respond with repentance. 32 "repented at the preaching"

12

Escaping this wicked generation. Luke 11:28-32

Knowing what I've got. 11:28-30

I've got God's blessing. 28 "Blessed are"
I've got God's truth. 29 "sign of Jonah"

Being who I am. 11:31-32

If I am smart, I will seek wisdom. 31 "wisdom"
If I am smart, I will seek repentance. 32 "repented"

13

You are the champ. You got this. Luke 11:28-32

Boxing / Battlebots / contest motif

In the blue corner; the reigning champion. 11:28

Winners are already blessed. "blessed are"
Winners are listening well. "hear"

Winners are focused on the Word. "Word of God"
Winners are action oriented. "and obey it"

In the red corner; the crowd's favourite. 11:29-32
Losers hold on to their sin. "wicked"
Losers lack humility. "demand"
Losers need wisdom. 31 "wisdom"
Losers must repent. 32 "repent"

14

Read the signs! Luke 11:28-32

My position in salvation. 11:28
I have eternal assurance. "blessed are"
I am spiritually able "hear the Word"
I am faithfully active

My progress in sanctification. 11:29-32
I develop gracious humility. 29-30 cp "demands"
I develop practical intelligence. 31 "wisdom"
I develop continual repentance. 32 "repented"

15

Reset your spiritual GPS from lost in the backstreets to the Highway to Heaven

Heading the right way. 11:28
My destination. "blessed"
My direction. "Word of God"
My decision. "and obey it"

Hindering loops. 11:29
I am lost, Wicked Way. "wicked generation"
I am looking, Demanding Dve. "demand a sign"

Helpful signs. 11:30-32
The Son points the way, Resurrection Rd.
The queen points the way, Wisdom Way.
The Ninevites point the way, Repentance Rd.

Other possible titles

It's a sign from God.

"I am the greatest!" Jesus
What are you waiting for?
From signs to substance.
Are we there yet?
What wicked looks like.
The size of the sign.
A very fishy story.
Let's compare fishing stories.
Signs you can't ignore.
Purpose of signs
Value of signs
God's judgement on this generation

Music and songs

Songs about the greatness of Jesus

All hail King Jesus. 237 / SiS 219
Behold the Lamb of God. Ot 11
Celebrate Jesus. 663
Consider Christ. Ot 2
He is Lord. SiS 49
I believe in Jesus. Ot 60
I stand amazed (My Saviour's love). CH 378
In Christ alone. Ot 4
Jesus is the answer. Ot 82
Jesus Name above all names. SiS 226
Jesus what a beautiful Name. 777
King of Kings and Lord of lords. SiS 409
O let the Son of God enfold you... Spirit song. 477
My Lord what love is this... Amazing love. 160

Songs about repentance

He has shown all of you. SiS 59
I give You my heart. TS 67
I'm gonna follow You. (Banov)
Lord show me what it means. 413

Thought starters for personal reflection or group discussion

1. What was your first car, or other means of transport?
2. When you get lost, what will you do to get back on course; ask someone; check a map; keep going; or...?

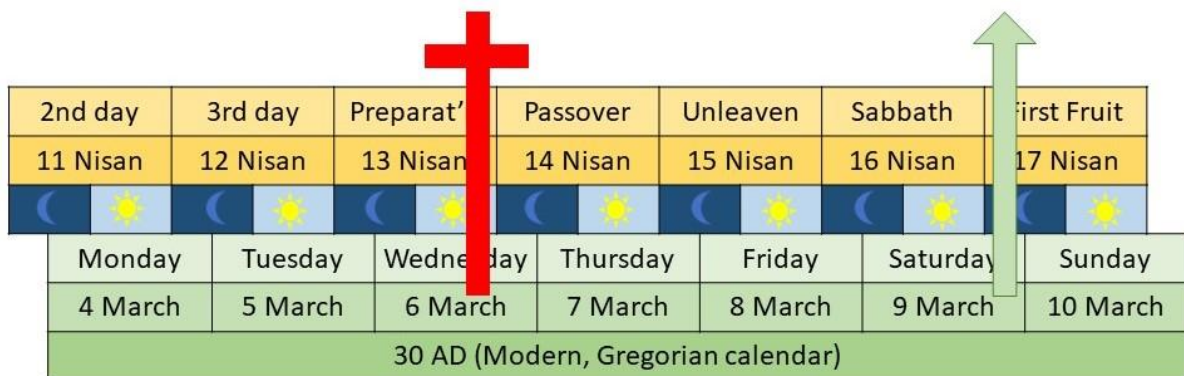
3. Luke 11:28-29 jumps from 'being blessed' to 'demanding a sign'. Is that a big jump? How can v28 prevent v29?
4. Jesus refused to prove God's intervention on earth ("no sign will be given" v29). Do you think more people would be saved if God reversed this policy and gave signs to everyone who demanded?
5. Are Christians ever guilty of (inadvertently) praying our demands? List 3 ways we can pray our blessings.
6. Why would Jesus call King Solomon and the prophet Jonah 'great'? In what ways were they not so great? What makes Jesus 'greater than' them?

The sign of Jonah

The Gospels record Jesus speaking of the sign of Jonah on three separate occasions. Those three occasions are Matthew 12:39-40, Matthew 16:1-4 (=Mark 8:11-12), and Luke 11:29-30. The context for each reference is different, showing that Jesus pointed to Jonah as His sign on at least three separate occasions. The first reference includes Jesus' explanation of the sign of Jonah.

³⁹ Jesus replied, "A wicked and adulterous generation demands a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12:39-40

Those "three days and three nights" were the three Sabbath Days between the crucifixion and the resurrection. Those days in the tomb were the annual Sabbaths of Passover, and Unleavened Bread; and the weekly Sabbath. He rose on the Day of First Fruits.



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Commentary on signs

Signs in the Old Testament

The first sign was part of Creation

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for **signs** and for seasons and for days and years. Genesis 1:14

The second sign was for protection

So the Lord said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord appointed a **sign** for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him. Genesis 4:15

The third sign was as a covenant of grace

¹² God said, "This is the **sign** of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations. ¹³ I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a **sign** of a covenant between Me and the earth... ¹⁷ And God said to Noah, "This is the **sign** of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth." Genesis 9:12, 13, 17

The fourth sign was between God and Abraham

And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the **sign** of the covenant between Me and you. Genesis 17:11

The exodus to Mt Sinai was a sign

And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the **sign** to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain." Exodus 3:12

The plagues on Egypt were all signs

⁸ "If they will not believe you or heed the witness of the first **sign**, they may believe the witness of the last **sign**. ⁹ But if they will not believe even these two **signs** or heed what you say, then you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water which you take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground."... ¹⁷ You shall take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the **signs**."... ²⁸ Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord with which He had sent him, and all the **signs** that He had commanded him to do.... ³⁰ and Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses. He then performed the signs in the sight of the people... ³ But I will harden Pharaoh's heart that I may multiply My **signs** and My wonders in the land of Egypt... ²³ I will put a division between My people and your people. Tomorrow this **sign** will occur."... ¹ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these **signs** of Mine among them, ² and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My **signs** among them, that you may know that I am the Lord." Exodus 4:8, 9, 17, 28, 30, 7:3, 8:23, 10:1, 2

The blood of the Passover was a sign

The blood shall be a **sign** for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. Exodus 12:13

The Feast of Unleaven Bread was a sign

So it shall serve as a **sign** on your hand and as reminders on your forehead, for with a powerful hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt. Exodus 13:16

Sabbaths / holy days are all signs

¹³ "But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a **sign** between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that

I am the Lord who sanctifies you... ¹⁷ It is a **sign** between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labour, and was refreshed. Exodus 31:13, 17

All miracles are signs

¹¹ The Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the **signs** which I have performed in their midst?... ²² Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My **signs** which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice. Numbers 14:11, 22

Other Old Testament references to 'sign/s' include

Numbers 16:38, 17:10, 31:50, Deuteronomy 4:34, 6:8, 22, 7:19, 11:3, 18, 13:1, 2, 26:8, 28:46, 29:3, 34:11, Joshua 4:6, 24:17, 6:17, 36, Judges 20:38, 1 Samuel 2:34, 10:7, 9, 14:10, 1 Kings 13:3, 5, 2 Kings 19:29, 20:8, 9, 2 Chronicles 32:24, Nehemiah 9:10, Psalm 65:8, 74:4, 9, 78:43, 86:17, Psalm 135:9, Isaiah 7:11, 14, 8:18, 11:10, 19:20, 20:3, 37:30, 38:22, 55:13, 57:8, 66:19, Jeremiah 10:2, 32:20, 21, 44:29, Ezekiel 4:3, 12:6, 11, 14:8, 20:12, 20, 24:24, 27, Daniel 4:2, 3, 4:3, 6:8, 6:27.

Signs in the New Testament

³⁸ Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a **sign** from You." ³⁹ But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a **sign**; and yet no **sign** will be given to it but the **sign** of Jonah the prophet. Matthew 12:38-39

¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a **sign** from heaven... ³ And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times? ⁴ An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a **sign**; and a **sign** will not be given it, except the **sign** of Jonah." And He left them and went away. Matthew 16:1, 3, 4 = Mark 8:11-12

Jesus is a sign

Jesus' conception and birth is a sign

The Lord Himself will give you a **sign**: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

Jesus' death and resurrection is a sign

³⁹ Jesus replied, "A wicked and adulterous generation demands a **sign**, but none will be given it except the **sign** of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12:39-40

Signs, in the ministry of the apostles

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and **signs** which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know. Acts 2:22

Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and **signs** were taking place through the apostles. Acts 2:43

while You extend Your hand to heal, and **signs** and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus. Acts 4:30

At the hands of the apostles many **signs** and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico. Acts 5:12

Signs, in the ministry of the evangelists

And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and **signs** among the people. Acts 6:8

⁶ The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the **signs** which he was performing... ¹³ Even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed **signs** and great miracles taking place, he was constantly amazed. Acts 8:6, 13

Therefore, they spent a long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that **signs** and wonders be done by their hands. Acts 14:3

All the people kept silent, and they were listening to Barnabas and Paul as they were relating what **signs** and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. Acts 15:12

in the power of **signs** and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Romans 15:19

Signs in the world, and in the church

For indeed Jews ask for **signs** and Greeks search for wisdom. 1 Corinthians 1:22

So then tongues are for a **sign**, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a **sign**, not to unbelievers but to those who believe. 1 Corinthians 14:22

The **signs** of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by **signs** and wonders and miracles. 2 Corinthians 12:12

in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a **sign** of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. Philippians 1:28

that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and **signs** and false wonders, 2 Thessalonians 2:9

God also testifying with them, both by **signs** and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. Hebrews 2:4

Signs in Revelation

A great **sign** appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. Revelation 12:1

Then another **sign** appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. Revelation 12:3

¹³ He performs great **signs**, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. ¹⁴ And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the **signs** which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. Revelation 13:13-14

Then I saw another **sign** in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. Revelation 15:1

For they are spirits of demons, performing **signs**, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. Revelation 16:14

And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the **signs** in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. Revelation 19:20

Skit by Bob Snook

JONAH2 3'?m2f Did Jonah live for three days inside a fish?

PROF -- (enters carrying briefcase and books, begins crossing)

KATY -- (follows carrying books and papers, shouts) Professor Anderson?

PROF -- (stops, turns) Yes?

KATY -- (approaches) I've decided what I'm going to write my dissertation on.

PROF -- Already? I gave you a week to decide.

KATY -- Yes. I got an email yesterday that got me interested in the story of Jonah and the whale. So, I decided that my dissertation will be titled, "Three ways to live three days in the belly of a fish".

PROF -- That's a very clever title. But...

KATY -- This email said that a man was actually swallowed by a whale and lived to tell about it.

PROF -- Yes, well, that may or may not be true, but it sort of misses the point...

KATY -- ...The guy wasn't in the whale's stomach for three whole whole days, but the incident shows that a man could survive for several hours. When when they finally rescued him, his hair and his skin were all bleached from the stomach acid. Can you believe it?

PROF -- Actually, no, I can't.

KATY -- Well, the email said that the story was verified.

PROF -- Would this story just happen to be about a whaling ship in the Falkland Islands?

KATY -- As a matter of fact, it would. How did...

PROF -- ...I researched that story myself. Not a word of it is true.

KATY -- It isn't?

PROF -- No. It turns out the boat named in the story is a fishing boat, not a whaler. The ship's crew list never listed the name of the man who was allegedly involved. The ship's log never even mentioned the Falkland Islands. And the captain's widow said her husband never mentioned anything even closely related such a story. She called it a sea yarn.

KATY -- Oh.

PROF -- The most unfortunate part about the story is that Christians have been propagating the story for almost a hundred years as if it were a fifth gospel.

KATY -- They said it was verified.

PROF -- I'm sure they meant well. But, actually, it doesn't really matter if a man could survive in a fish's belly or not.

KATY -- It doesn't?

PROF -- No, Jesus made that pretty clear.

KATY -- Jesus did? How was Jesus involved?

PROF -- In Matthew 12:40, Jesus says "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

KATY -- Oh. You mean Jonah didn't stay alive in the whale. He was dead.

PROF -- That's the way it looks to me.

KATY -- That kind of makes the story of Jonah all the more exciting, doesn't it?

PROF -- Yes. And prophetic.

KATY -- Prophetic?

PROF -- Yes. In Jonah 2:6, Jonah prays, "...you brought my life up from the pit, O LORD my God."

KATY -- He died and rose again.

PROF -- Do you still want your dissertation to be called "Three ways to live three days in the belly of a fish"?

KATY -- I guess not.

PROF -- (turns moves to exit) Well, you still have a week to decide.

KATY -- (follows) That's too bad I had a really neat design for a snorkel....

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