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Draw Nigh Unto Me Part 75

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Defaced - Week 67

God's Coming Spiritual Revolution - Part 14

So how do spiritual longings retard the growth of Spiritual Desire? (continued)

The Sign of Jonah - Part 4 of 6

By Doug Batchelor [Emphases added]

Ref: <https://www.amazingfacts.org/media-library/book/e/75/the-sign-of-jonah>

Imagine how Jonah must have suffered during his ordeal as a captive in the pitch-black belly of the great fish.

Three days in that slimy, stench-filled darkness must have seemed like an eternity.

(Have you ever considered that if Jonah could survive alive in that fish's digestive abyss, he may not have been the only creature still alive and squirming around in there?)

Yet the suffering of our Lord was infinitely greater than that of the famous wayward prophet.

How much Jesus must love us to willingly endure all that to spare us the miserable fate of the lost!

So as we look again at our Bible text, keep in mind that Jesus never said it would be three 24-hour segments, but rather, the suffering to end all suffering would occur over a period of three days and three nights.

Jesus was "in the heart of the earth," or in the grip of the enemy, over a period of three days and three nights—Thursday night, Friday night, Saturday night.

He rose on Sunday morning.

Jewish Timing

Before leaving the timing issue, let's look at several passages in the Gospels where it plainly states Jesus would rise after 3 days—or the third day.

First, these verses are distinct and separate from the "three days and three nights" verse we've already considered.

In **Mark 8:31**, the Bible records, "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Then to add emphasis, "For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day" (**Mark 9:31**).

Some still try to use these texts to lengthen Jesus' time in the tomb.

They feel the story makes sense unless they calculate the time like a 72 hour phone call.

But look at it this way: When playing ping pong to determine who serves, you must volley the ball back and forth over the net at least three times before the rally counts.

It doesn't matter where the ball is on the table, as long as it goes over the net three times.

Likewise, if you rent a car for three days, some rental agencies charge for a car each day, not over a 24-hour period.

It doesn't matter how many hours you drive the car—if you have possession for any part of a day, you pay for the entire day.

So if you got a car at 6:00 p.m. on a Monday, kept it all day Tuesday, and returned at 5:15 p.m. on Wednesday, you're charged three full days even though you had the car for less than 48 hours!

In like manner, the Jews reckoned time in such a way that if an event touched on any part of three days, it was considered a three-day event—ending on the third day.

Jews also used sundials to keep time, and on cloudy days it was harder to measure exact time in hours and minutes.

If you lived in a big city, guards or watchmen would ring a bell or blow a horn to mark off the hours.

That's how the Bible writers could tell us what hour Jesus was crucified and later died (**Mark 15:25; Mark 15:34**).

Jonah Means Peace

There are many other ways in which Jonah is a type or sign of Christ.

Do you remember that just like Jesus, Jonah was asleep in a boat in the midst of a terrible storm?

When the captain found Jonah sleeping, he awoke the snoozing passenger and said, "Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not" (**Jonah 1:6**).

We can't miss the striking similarities in these words and the ones that the fearful disciples spoke to Jesus when they awoke Him!

The disciples awoke Jesus, as He slept in the stern on a pillow, and asked, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (**Mark 4:38, 39**).

Jesus is not willing that any of us should perish, but we must call upon Him to awake and save us.

"Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, cast us not off for ever" (**Psalm 44:23; 2 Peter 3:9; Romans 10:13**).

It is also worthy of mention that both Jesus and Jonah were sleeping in the lowest part of their respective vessels (**Jonah 1:5**).

Jesus humbled Himself more than any other that He might exalt us.

In fact, the name Jonah means "dove," which is a symbol of peace.

Jesus is the Prince of Peace (**Isaiah 9:6**).

When Jesus was sleeping in a boat during the storm, they woke Him up, and then He brought peace to their dilemma.

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm" (**Mark 4:39**).

Jonah the Sacrifice

Jonah instructed the sailors to throw him overboard if they wanted to survive and have peace.

I once wondered why Jonah didn't volunteer to jump overboard himself.

Yet had he done so, the sailors would not have had to take personal responsibility for him.

In the same way, we must accept responsibility for the death of God's son.

Like Jesus, Jonah too was a willing sacrifice.

The wrath of God was coming upon all those doomed sailors, and Jonah took the wrath by offering himself.

In the same way, we must take Jesus and offer His blood as our sacrifice to pass from death to life and have that peace that passes understanding.

Isaiah 53:10 says, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."

Notice the prayer the sailors uttered as they offered Jonah to the raging elements.

"Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee" (**Jonah 1:14**).

It is the innocent blood of Jesus that covers our sins (**Revelation 7:14**).

Now also notice the similarities between Jonah's prayer from the fish's stomach and the messianic prayer that David wrote regarding the sufferings of Jesus from the cross.

Jonah prayed: "For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me" (**Jonah 2:3**).

David prayed: "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (**Psalm 69:2**).

Jonah prayed by faith from the bowels of the sea monster, believing the Lord could hear him despite the evidence of his senses—that he was hopelessly separated from God.

"Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple" (**Jonah 2:4**).

In like manner, when Jesus sensed the awful separation from His Father during His ordeal on the cross, He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (**Mark 15:34**).

Then by faith, Jesus reached up into the heavenly temple and prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend [commit] my spirit" (**Luke 23:46**).

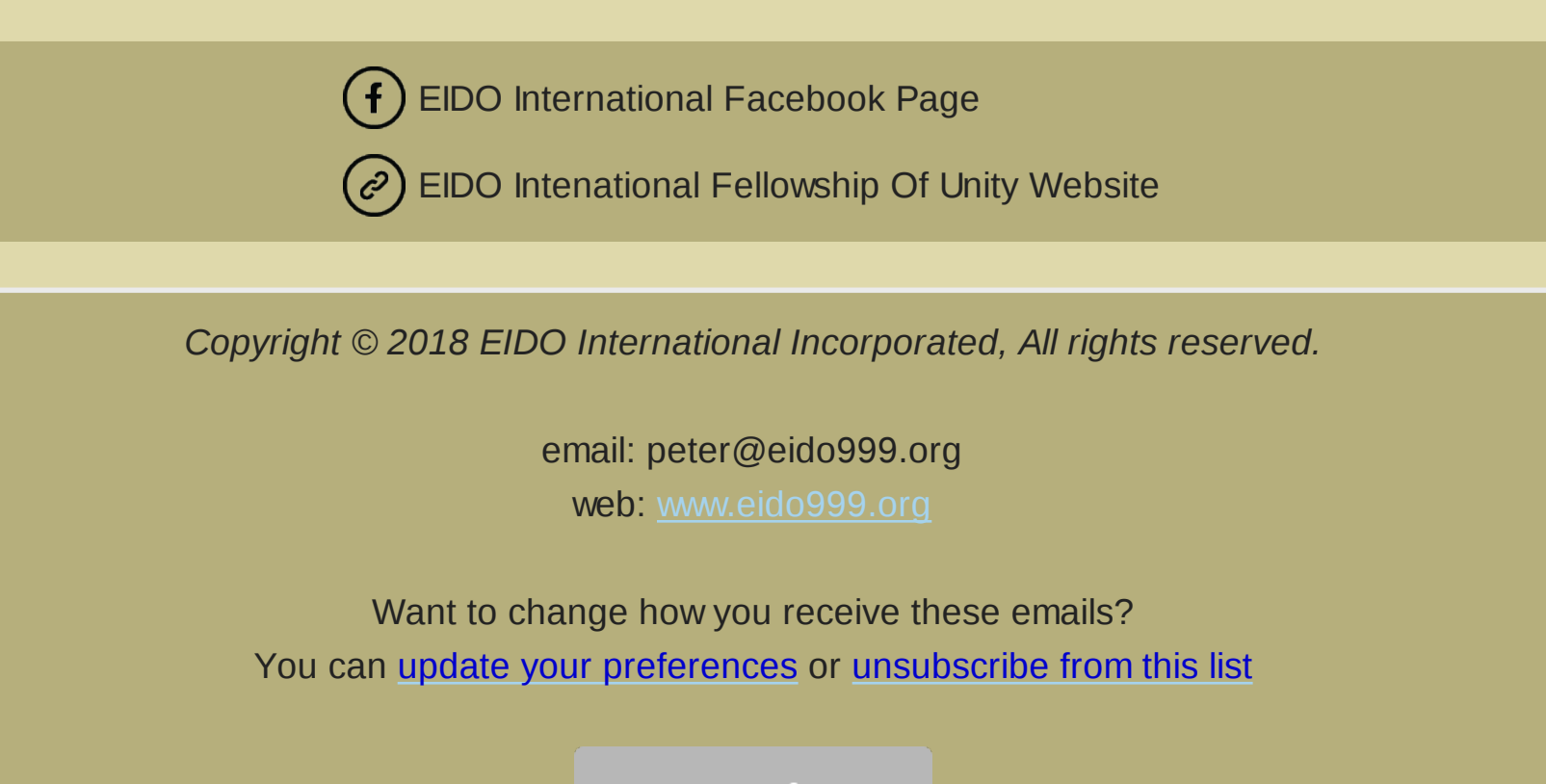
This was a tremendous act of faith.

Christ was bearing the incomprehensible guilt and sins of a lost world, and He felt the eternal and abysmal separation from His Father.

To Be Continued

Love,
Mwesigwa

[Defaced - Week 68 follows next week]



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