The Sign of Jonah in Matthew and Luke-Acts



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Short Abstract

The thesis challenges prevailing scholarly views on the Sign of Jonah (Matt 12:38–42; 16:1–4, Luke 11:29–32), arguing it is more important for both Matthew and Luke-Acts than conventionally recognized. That importance consists in (1) the extent of its influence and (2) its kerygmatic centrality. Contrary to existing scholarship that regards Jonah's Sign as fundamentally condemnatory, Luke and Matthew understand it as a positive sign designed to provoke Israel to repentance.

The thesis adopts a synthetic approach, examining for the first time the complete range of Jonah's influence throughout Matthew and Luke-Acts, including explicit references and literary allusions. This broader range of New Testament Jonah texts is systematically contextualized within ancient Jewish reception of Jonah, including the neglected Ps.-Philonic homily *De Jona*.

The investigation reveals that ancient Jewish interpreters of Jonah typically (1) foreground the divine mercy's responsiveness to repentance; (2) understand Nineveh's salvation as affirming rather than subverting Israel's election; and (3) integrate Jonah's deliverance into the whole narrative. A striking pattern also emerges across multiple sources linking Jonah's deliverance to the Red Sea crossing.

For Luke-Acts, the Sign of Jonah unfolds as a scripturally ordained sequence: suffering, resurrection on the third day, and the subsequent proclamation of repentance to all nations. Jonah uniquely performs *in order* these three actions attributed to the Messiah's scriptural vocation (Luke 24:44–47). For Matthew, the Sign is clearly the Son of Man's burial in the earth's heart for three days and nights. It addresses his "scribes and Pharisees" in particular. Both Evangelists' Storm Stilling pericopes foreshadow their distinctive versions of Jonah's Sign, further illustrating its kerygmatic centrality (Matt 8:23–27; Luke 8:22–25).

Reception-historical analysis robustly attests these key exegetical findings. Yet, the study also refutes assertions that Matthew and Luke are responsible for later anti-Jewish readings of Jonah.

Long Abstract

The thesis challenges prevailing scholarly views on the Sign of Jonah in Matthew and Luke-Acts (Matt 12:38–42; 16:1–4, Luke 11:29–32). While New Testament scholarship has traditionally regarded Jonah's Sign as having a minimal footprint in the writings of Luke and Matthew, this study argues for its much greater influence and importance. That importance is defined in terms of (1) the extent of its influence and (2) its centrality to the core kerygmatic events of both Matthew and Luke, distinctively formulated and understood. Furthermore, much existing scholarly opinion surprisingly regards the Sign of Jonah as fundamentally negative, announcing irreversible judgment upon Jesus's Jewish contemporaries. The thesis demonstrates that Luke and Matthew understand Jonah's Sign instead as a positive one designed to provoke Israel to repentance. This is consistent with ancient Jewish reception of the prophet and central themes of Jonah the book. By situating the Evangelists' Christological interpretation of Jonah within broader ancient Jewish interpretive traditions, this study reveals continuities previously overlooked and offers fresh perspective on central Matthean and Lukan themes.

Methodologically, the thesis adopts a synthetic approach, examining for the first time the complete range of Jonah's influence in both explicit references and literary allusions throughout Matthew and Luke-Acts. This broader range of New Testament Jonah texts is systematically compared with ancient Jewish reception of Jonah. That ancient Jewish reception is broader than usually appreciated in New Testament scholarship, particularly considering the neglected Ps.-Philonic homily *De Jona*. This originally Greek language synagogue homily, extant in Armenian, forms by far the most extensive Jewish reception of Jonah from antiquity and provides fruitful new points of comparison with the Matthean and Lukan Jonah.

Three comparators bring the analysis of ancient Jewish reception into dialogue with the New Testament Jonah. These are the way in which the sources receive: (1) the tension between warnings of divine judgment and clemency in Jonah; (2) the relationship between the election of Israel and the salvation and repentance of the Gentile Ninevites, or the tension between the particular and the universal; and (3) the deliverance of Jonah by means of the great fish/sea monster and its integration into the wider story and the larger themes in (1) and (2). These comparators correspond to the points of disagreement which divide interpreters of the Sign of Jonah in its Lukan and Matthean versions.

The investigation employs established criteria for detecting scriptural allusions while arguing for each allusive reference on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Particular value is placed on two criteria. The first is the similarity of a potential New Testament allusion to existing ancient Jewish interpretation of Jonah. This criterion draws upon the analysis of ancient Jewish reception in Chapter Two. The second criterion that receives distinctive emphasis here is the early history of reception. Chapter Five's *Wirkungsgeschichte* analysis grounds the arguments for Jonah intertextuality in Matthew and Luke-Acts in its effects on real-world, chronologically proximate readers.

Chapter Two examines the reception of Jonah within ancient Jewish sources (200 BCE – 400 CE) to contextualize the Matthean and Lukan receptions of Jonah within their Jewish milieu. The analysis provides the first systematic comparison between ancient Jewish interpretations of Jonah and the broader range of potential New Testament Jonah texts. The investigation organizes the sources chronologically from Tobit (200 BCE) through the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics (ca. 400 CE), guided by the three comparators mentioned above.

The analysis reveals that (1) Ancient Jewish interpreters typically foreground the responsiveness of divine mercy to repentance against the horizon of judgment as a real possibility. (2) Ancient Jewish authors usually understand the salvation of Nineveh as affirming rather than subverting the election of Israel. That is, Jonah is consistently remembered as a paradigm of God's rescue of his own people, and the Ninevites' repentance is understood as exemplary rather than competitive with Israel's salvation. Finally, (3) ancient Jewish readers of Jonah regularly integrate Jonah's deliverance by the great fish/sea monster into the whole Jonah story, viewing the book's themes and plot as deeply interwoven. The consistent reception of Jonah as a paradigm of God's deliverance of Israel suggests that the Sign of Jonah likely also recalls this miraculous deliverance in the context of the fuller Jonah narrative. This Jewish reception places a much greater burden of proof on those who take the Sign of Jonah as a fundamentally negative sign against Israel than is usually acknowledged.

A striking pattern also emerges across sources linking Jonah's deliverance to the paradigmatic salvation event of the Red Sea crossing, evidenced in 3 Maccabees, the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, Targums, and the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics. This widespread association increases the plausibility that Jonah functioned as a formative scriptural text for early Christian proclamation.

Chapter Three examines the Sign of Jonah in Luke-Acts, arguing that it has been considerably underestimated in scope and importance by modern scholarship. While previous studies have largely confined analysis to the individual Sign of Jonah pericope in Luke 11:29–32, this analysis demonstrates that the Sign of Jonah's influence extends throughout Luke's two volumes and is central to their core kerygmatic events.

The chapter proposes that Luke's Sign of Jonah unfolds as a scripturally ordained sequence: the Messiah's suffering and death, resurrection on the third day, and the subsequent proclamation of repentance to all nations. Luke's enigmatic Sign of Jonah, which states, "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be to this generation" (11:30), leads readers to expect the later unfolding of this mysterious saying. Through detailed intertextual analysis, the study shows that Jonah is the only scriptural figure who performs, in order, the three actions Luke's risen Jesus attributes to the Messiah's scripturally preordained vocation: suffering (παθεῖν), rising on the third day (ἀναστῆναι... τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ), and proclaiming repentance (κηρυχθῆναι... μετάνοιαν) to Gentile nations (24:44–47). The distinctive vocabulary of "rising," "preaching," and "repentance" clusters uniquely in Septuagint Jonah, the Sign of Jonah pericope (Luke 11:29–32 // Matt 12:38–42), and Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47).

The chapter also traces Jonah allusions at crucial boundary-crossing moments in Acts: Peter's journey from Joppa to Cornelius's household (Acts 9:36–11:18) and Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27). These connections further demonstrate the function of the apostolic preaching mission

to Gentiles as part of the Sign of Jonah given for Israel rather than as a supersessionist movement away from Judaism. In this light, the allusions to Jonah in the Stilling of the Storm (Luke 8:22–25) can clearly be perceived as a foreshadowing of the Lukan Sign of Jonah. The analysis reveals the influence of Jonah's prophetic scriptural narrative on Luke's formulation of the foundational Christian proclamation about Jesus's death, resurrection, and the subsequent proclamation of repentence to all nations. Jonah and his Sign function typologically to legitimize the centrifugal movement of the gospel from Jerusalem to the nations while maintaining hope for Israel's ultimate redemption.

Chapter Four examines Matthew's Sign of Jonah, contending that like in Luke-Acts its scope and importance are greater than usually appreciated. Matthew's version of Jonah's Sign appears more straightforward than Luke's due to its explicit identification of Jonah's three days and nights in the sea monster with the Son of Man's burial in the earth's heart for that same length of time (Matt 12:40). However, three key interpretive disputes remain: whether the Sign (1) affords the opportunity for repentance; (2) anticipates a Gentile mission; and (3) addresses only the authorities or the entire generation of Jesus's Jewish contemporaries.

The chapter establishes that Matthew's explanation of the Sign through Jonah's fish episode (12:40) forms a natural counterpart to the Jonah-Solomon double saying (12:41–42), contrary to scholarly arguments for a sharp disjunction within this pericope. Ancient Jewish interpretations consistently integrate Jonah's deliverance into his mission, illustrating the pericope's coherence. Additionally, the analysis demonstrates that the well-known but poorly understood Jonah allusions in the Stilling of the Storm (8:23–27) foreshadow Jesus's death and resurrection as the climactic Sign of Jonah. Unlike Luke's version, Matthew's Jonah Sign does not include missionizing to Gentiles. Although addressing the whole of Jesus's generation, the Sign has special reference to the Matthean scribes and Pharisees, who are present during the prediction (12:38) and remember it at Jesus's burial (27:63–64). This indicates that Matthew has not lost hope for this group despite the hyperbolic, internecine polemic against them in the Gospel.

The analysis thus reveals the Sign of Jonah as more central to Matthew's core kerygmatic events, Jesus's death and resurrection, than previously recognized. The chapter also explores potential connections between Matthew's interest in Jonah and the Gospel's distinctive concern for Galilean tribal restoration, given Jonah's origins in Zebulunite territory. Throughout, Matthew emerges as a first-century Jewish reader participating in broader ancient Jewish Jonah discourse while maintaining his distinctive Christological focus.

Chapter Five performs a reception history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) analysis of Jonah allusions in Matthew and Luke-Acts through patristic interpretation, demonstrating how ancient readers identified and developed intertextual connections between the Evangelists' writings and the book of Jonah. The analysis focuses on passages where multiple patristic authors recognize Jonah allusions beyond the explicit Sign of Jonah pericopes, providing robust evidence for the thesis's key exegetical findings.

The most extensively attested connections link (1) Jonah/the Sign of Jonah to Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47), where four patristic writers interpret Jonah's sign as encompassing the complete kerygmatic sequence of Christ's death, third-day resurrection, and subsequent

proclamation of repentance to all nations; and (2) Jonah's tempest and the Stilling of the Storm, where for many patristic authors the slumber and awakening of Jonah and Jesus anticipates both men's experiences of the Sign of Jonah. For several of these authors, Jonah's self-sacrificial submission to being cast overboard prefigures Christ's salvific death.

Additional widely-recognized connections include (1) the association of Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34) with the Sign of Jonah through shared vocabulary and themes; (2) parallels drawn between Jonah's voyage and Paul's shipwreck in Acts 27, emphasizing their shared commission to preach to Gentile imperial capital cities; and (3) connections between Jonah's rescue from the depths and Peter's salvation from drowning in Matt 14:28–33.

The linguistic and geographical diversity of much of this patristic testimony (across Greek, Latin, and Syriac sources) argues against most of these interpretations resulting merely from "memetic" or "viral," culturally transferred readings. Instead, the evidence supports the conclusion that Matthew and Luke crafted Jonah allusions that resonated with ancient readers, who then creatively extended these foundational interpretive moves while remaining dependent on the Evangelists' original intertextual frameworks.

The study's findings have significant implications for understanding early Christian scriptural hermeneutics and the relationship between Judaism and emerging Christianity. By demonstrating that both Evangelists operate firmly within an ancient Jewish Jonah discourse, the thesis challenges scholarly tendencies to read supersessionist meanings back into the New Testament Sign of Jonah texts themselves. The tragic trajectory of later anti-Jewish Christian interpretation of Jonah represents a regrettable departure from rather than an inevitable development of the Matthean and Lukan reception of the prophet.

Methodologically, the thesis further establishes the crucial value of reception history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) in detecting scriptural allusions. This approach offers a more robust foundation for identifying authentic scriptural allusions than criteria based solely on verbal parallels or thematic similarities. The results illustrate a more proportional relationship between Jonah's Matthean and Lukan profile and his later fame in the catacombs and basilicas, as well as the patristic textual sources.

The research also opens fresh avenues for understanding the development of early Christian kerygmatic formulations appealing to Jewish Scripture. The similarity between Luke's Opening of the Scriptures and the primitive *traditum* in 1 Corinthians 15:3–4, combined with ancient Christian recognition of Jonah's influence in both passages, suggests that prophetically interpreted scriptural narrative may have been integral to core Christian proclamation from very early stages. This challenges assumptions that early kerygmatic formulations relied exclusively on poetic scriptural texts like Isaiah and the Psalms or non-narrative prose texts like Deuteronomy, however formative those texts of course were.

For historical Jesus research, the thesis provides new evidence for evaluating the authenticity of the Sign of Jonah saying. If the saying is indeed authentic, the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah as a paradigm of God's rescue of Israel and a proclaimer of divine justice and mercy might well explain the prophet's appeal. Rootedness in an authentic saying of Jesus of Nazareth, a Galilean

like Jonah, would provide as good a launching point as any for the Sign of Jonah's eventual kerygmatic centrality and influence.

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All abbreviations follow the *SBL Handbook of Style*.

Chapter One: Introduction

After ascending his nautically themed pulpit by ladder and rope in the Whaleman's Chapel of New Bedford, Massachusetts, Herman Melville's Father Mapple delivers what must rank, if nothing else, among the most eloquent sermons on Jonah:

> Shipmates, this book, containing only four chapters—four yarns—is one of the smallest strands in the mighty cable of the Scriptures. Yet what depths of the soul does Jonah's deep sea-line sound! what a pregnant lesson to us is this prophet! …But *what* is this lesson that the book of Jonah teaches? Shipmates, it is a two-stranded lesson; a lesson to us all as sinful men, and a lesson to me as a pilot of the living God. As sinful men, it is a lesson to us all, because it is a story of the sin, hard-heartedness, suddenly awakened fears, the swift punishment, repentance, prayers, and finally the deliverance and joy of Jonah…Jonah did the Almighty's bidding. And what was that, shipmates? To preach the Truth to the face of Falsehood! …This, shipmates, this is that other lesson; and woe to that pilot of the living God who slights it. (Melville 1851, 45, 53)

Ishmael, Melville's melancholy protagonist, might admire Father Mapple's captain-like command of his pulpit, but the reader suspects he finds the lessons of Jonah (like the lessons of Nantucket whaling) rather less straightforward. The many witty references to Jonah throughout his narration suggest, however, that Ishmael agrees with Father Mapple at least regarding the prophet's perennial relevance. On this matter, a time-traveling ancient Jewish or Christian reader joining the congregation would likely have found much agreement. Jonah's popularity has proven strikingly enduring through time as well as across cultures and the three Abrahamic religions. Indeed, during the writing of this thesis, Jonah again made global headlines when a viral video showed Venezuelan kayaker Adrián Simancas momentarily engulfed and then spat out by a humpback whale in the Strait of Magellan.[1]

1. McGowan 2025, https://tinyurl.com/5hf9eccc.

An ancient Christian congregant might also, however, have lodged a complaint with Father Mapple since his thunderous sermon leaves out the feature of Jonah most celebrated in the ancient church. This feature, too, has been given eloquent expression in a poem possibly attributable to Cyprianus Gallus (5th century). After the sailors are relieved of Jonah's tempest, the poet says:

> Jonah the seer
> The while is voyaging, in other craft
> Embarked, …himself, shut in
> By waters, yet untouched; in the sea's heart,
> And yet beyond its reach; 'mid wrecks of fleets
> Half-eaten, and men's carcasses dissolved
> In putrid disintegrity: in life
> Learning the process of his death; but still—
> To be a sign hereafter of the Lord—
> A witness was he (in his very self)
> Not of destruction, but of death's repulse. (Thelwall [trans] 1885, 129)

The final lines refer of course to Jesus's famous saying about Jonah's Sign, which inspires the prophet's enormous popularity among ancient Christians. Thrown overboard by the sailors, swallowed by the sea monster, and spat out onto the shore beneath his gourd vine, Jonah is ubiquitous in ancient Christian art. The Jonah cycle is still visible today in early paintings, such as those in the Catacomb of Peter and Marcellinus,[2] and in sarcophagus carvings, like those held in the Museo Pio Cristiano[3] and the atmospheric Santa Maria Antiqua in the Roman Forum.[4] Jonah was the single most depicted biblical figure in the pre-Constantinian centuries, and he would later sail in the vaulted ceilings of basilicas and mausoleums.[5] The Jonah cycle portrayed

2. Images in Jensen 2024, 14 (fig. 1.10), 16 (fig. 1.12).

3. Image in Jensen 2024, 103 (fig. 3.16).

4. Image in Jensen 2024, 12 (fig. 1.9).

5. See further Jensen 2024, 100–104; 2012, 153–56; 2023, 1029, 1045–48.

typologically Jesus's death and resurrection and came powerfully to symbolize baptism and the resurrection hope of individual Christians.[6]

Jonah also remained a source of extraordinary inspiration for Jews in antiquity, as the magnificent mosaics paving the floor of the monumental Huqoq Synagogue in Galilee (ca. 400 CE) attest.[7] In these mosaics, as in other ancient Jewish sources, Jonah is paired with no less a narrative than the Red Sea crossing.[8] Even considering Jonah's popularity in ancient Judaism, however, there can be no doubt that Jesus's Sign of Jonah saying was freshly generative for ancient Christian reception of the prophet. If Jonah, as Father Mapple has it, is a small but mighty strand in the cable of the Scriptures, the Sign of Jonah likewise forms such a strand within the cable of the Gospels: thin yet powerful, at least in terms of reception-historical impact.

New Testament scholarship has tended, however, to regard that reception as out of all proportion to the actual importance of the Sign of Jonah for the Gospels themselves. Luke's enigmatic Sign of Jonah (11:29–32) is held by the majority to be only a passing reference to Jonah's preaching or perhaps to his figural death and resurrection as analogous to Jesus's.[9] Matthew's Sign of Jonah (12:38–42; 16:1–4), which in contrast to Luke's version openly predicts the Son of Man's resurrection after three days and nights (12:40), is commonly taken as both contextually incongruous and an isolated curiosity within the First Gospel.[10] Surprisingly, considering the book of Jonah's themes, both the Matthean and Lukan versions are often

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6. See further Jensen 2011, 33–39; 2012, 153–56.

7. See the images and interpretation in Magness et al. 2018, 111–115.

8. A chiastic pairing which Magness et al. term "antiphonal"; 2018, 111. See Chapter Two pp. 78–81.

9. Representative and influential are e.g. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 103–36; Edwards 1971, 89–95; Chow 1995, 95–145.

10. E.g. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 103–36; Edwards 1971, 30–34, 95–105; Chow 1995, 45–93.

understood as fundamentally negative pronouncements. Jonah's Sign, once given, is purported to announce an irreversible judgment upon "this generation" of Jesus's Jewish contemporaries.[11] A variant of this reading holds that Jonah's Sign has already been rejected by the close of the Gospel narratives.[12]

My thesis challenges these prevailing views, arguing that the Sign of Jonah is much more important for both Luke-Acts and Matthew than has previously been recognized. I define that importance in terms of (1) the extent of the Sign of Jonah's footprint throughout these writings and (2) its centrality to the core kerygmatic events of both Matthew and Luke-Acts, distinctively formulated and understood. I further contend, against much existing opinion, that both the Lukan and Matthean versions of Jonah's Sign are in essence positive, aiming to provoke Israel to repentance through warnings of judgment rather than to foreclose that possibility.

The analysis thus reassesses scholarly understanding of central Matthean and Lukan themes as well as the role of Jewish Scripture in shaping those themes. Because the Sign of Jonah is offered through the core kerygmatic events of Matthew and Luke-Acts, the argument addresses the very heart of these texts. I use the adjective "kerygmatic" in this thesis to describe the centrality of Jesus's death and resurrection to Luke and Matthew, understood as proclamational and theological accounts, rather than to enter into older, form-critical debates about the earliest form of Christian preaching (cf. Dibelius 1935; Bultmann 1951). Nor do I seek

11. Given at the Parousia, the Sign comes too late for e.g. Jeremias [1938] 1964, 409–410; Vögtle [1953] 1971, 133–36. On the Lukan side, cf. also the Sign as proclamation of "unsalvation" (*Unheilszeichen*) in Wolter 2008, 424–45; English trans. 2016–17, 2:113–14; cf. Zeller 1985, 521. On the Matthean side, Luz has the Sign being not *for* but *against* Israel; 2001–2007, 2:218; cf. Glombitza 1962, 361–64; Verseput 1986, 264–65; Wilson 2022, 1:358.

12. This is a prominent view in Matthew scholarship; cf. e.g. Zahn 1922, 470; Mora 1983, 91; Gnilka 1988, 466; Lehmann [1964] 2004, 115–16; Konradt 2014, 223. It also characterizes the treatment of Luke in e.g. Mora 1983, 76, 83 and, further back, Wellhausen [1905] 2018, 76.

even to unearth a scriptural "sub-structure" to that proclamation in the full sense of Dodd's classic treatment (1952).

The analysis, furthermore, demonstrates the extent of the Matthean and Lukan Jonah's grounding in and continuity with ancient Jewish reception of the book. That Jewish reception is more expansive than is usually appreciated in treatments of the New Testament Jonah, particularly in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona.* This neglected ancient synagogue homily, which is by far the most extensive Jewish reception of Jonah in antiquity, is shown here to offer several illuminating points of comparison with Matthew and Luke-Acts. My thesis offers, moreover, new perspective on the Lukan and Matthean reception of Jonah as a bridge to Christian textual and material reception of the prophet in the following centuries. The thesis makes a distinctive contribution by demonstrating patristic sources' robust affirmation of the more extensive footprint of Jonah traced here throughout Matthew and Luke-Acts.

To perform the analysis, I freshly situate the Sign of Jonah within Jonah's influence throughout Luke-Acts and Matthew, including for instance the widely accepted Jonah allusions in the Stilling of the Storm pericope. With very minor exceptions,[13] this thesis represents the first such synthetic treatment of the influence of Jonah, both in explicit reference and through literary allusion, throughout either Matthew or Luke-Acts, and it is without exception the first of monograph length. I bring this fuller Matthean and Lukan profile of Jonah into systematic comparison with the ancient Jewish profile of Jonah. The comparative analysis contextualizes

13. Powell gives a cursory overview of the entire New Testament Jonah, not intending to break new ground; 2007, 157–64. Two minor exceptions on the Matthean side include a brief early article of David Moffitt's (2011, 233–45) and the idiosyncratic treatment of Matthew's Jonah in terms of "tribulation" in Rieske 2018, 351–72. The present analysis differs considerably from these articles' conclusions and analyzes a considerably wider range of texts.

the New Testament Jonah within Jonah's broader ancient Jewish reception more thoroughly than has previously been attempted.

Status Quaestionis

The Sign of Jonah is a *crux* of New Testament scholarship, featuring in voluminous secondary literature. Much of the literature focuses on the pericope's tradition history to discern the sense of the saying, if authentic, in the mouth of the historical Jesus or the hypothetical Q original.[14] For those inquiring about the Matthean and Lukan meaning of Jonah's Sign, the discussions tend overwhelmingly to exclude any consideration of the wider influence of Jonah in these writings.[15] This methodological orientation, which the results of the present analysis will prove to be a weakness, characterizes the influential and representative treatments of Joachim Jeremias ([1938] 1964), Anton Vögtle ([1953] 1971), and Richard Edwards (1971), as well as the widely cited dissertation of Simon Chow (1995).

Previous taxonomies of the Sign of Jonah also usually fail to disambiguate competing views lucidly, focusing typically on the concrete reference point(s) in Jesus's life: (1) death and resurrection, (2) preaching, or (3) Parousia, corresponding either to Jonah's rescue from the fish (1 and 3) or his proclamation to Nineveh (2).[16] This question of to what the Sign of Jonah refers in Jesus's own life is understood in this thesis as one axis. Two additional axes, however, nuance this conventional taxonomy and clarify the divergences among existing interpretations: (1) whether the Sign of Jonah affords the possibility of repentance; and (2) whether the Sign of

14. Examples include the dedicated treatments in Bowen 1916; Michael 1920; Howton 1962; Edwards 1971; Hooker 1997, 17–34; Reed 1997; Plisch 2002.

15. See footnote 13 above.

16. Cf. the categorization of proposals in e.g. Green 1997, 463–64; Chow 1995, 15–19; Novakovic 2012, 177n18. See also the assessment of the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah in terms of whether they focus on either the fish or the proclamation in Chow 1995, 25–44. A useful categorization of options in terms of the type of genitive τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ constitutes may be found in Huber 1998.

Jonah involves Gentiles in the narrative present. Making these three axes explicit allows greater clarity in the analysis of Luke-Acts and Matthew in Chapters Three and Four. These axes also correspond to features in the ancient Jewish interpretation of Jonah that prove useful points of comparison with the New Testament's Jonah. I address this further in the methodological discussion below.

The ancient Jewish reception of Jonah has received insufficient attention in New Testament scholarship. Brief and piecemeal efforts by e.g. Jeremias ([1938] 1964, 406–10), Seidelin (1951, 122–27), Bayer (1986, 136–38), and Huber (1998, 89–92) were surpassed by the first methodologically sustained analysis in Chow (1995, 25–44). Even there, however, the discussion is brief and in places markedly insubstantial, while occasional inaccuracies appear.[17] An interesting analysis of Jonah's "afterlives," as the history of reception was then often called, appeared in 2000 by Yvonne Sherwood, written from a literary-critical orientation. Despite offering an impressively wide-ranging discussion, Sherwood's contention that the full and complex, rebellious Jonah of Jewish Scripture is erased by his New Testament reception (2000, 17) would have benefitted from more engagement with ancient Jewish sources. As I will show, these sources consistently receive Jonah as a positive paradigm of rescue and as a witness of God's willingness to show mercy to repentant humanity (e.g. 3 Macc. 6:8; m. Ta'an. 2:1–4; Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* 1–3, 25).

Exemplary recent work on the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah from two scholars in particular, Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer and Daniel Vorpahl, demonstrates the need for a more thorough reckoning with this material from the perspective of New Testament scholarship. Tiemeyer approaches Jonah from a Hebrew Bible/Old Testament perspective in several excellent articles

17. See Chapter Two footnote 6.

(e.g. 2016; 2017) culminating in a commentary on *Jonah Through the Centuries* in the Wiley Blackwell Bible commentary series (2022). Vorpahl's lengthy and useful *Habilitationsschrift* examines Jonah from the standpoint of Jewish reception history as a case study of the dynamics of intra-Jewish reception *per se* (2021, 152–422). While neither scholar breaks new ground on the New Testament, both are key conversation partners for the analysis of the ancient Jewish sources. Their contributions illustrate the extent and richness of the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah and suggest its potential for a fresh analysis of the New Testament Jonah's famous Sign. Before beginning that analysis, however, some methodological comments are appropriate.

Methodology

Two aspects of the thesis require methodological articulation at this stage: (1) the method of detecting allusions to Jewish Scripture and (2) the method of comparative analysis with ancient Jewish sources.

Detecting Literary Allusions

As noted earlier, this thesis brings for the first time a broader profile of Matthean and Lukan Jonah texts, including both explicit and allusive references, into thorough comparison with the ancient Jewish Jonah-receiving texts. I adopt the definition of allusion as "a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts" given by Ziva Ben-Porat (1976, 109). Intentional allusions are thus the primary concern here rather than unconscious echoes or resemblances. Such allusions intend to activate an intertextual patterning, bringing into focus discrete elements of the alluded-to text according to the priorities of the alluding text (Ben-Porat 1976, 107–109). The result is to place two discrete contexts into dialogue; and while this can produce a fruitful interaction that yields meaning for readers beyond the alluding author's intentions, the purpose

of the author in interfacing the two textual surfaces is nevertheless a subject of natural interest.[18] That purpose is the object under investigation in this thesis. I am concerned, that is, with the communicative intent of Matthew and Luke.[19]

To discern the presence and significance of an allusion to Jewish Scripture, I employ an eclectic combination of the methodologies and sets of criteria proposed by Richard Hays and Dale Allison, respectively. Hays's famous criteria for detecting scriptural "echoes"[20] are: (1) availability, (2) volume, (3) recurrence, (4) thematic coherence, (5) historical plausibility, (6) history of interpretation, and (7) satisfaction.[21] This list has been the subject of multiple critiques[22] while remaining generative for subsequent scholarship. Allison's proposed criteria are less well-known but usefully pragmatic: (1) history of interpretation; (2) common vocabulary, word order, themes, structure, and circumstances; (3) rare commonalities in the above; (4) prominence of the alluded-to text in the tradition of the alluding text; (5) alluding author shows interest in alluded-to text elsewhere; and (6) meaning is enhanced congruently by the allusion (Allison 2000, 10–13). While both these sets of criteria are consulted throughout this investigation, a mechanistic, box-ticking approach should not replace case-by-case argumentation that respects the complexity and individuality of any given allusive reference. To

18. See further Moyise 2015, 12–13, 19–20, 132, 135–46; 2016, 23–36.

19. See further Moyise 2008, 128–30. I speak of the Evangelists by their traditional names without claiming certain knowledge of the texts' historical authors.

20. Porter critiques the slippery definition of "echo" in Hays, who derived the term from Hollander 1981; Porter 1997, 85–94; 2006, 109; 2008, 29–40. Moyise has suggested "intertextual echo" as the term that best captures the search for allusions which are more significant than might appear at first glance; 2000, 17.

21. Hays 1989, 29–32.

22. E.g. Brawley 1995, 13–14; Allen 2019, 129–41.

argue each case individually is in fact the practice of both Allison and Hays.[23] I proceed likewise and refer to their criteria throughout in the footnotes.

Allison's fourth criterion, regarding the prominence of the alluded-to text in the alluding text's tradition, is crucial to the method of this thesis. I often argue for the plausibility of an allusion to Jonah on the basis of similarities in Jewish sources' reception of the book. The comparative analysis of Chapter Two renders such similarities visible. Another criterion which receives a stronger emphasis here than in, e.g., Hays's early work is the history of reception. Despite being listed as Hays's sixth criterion, it receives a minimalist endorsement. The primary concern was apparently that interpretation history not be used to exclude a potential allusive reference "as a negative test" (1989, 31). Hays's own newly suggested allusions in the book are not noticed by many ancient readers, a fact which he explains in terms of the changed context of a mostly-Gentile church losing Paul's "urgency about relating the gospel to God's dealings with Israel" (1989, 31). Thus, Hays's early suspicion towards the history of interpretation was likely colored by his concerns in the book on Paul and Scripture. As Dale Allison points out, however, in reply: "But it is also true that later circumstances — such as opposition to Marcion — encouraged the search for First Testament parallels and that many Christian exegetes have known the Jewish Scriptures inside out" (2000, 10n30).

This reasonable point is amplified by an observation Allison makes elsewhere, which is worth quoting in full:

> It is here [in discerning allusions to scripture] that the Fathers help us. For they were, in so many ways, closer to the first-century Christians than we are. Unlike most of us, they lived and moved and had their being in the Scriptures. It was their popular music. They still read aloud. They still had a small literary canon. And they still heard Scripture chanted. They were accordingly attuned to *hear* things that we no longer *hear,* things which we can only *see* after picking up

23. Criteria may in fact sometimes require tailoring to the specific texts being analyzed, as the useful analysis of scriptural allusions in the Hodayot by Julie Hughes illustrates; 2006, 52–54.

> concordances or doing word searches on our computers. I have come to believe that if we find in Matthew or another New Testament book an allusion to the Old Testament that the Fathers did not find, the burden of proof is on us; and if they detected an allusion which modern commentators have not detected, investigation is in order.[24]

In this specific sense, patristic sources occupy a privileged place in the detection of scriptural allusions in that they constitute both the texts' early effective history as well as, to some extent, their implied or ideal readers.[25] Their discernment of the intertextual patterning activated by scriptural allusions is, therefore, worth attending to both as a control on excessive speculation as well as a generative exercise that opens modern ears to intertextual connections.

Key critiques and cautions regarding the hunt for allusions are addressed in part by this control, including Christopher Stanley's reasonable suggestion that limitations in ancient audiences' scriptural knowledge should chasten scholarly arguments for subtle allusions (2004, 38–61). Paul Foster's critiques of excesses in some literature inspired by Hays do indeed land (2015, 96–111). But in contrast with many treatments which he correctly cites as susceptible to such criticisms, modern scholars are not the first to have recognized the Jonah connections proposed here. In later comments, Hays himself appears to have warmed to the potential of attending to ancient hearers and readers on this score.[26]

The approach of this thesis is first to establish allusions to Scripture on textual and contextual grounds in Luke-Acts and Matthew, noting ancient Jewish parallels along with

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24. Allison 2005, 119. Compare the remarks by Luz on the "exegetical significance of the Church Fathers" in an oblique but perhaps tangible categorical distinction from what he terms their "hermeneutical significance;" Luz 2005, 295–98, 303–4. See also the remarks on "reception exegesis" as a form of reception history that seeks to illuminate the originating text in Joyce and Lipton 2020, 17–19; see also Tiemeyer 2022, 245

25. Combining *Wirkungsgeschichte* and the privileging of implied readers as a way of properly focusing New Testament interpretation is suggested influentially in Bockmuehl 2006, 61–74.

26. Hays 2002, li–lii; also noted in Johnson 2023, 34n2

ancient Christian readers who observed these intertextual connections. Then, a subsequent chapter conducts a *Wirkungsgeschichte*[27] analysis of Matthean and Lukan Jonah allusions detected by their ancient readers, grounding my arguments for Jonah intertextuality in the effects of the texts on real-world, chronologically proximate readers and hearers.[28] While ancient authors extend and develop these intertextual Jonah connections in ways that move creatively beyond the Evangelists' own usage of Jewish Scripture, they are nevertheless dependent on fundamental interpretative moves made by Matthew and Luke, as I will show. In other words, where patristic interpreters work with the *intentio operis* of the canonical New and Old Testaments, they are still often dependent upon the *intentio auctoris* of Matthew and Luke at crucial points.[29] Cross-references between the traditional exegetical discussions of Chapters Three and Four and the reception-historical analysis of Chapter Five are provided throughout.

Literary allusions and intertextuality are widely discussed, and a methodological discussion could overburden this introduction. One further point must therefore suffice: *l'intertextualité* originates as a philosophical theory about the fluidity of textual meaning associated with the post-structuralist thought of Julia Kristeva and Roland Barthes.[30] "Intertextuality" has, however, now become a standard term of art in biblical studies, functioning

27. Gadamer's 1960 *Wahrheit und Methode* inspired an uptake of *Wirkungsgeschichte* in German New Testament scholarship, including especially in several contributions to the ecumenical *Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*. The commentaries of e.g. Ulrich Luz on Matthew (1985–2002) in this series have been particularly highly regarded; see further Bockmuehl 2006, 163–66; Evans 2014, 13–19; Burnet 2021, 64–66. The wake of the English translation of Gadamer's study as *Truth and Method* in 1975 now encompasses signal publications like the ongoing Wiley Blackwell Bible Commentaries, *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, and *Journal of the Bible and its Reception*. Jonah itself has occasionally featured in the theoretical discussions; e.g. Jauss 1985; Sherwood 2000; Parris 2015; see also Vorpahl 2021; Tiemeyer 2022.

28. In the terms developed by Stefan Alkier, this is an analysis of reception-oriented intertextuality in service of understanding production-oriented intertextuality; 2005, 4; 2009, 9–11.

29. See Eco 1990, 50–62.

30. E.g. Kristeva 1969; Barthes 1970.

as an umbrella term that includes the kind of scriptural influence and reception analyzed here.[31] When appropriate, I use the terms "intertextual" or "intertextuality" in this now common sense.

Comparison with Ancient Jewish Texts

Matthew and Luke are both immersed in early Jewish traditions of scriptural interpretation, although their precise social and intellectual location in relation to those traditions of course differs.[32] I offer a brief discussion here on why the Lukan and Matthean reception of Jonah finds its most appropriate context in the ancient Jewish reception of the book before laying out a methodology for comparative analysis with ancient Jewish texts.

Matthew appears to stand in close geographical and intimate social proximity to Galilean Judaism,[33] perhaps writing from southern Syria.[34] Such proximity is evident in e.g. the prominence of Galilee (Matt 4:15; 26:69–73; 28:16), the defense of Torah observance (5:17–20; 15:20), and the hyperbolic, internecine criticisms of Pharisees (5:20; 15:1–20; 23:1–36; 27:62–66).[35] The First Gospel's distinctive Jewishness left an impression in the ancient sources, also.[36] Nevertheless, a simple binary of "within" or "without" Judaism is unlikely to capture the complex, particular situation of Matthew (or Luke-Acts) within the emerging early Jesus movement.[37] The present thesis is not the place to resolve this important debate, but the

31. For a critical evaluation of this state of affairs, see Moyise 2000, 14–41.

32. For recent surveys, see e.g. Konradt 2023; Bauspiess 2023; Rusam 2023.

33. For contemporary discussions of Matthew within Judaism, which have increased in popularity particularly since Overman 1990; Saldarini 1994; and Sim 1998; see e.g, Kampen 2019; Runesson and Gurtner (eds) 2020; Runesson 2023.

34. So recently, e.g. Konradt 2020, 22–23.

35. See further on these issues recently Kampen 2019, 13–22; Konradt 2020, 5–20; 2021, 125–32.

36. Cf. e.g. Papias's early account of Matthew's composition "in the Hebrew language" (Ἑβραΐδι διαλέκτῳ) preserved in Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.16. On the relation of Matthew to an ancient *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, see e.g. Coogan 2023.

37. Rightly, Konradt 2021, 123.

Matthean reception of Jonah analyzed in Chapter Four does suggest Matthew has not abandoned hope for other groups in Israel. Matthew is usually thought primarily to have consulted Greek translations of the Jewish Scriptures, although Menken's important study (2004) suggests these were possibly Hebraizing versions.[38] Despite this, Matthew's interaction with Jonah resembles the LXX more than the extant Hebraizing edition of Jonah, 8ḤevXIIgr (as does Luke's).[39] It is also possible but not certain that Matthew knew the Scriptures in Hebrew.[40]

Luke-Acts, locating Jerusalem at the center of the Jesus movement's foundations[41] and tracing in Acts the missionary expansion of the early church to the heart of the Roman empire, reflects a different, likely more Gentile-oriented ecclesial and social context from Matthew.[42] Nevertheless, it is possible that Luke was himself Jewish by ethnicity, although it seems equally possible that he was a Gentile former God-fearer.[43] In either case, recent scholarship rightly emphasizes Luke's proximity to Judaism.[44] Luke's writings express this in part through profound dependence on the Greek translations of Jewish Scripture.[45] Scholars generally recognize the

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38. See further Moyise 2013; Lincicum 2021, 529–30.

39. E.g. in the reference to the Ninevites' "repenting" (μετανόεω) in Matt 12:41, which resembles the vocabulary of Jonah LXX, whereas 8ḤevXIIgr opts for ἐπιστρέφω at Jonah 3:8–10. See Tov, Kraft, and Parsons (eds) 1990, 28–33; Ziegler (ed) 1984; cf. Menken 2004, 253–54.

40. See further Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 32–58; 230–32.

41. Luke 2:22, 38, 41, 4:9; 9:51; 13:33–34; 19:41–44; 23:28; 24:47, 52; Acts 1:4, 8; 8:1; 20:16; 21:13; 28:17.

42. The critical essays in Tyson (ed) 1988, reflecting different points of view in dialogue, remain a useful introductory reference point for discussions of Luke's perspective on the Jewish people. See also the historical survey in Tyson 1999.

43. See further Keener 2012–2015, 1:402–22.

44. Oliver 2013; Oliver 2021, esp. 23–26; Smith 2024, esp. 107–155.

45. For a survey of research, see Bovon 2006, 108–23; see also Fitzmyer 1998a, 295–313; Rusam 2003, 7–15; Denaux 2013, 57–79; Sterling 2023, 84–238. On Luke's formal education, see recently Reece 2022, esp. 15–50.

Septuagint as corresponding to Luke's scriptural text, although he may have possessed revised versions of some books and at times quoted freely.[46]

The use of Jewish Scripture is one element of the (admittedly imperfect) narrative unity between Luke's two books which forms an operating assumption for this study. This thesis assumes both works are written by one author, who intended Acts as a continuation of the narrative begun in Luke. There are of course seams and tensions, as in the well-known overlap in the ascension accounts in Luke 24:50–53 and Acts 1:6–11, but I regard the narrative continuity as clear and intentional while also not being executed flawlessly.[47] Narrative and theological continuity, rather than strictly literary unity, is relevant here. The consistency in Luke's engagement with Jonah/the Sign of Jonah throughout both volumes, argued in Chapter Three, might be regarded as further evidence of such continuity.

The Lukan and Matthean reception of Jonah thus finds its most appropriate context in the ancient Jewish reception of the book. Analyzing the ancient Jewish Jonah is, therefore, the focus of Chapter Two. By situating the Evangelists' reception of Jonah within the prophet's ancient Jewish profile, the analysis resists the tendency for "Old Testament in New Testament" treatments to recognize only New Testament authors' autocratic "use" of Jewish Scripture. This contextualization is one way, methodologically, to account for the pressure the scriptural text itself exerts through its perceived divine agency on the authors receiving it within a particular hermeneutical environment, even if one of course also grants the agency of those authors.[48] As

46. See recently Bauspiess 2023, 266; Rusam 2023, 333. The translational tendency associated with the *kaige* recension appears potentially to have influenced the citation of Joel 3:2 LXX in Acts 2:18; see Karrer and Schmid 2010, 180; noted in Lincicum 2021, 530.

47. Important discussions include, e.g. Cadbury 1927; Tannehill 1986; Parsons and Pervo 1993; Marguerat 2002, 43–64; Gregory and Rowe (eds) 2010.

48. See further Bockmuehl, cited in Hays 2016, 7–8.

Lincicum has argued in relation to Paul's reception of Deuteronomy, the present analysis suggests that common features in Jonah-receiving texts may reflect the influence both of a shared interpretative environment and, often, defining features of the book of Jonah itself.[49]

I am thus not concerned to make a case for the influence of any single ancient Jewish reception of Jonah upon Matthew or Luke, but rather to illuminate a broad stream of ancient Jewish interpretation of Jonah in which the Evangelists can be located.[50] The project is thus a comparative rather than a genealogical one, except insofar as Jonah itself is upstream of every receiving text.[51] Luke's and Matthew's Christologically focused understandings of the Sign of Jonah are, I grant, distinctive. But it nevertheless proves consistently illuminating to view their reception of Jonah within the broader ancient Jewish reception of the prophet. Because, furthermore, the extant primary sources are limited, it is useful to include in the comparative analysis ancient Jewish texts which postdate Luke's and Matthew's writings.

The upper chronological limit, in order to keep the discussion both concise and maximally useful for illuminating the New Testament Jonah, is set at the end of the fourth century. This is roughly when literature traditionally designated "Tannaitic," in the sense of featuring the *Tannaim* predominantly although postdating their activity, was edited.[52]

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49. See Lincicum 2010, esp. 9–11.

50. Compare the methodological comments in Novenson 2012, 8–10 regarding capturing a complete view of an ancient Jewish linguistic system to contextualize Paul's grammar of messianism; and see also his later comments on Christianity, as least in its messiah language, as itself an instance of the ancient Judaism which does not reach a culminating limit in the first century; Novenson 2017, 21–26. This messiah language, as he rightly notes, is part of a larger project of scriptural interpretation in ancient Judaism (2017, 17), and in that sense it intersects closely with the Christological interpretation of Jonah in Luke-Acts and Matthew.

51. Compare the concerns in Sandmel's famous article, "Parallelomania," where he recognizes the way in which Scripture gives rise to certain "parallels" between later interpreting sources without any other literary influence between them; 1962, 3.

52. E.g. the halakhic midrashim, on which see Stemberger 1996, 247–51.

Sources written later than the New Testament are not automatically assumed to cast light back onto the first century, but they may attest to older traditions (e.g. the fasting liturgy in m. Ta'an. 2:1–5). They may also witness to the natural implications of interpretative trajectories already present in the first century.[53] In the neglected Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, one encounters a still relatively poorly known Hellenistic Jewish text, probably dating from the second or third century CE, which engages homiletically with almost every detail of the Jonah narrative.[54] The analysis of *De Jona* is aided particularly by consulting the complete unpublished manuscript of Hans Lewy's selective Greek retroversion, English translation, and commentary on *De Jona* (1945).[55] This is the first treatment of *De Jona* to have the advantage of consulting Lewy's complete manuscript.

The comparative task is necessarily selective. It highlights certain aspects of comparanda for closer scrutiny, categorizes or generalizes about those aspects to make the connections between texts visible, and redescribes them in an idiom intelligible to contemporary scholarship.[56] Selectivity, however, does not imply arbitrariness simply because it serves a purpose. One may grant that, as Jonathan Z. Smith's famous definition correctly emphasized, the act of comparing generates an intellectual construct "within the space of the scholar's mind."[57]

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53. E.g. Fragment Targum (V) and Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13; Jonah Targum 2:6 in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets.

54. I will argue for a probable upper limit in the late third century CE based on the history of the transmission of the Philonic corpus through the Library of Caesarea; see further Runia 1993, 16–25; cf. Siegert 1992, 40–41, 45–46; Muradyan and Topchyan (trans) 2013, 750–51.

55. My thanks to the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities for providing me with complete transcriptions of the manuscripts of Hans Lewy's English translation and Greek retroversion of the Armenian text of *De Jona* and his commentary on the text, and with copies of the correspondence between Lewy and Kirsopp and Silva Lake regarding the publication of what was to have been the second volume of his critical edition. Thanks also to Michael Stone for his encouragement to request access to a copy and for recounting by email the manuscript's fascinating history.

56. See further Barclay and White 2020, 3–4; Barclay 2020, 13–16.

57. Smith 2013, 51.

This need not, however, prevent the construct from illuminating the mind. If others find the comparison's purposes useful and clearly communicated, it may illuminate other minds also.

As anticipated above, three comparators help to determine which aspects of the ancient Jewish Jonah texts to highlight in comparison to the New Testament Jonah.[58] These are the ways in which the texts receive (1) the tension between warnings of divine judgment and clemency in Jonah; (2) the relationship between the election of Israel and the salvation and repentance of the Gentile Ninevites, or the tension between the particular and the universal; and (3) the deliverance of Jonah by means of the great fish/sea monster and its integration into the wider story and the larger themes in (1) and (2). These axes correspond to the dimensions which divide Sign of Jonah interpreters, noted earlier, and they allow the conclusion of Chapter Two to gather up implications for the analyses of Luke-Acts and Matthew in Chapters Four and Five.

Order of Presentation

Chapter Two surveys the landscape in which the New Testament Jonah resides by conducting an analysis of the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah. The investigation focuses on comparison with the New Testament Jonah. Chapter Three then addresses the Sign of Jonah in Luke-Acts. Treating Luke's writings first, despite his possible use of Matthew, is natural because of the inherent interest of Luke's enigmatic explanation of Jonah's Sign (Luke 11:30) by comparison with Matthew's better-known explanation of the Sign in terms of Jonah's three days and nights in the sea monster (Matt 12:40). Matthew's Sign of Jonah is then addressed in Chapter Four. Chapter Five's effective history analysis grounds the foregoing analysis of the

58. Comparators constitute the "with respect to" inherent to any comparison; Smith 2013, 51; Gathercole 2020, 174.

Matthean and Lukan Jonah in real-world, chronologically proximate readers and hearers of these texts. A concluding chapter synthesizes the results of the investigation.

Chapter Two: Jonah's Ancient Jewish Reception

Introduction

The following analysis thoroughly contextualizes the Matthean and Lukan receptions of Jonah within ancient Jewish interpretive traditions.[1] As noted in the introduction, situating Matthew and Luke-Acts thus resists framing the discussion merely in terms of the New Testament authors' imperious "use" of the Old Testament.[2] The analysis reveals how both shared interpretive traditions and Jonah's own themes and features influence these receptions.[3]

This analysis is the first systematic comparison between ancient Jewish interpretations of Jonah and the broader range of potential New Testament Jonah texts. Earlier efforts to ground the Matthean and Lukan receptions of Jonah in their ancient Jewish context were too brief and piecemeal to be effective. As a rule, they focus only on the Sign of Jonah pericope to the exclusion of other crucial Jonah allusions, such as those commonly recognized in the Stilling of the Storm Stilling pericope.[4] This restrictive focus also characterizes the widely cited treatment in Chow 1995 (25–44), which is methodologically more robust than older treatments but still relatively brief.[5] This brevity often results in an insubstantial analysis of the sources, while some

1. See the methodological discussion in Chapter One pp. 13–18.

2. See my further comments in Chapter One, referencing comments by Bockmuehl cited approvingly in Hays 2016, 7–8.

3. See further Lincicum on the reception of Deuteronomy in Paul and early Judaism; 2010, esp. 9–11.

4. E.g. Jeremias 1964; Seidelin 1951, 122–27; Bayer 1986, 136–38; Huber 1998, 89–92. On the Storm Stilling in Luke-Acts and Matthew, see Chapter Three pp. 133–148 and Chapter Four pp. 181–189, respectively.

5. A lesser-known, unpublished dissertation by Bruce Neil Beck (2000) is yet more selective than Chow 1995, but has a usefully thorough discussion of Lives of the Prophets.

inaccuracies also render the account flawed.[6] The discussion omits several sources examined here, including Tobit, Judith, Joseph and Aseneth*, Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers* (Apos. Con. VII 33–38), and Huqoq Synagogue mosaics.

Chow's account has been eclipsed in recent years by Daniel Vorpahl's (2021) lengthy analysis of the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah from the standpoint of intra-Jewish reception history. Vorpahl is the most consistent dialogue partner of the present chapter, although the aim of that study gives it a different focus from my own New Testament focused contribution. By contrast, Vorpahl's study is concerned with Jonah as emblematic of the dynamics of intra-Jewish reception *per se* and continually springboards from specific instances of Jonah's reception to address wider theoretical issues (2021, 152–422). Yet, despite its ample length, even there the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, by far the most extensive ancient Jewish reception of Jonah, is treated only in translation, while, for example, Jos. Asen. and the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics are neglected and under-analyzed, respectively. As noted in Chapter One, other important recent scholarship on the reception of Jonah, such as that of Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (e.g. 2016; 2017; 2022) whose work approaches Jonah's reception history from an Old Testament/Hebrew Bible perspective, underscores the extent to which New Testament scholarship requires a more thorough reckoning with Jonah as Jewishly received in antiquity. This chapter undertakes such a comparative analysis in order to perceive the Matthean and Lukan Jonah in a new light.

As outlined in the introduction, three comparators help to determine which aspects of the ancient Jewish Jonah texts to highlight in comparison to the New Testament Jonah. These are the

6. For example, too much weight is placed on the assumption of a first-century dating of Liv. Pro.; 1995, 29–31, 43. Similarly, the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* is engaged almost entirely in translation, and where the Armenian is engaged it leads to a false equation of the Armenian կերպարան ("form") with the Greek σημεῖον. But նշան ("sign") is the natural Armenian equivalent; cf. Chow 1995, 36. See Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:1092; 2:433.

ways in which the texts receive (1) the tension between warnings of divine judgment and clemency in Jonah; (2) the relationship between the election of Israel and the salvation and repentance of the Gentile Ninevites, or the tension between the particular and the universal; and (3) the deliverance of Jonah by means of the great fish/sea monster and its integration into the wider story and the larger themes in (1) and (2). These are the three primary axes along which interpreters of the Sign of Jonah are divided, even if existing interpretations are typically organized in a more simplistic taxonomy.[7] The conclusion of the chapter draws together the analysis of these comparators and suggests their implications for the New Testament Jonah. However, each ancient Jewish Jonah text is first analyzed on its own terms and in its original setting, so that any light it casts on these dimensions emerges organically from historical-critical analysis. Some texts naturally also prompt more specific, individualized comparison with aspects of the NT reception of Jonah. The implications of this chapter's analysis will be evident throughout, but its full significance lies in how it assists in the direct exegesis of Luke-Acts and Matthew in the following two chapters.

After a brief assessment of the textual situation of Jonah in antiquity, the analysis begins with the chronologically earliest reception of Jonah, Tobit (200 BCE). The upper chronological limit is set at the end of the fourth century.[8] For later sources, as well as for earlier ones, the exercise of this chapter remains comparative rather than genealogical.[9] The only texts assumed

7. Vorpahl also highlights three themes in particular for their consistent reception: the "foreign peoples theme (*Fremdvölkerthematik*) central to the book of Jonah," the "prophecy theme" (*Prophetiethematik*), and the "multidimensional theme of repentance" (*Bußthematik*); 2021, 10. Although Vorpahl does not of course consider the point, these are related conceptually to the axes which divide interpreters of the Sign of Jonah, corresponding to my axes (1) and (2), which were developed independently of Vorpahl's.

8. See p. 16.

9. See the full methodological discussion in Chapter One pp. 13–18, which offers a theoretical justification for the comparative task and the inclusion of ancient Jewish literature postdating Luke-Acts and Matthew.

directly to have influenced the others are the Jewish Scriptures. I first turn to a discussion of the scriptural Jonah's textual profile in antiquity.

The Textual Jonah

The Hebrew text of Jonah was relatively stable by the first century CE,[10] as is evidenced by the general agreement between the MT of Jonah and the oldest Hebrew manuscripts of the book (4QXII$^{a, f–g}$ (4Q76, 81–82)). These were found in Qumran cave four and date from the mid-second to the late first century BCE.[11] Jonah is thus available and used as a scriptural text at Qumran even though the prophet does not otherwise feature prominently in the Dead Sea Scrolls, if at all.[12] A second-century CE Hebrew manuscript of the Twelve was also discovered at Wadi Murabba'at (Mur88), which contains a partial text of Jonah very close to the MT.[13] The limited textual variants in these manuscripts may be viewed synoptically in the useful format of the *Biblia Qumranica*.[14] Where relevant, these variants are noted in the discussions of Matthew and Luke-Acts, although Tov emphasizes that they are not of major importance for textual criticism of the Minor Prophets.[15]

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10. Brooke 2006, 24; Tov 2019, 130. The Hebrew of Jonah in this thesis is taken from the BHQ edition, Gelston (ed) 2010.

11. See Fuller 1997, 221–318 for the critical edition of these manuscripts in the *DJD* series. This depends on Fuller's earlier thesis work; Fuller 1988. Influential initial work was done in Barthélemy 1963. See further Brooke 2006, 21, 24–25.

12. The only possible exceptions occur in the Hodayot (1QH^a XIV 23–24; 1QH^a XI 19–20) and are at best loosely allusive. The psalmic language of these hymns more likely testifies to the participation of Jonah's own psalm in a world of scriptural and psalmic discourse rather than to intentional allusions to Jonah on the part of the Qumran hymnists. It is difficult to be certain whether ideological considerations or sheer accident cause Jonah's minimal Qumran footprint; cf. Vorpahl 2021, 225–29.

13. Brooke 2006, 26–27; Martínez 2004, 104; See the critical edition in Milik 1961.

14. Ego et al. (eds) 2005, 77–87.

15. Tov 2019, 130.

Jonah was translated into Greek along with the rest of the Book of the Twelve, probably in the second century BCE (Dogniez 2021, 309). In addition to Septuagint Jonah,[16] a large portion of Jonah in Greek is extant in the Minor Prophets scroll from Naḥal Ḥever, 8ḤevXIIgr. This scroll is a *kaige* revision of the Old Greek, dating to the first century BCE or first century CE and exhibiting a Hebraizing character.[17] The divine Name occurs, for example, in paleo-Hebrew script rather than the customary κύριος of the LXX. While Matthew may have utilized comparable Hebraizing LXX texts, its allusions to Jonah in fact more closely resemble the LXX rather than 8ḤevXIIgr, as do Luke's.[18] Nevertheless, this manuscript illustrates that Greek Jonah is alive and well not only in LXX form but is also being copied in the Judean desert around the first century.

Also of interest are the different places Jonah occupies in the Book of the Twelve in the MT and LXX ordering, as well as potentially in 4QXII^{a} (4Q76). In the MT, Jonah comes between Obadiah and Micah, reflecting perhaps a biblical chronology (e.g. 1 Kings 18:3–7, 16; 2 Kings 14:25; Micah 1:1); while in the LXX, Jonah is placed between Obadiah and Nahum, potentially reflecting the common Nineveh focus of Jonah and Nahum (see e.g. Lovelace 2021, 450–51). 4QXII^{a} (4Q76) may reflect a third ordering, with Jonah immediately following Malachi, although this is contested.[19] It is further uncertain whether this potential Malachi–Jonah

16. LXX text of Jonah cited from the critical edition of Ziegler (ed) 1984, cross-referenced with the edition of the Naḥal Ḥever Greek Minor Prophets scroll, 8ḤevXIIgr, of Tov, Kraft, and Parsons (eds) 1990.

17. Tov, Kraft, and Parsons (eds) 1990, 26; Hall et al. (eds) 1999, 119; Aitken 2019, 3.

18. See Chapter One footnote 39.

19. See the text critical contributions in Fuller 1988, 5–38; 1997, 221–32. A case for the potential alternative order's significance may be found in Jones 1995, 129–69, 221–42. Cf. Brooke 2006, 21–22; and see the more skeptical assessments in Martínez 2004, 106–108; Guillaume 2007, 2–10.

sequence would have closed out the Twelve or occupied a middle position.[20] It is possible that the LXX order affected a later Greek edition of Tobit (G^{I}) by encouraging the reading of Jonah in light of Nahum,[21] but by far the majority of ancient Jewish and Christian reception of Jonah is explicitly concerned with Jonah itself rather than its integration into the Book of the Twelve.[22] Josephus, as we will see, forms a partial exception by omitting any reference to Nineveh's repentance. In addition, however, to an awareness of Nahum's prophecy (*Ant.* 9.239–42), this likely also reflects Josephus's sensitivity to his Roman context as well as a historiographical orientation towards the veracity of Jonah's prophecy.[23] Indeed, as will become evident, Jonah is more often explicitly associated with figures from biblical narrative such as Daniel, the Three Young Men, and Moses than with other figures among the Twelve, although he is recognized as a prophet (e.g. *De Jona* 1.1). For ancient Jewish readers, the historical and canonical fate of Nineveh does not obscure Jonah's key theme of the merciful divine responsiveness to repentance, even if this responsiveness does not yield a picture of non-particularistic universalism.

The distinctives of Jonah LXX as a translation are of course crucial to the New Testament's reception of Jonah. The most obvious of these distinctives is the rendering of Jonah's "great fish" (דָּג גָּדוֹל) as "great sea monster" (κῆτος μέγα).[24] This translation is discussed below under the section heading "Joseph and Aseneth" and plays an important role at least in

20. Emphasized in Brooke 2006, 21–22.

21. See below pp. 27–28.

22. Noted in Ham 2009, 40.

23. See below pp. 42–45.

24. Jonah 2:1 LXX/Heb. See further Hall et al. (eds) 1999, 120.

Matthew's Sign of Jonah (Matt 12:40).[25] Other crucial but lesser-known features result from how the LXX amplifies thematic elements by translating different Hebrew words with similar Greek terms (Hall et al. [eds] 1999, 122). These include: (1) the streamlining of references to "proclamation" by the rendering of קרא and זעק as κήρυσσω[26] and of קְרִיאָה as κήρυγμα;[27] (2) the enhancement of a "belly/womb" motif by rendering מְעֵה הַדָּגָה as κοιλία τοῦ κήτους[28] and בֶּטֶן שְׁאוֹל as κοιλία ᾅδου,[29] which is further amplified by the homonymous rendering of the ship's "hold" (יְרֵכָה) as a κοῖλος ("hollow/cavity");[30] and (3) the limiting of Nineveh's space for repentance to three days, conforming it to Jonah's time in the belly of the sea monster.[31] The influence of these aspects of Greek Jonah on Matthew and Luke-Acts will be revisited in multiple places throughout Chapters Four and Five.

Tobit

The earliest extant Jonah-receiving text is the romantic narrative of Tobit, originally written in Aramaic or Hebrew around 200 BCE (Ego 2021, 306). Tobit engages with Jonah by repurposing Jonah's "great fish" theme against the backdrop of a setting in Nineveh and, in a later Greek recension, by explicit reference to Jonah's prophecy of Nineveh's destruction. I will treat the latter of these first since the reference to Jonah there is patent.

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25. See pp. 34–38.

26. Jonah 1:2; 3:2, 4–5, 7.

27. Jonah 3:2; Hall et al. (eds) 1999, 122.

28. Jonah 2:1–2 Heb/LXX. One notes the feminine gender of the fish in Hebrew (הַדָּגָה), likely reflecting the reference to its belly/womb; cf. Ambladh 25n52; Tiemeyer 2016, 312–313. Might this itself have encouraged the LXX translator(s) to enhance the κοιλία theme?

29. Jonah 2:3 Heb/LXX.

30. Hall et al. (eds) 1999, 122, 147.

31. Jonah 3:4; 2:1 LXX/Heb.

The Interpretation of Jonah's Prophecy in Tobit G^1

Near the end of the narrative, in the recension found in Codex Vaticanus (G^1),[32] Tobit warns his son Tobias to leave Nineveh because he is "persuaded of what Jonah the prophet said concerning Nineveh" (πέπεισμαι ὅσα ἐλάλησεν Ἰωνᾶς ὁ προφήτης περὶ Νινευὴ).[33] However, in the older and longer Greek version found in Codex Sinaiticus (G^2), Tobit instead refers to Nahum's prophecy of Nineveh's destruction, not Jonah's (Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck [eds] 2004, 320). Unfortunately, the Aramaic of this verse, attested in $4QTob^c$ ar (4Q198), is fragmentary and ambiguous. In its present form it refers only to an utterance of God, naming no prophet: [...]אלהא די מל [...] (presumably: "[the words of] God, which he utter[ed…]").[34] However, the subsequent lacuna is large enough to allow a potential reference to the divine word coming through a prophet like Nahum or Jonah. Nevertheless, the original may not have referred either to Jonah or to Nahum (Fitzmyer 2003, 325–26), and since the older and more reliable G^2 mentions Nahum, it is unlikely that Jonah was present in the original.

For present purposes, the introduction of Jonah in place of Nahum by later scribal editors, even though likely not original, is still significant. Some have thought it could reflect the editors' greater familiarity with Jonah's dramatic beginning rather than the surprising way Jonah's prophecy is actually fulfilled (Zimmermann 1958, 118; Fitzmyer 2003, 326). This, however, seems unlikely given the brevity of Jonah and the widespread knowledge and reception of Nineveh's repentance in ancient Jewish sources. Others have suggested that the substitution of

32. The date of this recension is unknown, but it is at least prior to the fourth century, when Codex Vaticanus was compiled; Boyd-Taylor 2021, 24.

33. Tobit 14:4, see also 14:8. Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck (eds) 2004, 320. Subsequent citations of Tobit in the ancient versions refer to this critical synopsis, which preserves the ancient witnesses as they stand rather than producing an eclectic, reconstructed text; Weeks, Gathercole, and Stuckenbruck (eds) 2004, 5. The particularities of Tobit's textual history make this ideal for the present discussion.

34. Broshi et al. 1995, 57; see Fitzmyer 2003, 326.

Jonah for Nahum represents a pro-Gentile, and perhaps even early Jewish-Christian context (Bredin 2006, 56), but this too seems unlikely given that the reference is to Gentile Nineveh's destruction rather than to its salvation. More probably, therefore, the insertion of Jonah for Nahum in Tobit G^1 represents the canonical and historical memory of Nineveh's downfall along with the popularity of Jonah relative to Nahum.[35] The LXX order in which Jonah directly precedes Nahum may have encouraged this. It may thus be that, from the point of view of Tobit G^1, Jonah's prophecy has both a proximate and an ultimate fulfillment. One fulfillment is presented in the text of Jonah, while the other is known both from Nahum and as a matter of historical memory by the author of Jonah and the scribal editors of Tobit G^1.[36]

The effect of this reception of Jonah in Tobit is to receive Jonah among the catalogue of stories which ultimately reveal God's faithfulness to Israel vis-à-vis the nations, as other ancient Jewish sources also do (e.g. 3 Macc. 6:8), and to minimize any simplistic universalism which might be perceived in the Jonah narrative.[37] In this way, the editors of G^1 move with the grain of the substantial repurposing of Jonah's "great fish" motif in Tobit 6:2–9 that is already present in the extant Aramaic fragments as well as in both G^1 and G^2.

Tobias and the Great Fish

Following now along with Tobit G^2, the "great fish" motif emerges in Tobit as Tobias and the angel Raphael are first "overtaken" (τυγχάνω) by night on their journey to recover the

35. Cf. Ego 2003, 156–67. The issue of Jonah's apparently false prophecy might also potentially be a concern, as Ego thinks and as Vorpahl (2021, 161) also suggests. Further on Nineveh's dual fates, see Ben Zvi 2003, 4–33.

36. *Pace* e.g. Lührmann 1969, 40–41, who thinks Tobit G^1 supports a view of the Sign of Jonah as strictly an announcement of judgment. Bayer is correct to recognize instead in Tobit G^1 a view in which judgment is temporarily suspended after Nineveh's repentance; Bayer 1986, 136. See Ben Zvi 2003, 24. A different route is taken in Nahum Targum 1:1 in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, for which see the discussion below.

37. *Pace* Bredin 2006, 56. Vorpahl insightfully points to Tobit's perspective on Nineveh as a center of diaspora Jewish life, supporting this point; 2021, 161.

money entrusted to Tobit's kinsman. At nightfall, they decide to set up camp by the Tigris (6:2). When Tobias steps down into the river to wash his feet, suddenly a "great fish" (ἰχθὺς μέγας) leaps out of the water and tries "to swallow the foot of the boy" (καταπεῖ(ν) τὸν πόδα τοῦ παιδαρίου, 6:3). Witnessing this, the angel commands Tobias to seize the fish, bring it to shore, and cut out its gall, heart, and liver. Raphael reveals that by burning the fish's heart and liver, Tobias will be able to exorcize a demon. This later proves to be the demon Asmodeus that has haunted Tobias's future wife, Sarah, killing her seven successive bridegrooms at the consummation of their respective marriages with her. The gall of the fish will then serve as ointment for healing Tobit's blind eyes (6:4–9, 14–18). Thus, this nighttime encounter with the ἰχθὺς μέγας is a pivotal scene in the narrative of Tobit. By killing and cooking the fish at the angel's instructions, Tobias prepares the resolution of the story's two primary conflicts.

Of course, the "great fish" (דָּג גָּדוֹל) of Jonah 1:17 (2:1 Heb/LXX) is rendered in the LXX as κῆτος μέγα rather than ἰχθὺς μέγας, as in Greek Tobit. However, the Aramaic of Tobit 6:3, attested in 4QTob^{c} ar (4Q197), has נ חד רב [נו] ("a great fish"), the same phrase as Tg. Jonathan to Jonah 2:1 (נונא רב) (cf. Fitzmyer 2003, 206). The only difference is that the Targum has נונא ("fish") in the emphatic state, while Aramaic Tobit 6:3 has the use of חד as the indefinite article. A Jonah allusion is thus very likely intended in Tobit's fragmentary Aramaic. The translators of G^{2} would in any case not necessarily wish to copy Greek Jonah when they might render a straightforward translation of the (probably) Aramaic original, which ἰχθὺς μέγας accomplishes. One would, furthermore, not expect a κῆτος μέγα ("great sea monster") to be lurking in a river, no matter how mighty. Just as Jonah's fish is sent by the LORD to καταπιεῖν him (Jonah 2:1 LXX), in Tobit 6:3 the fish attempts to "swallow" (καταπεῖν) Tobias's foot (or in G^{1} Tobias

himself; cf. Henderson 2022, 299). Set against the backdrop of Nineveh, an allusion to Jonah here is not inappropriate.[38]

The significance of this encounter with the "great fish" may lie in its nighttime setting, since the story's themes of blindness and sight are thematically woven into its movement through day and night (Nowell 1999, 1028). "Day" (ἡμέρα) occurs mainly near the beginning and end of the book with positive associations, while "night" (νύξ) mainly occurs in the central section of 6:2–8:18, referring usually to the wedding nights of Anna and her successive bridegrooms, the time of the demon's murderous activity. The only exception is in 2:9, the night during which Tobit buries his poor fellow countryman and is blinded (Nowell 1999, 1028). Tobias's dangerous nighttime encounter with the "great fish" is, therefore, associated with and foreshadows the night of his marriage to Sarah, the night during which the demon is exorcized (Jacobs 2018, 116).

It is possible, to be sure, to overread this association of the fight with the "great fish" with exorcism in terms of *Chaoskampf* traditions, as in interpretations where the "great fish" stands in directly for death itself in its war against the Almighty.[39] Similarly, the episode has occasionally been overread in terms of exile symbolism, where the "great fish" in Tobit and Jonah stand in directly for the experience of exile (cf. Henderson 2022, 302–3). Nevertheless, Nineveh was a center of diaspora Jewish life (Vorpahl 2021, 161), and the book of Jonah appears strongly colored by the experience of exile amidst hostile, imperial powers (Downs 2009, 27–44). The literary link between the episode and the exorcism performed by Tobias on his and Sarah's wedding night is very likely significant, therefore, particularly set against the ominous

38. Levine 2018, 21; *pace* Vorpahl, who overlooks the connection between 4QTob^{c} ar (4Q197) and Tg. Jonathan to Jonah 2:1 and thus doubts a deliberate allusion here. By contrast, Vorpahl argues unconvincingly for an allusion to Jonah's death wish (Jonah 4:3) in Tobit 3:6, but the Greek wording is very different. Unfortunately, the Aramaic is too fragmentary to compare with Tg. Jonathan to Jonah 4:3; cf. Vorpahl 2021, 164.

39. *Pace* Macatangay 2020, 322–25 and Henderson 2022, 302–3.

connotations of night throughout the narrative. Tobit's blindness, which is healed by the fish's gall, is also thematically connected to night by the motif of sightlessness. Tobias's fish may indeed, therefore, be associated to some extent with the chaotic elements and with death, and thus participate in *Chaoskampf* traditions, but likely not as a direct stand-in for death itself or for the exile *per se*. It seems, instead, more likely that the adaptation of the "great fish" motif from Jonah is intended to heighten the sense of deathly peril in the encounter while augmenting the surprising narrative twist in which, as in Jonah, the devouring fish becomes an instrument of salvation in the exilic context. The adaptation of Jonah's "great fish" motif thus amplifies the theme of God's preservation of his people (Tobit's family, Israel as a whole) through the dangers of diaspora life in Nineveh and beyond, just as God preserved Jonah.

Summary

In both the original and in a later recension, Tobit receives and repurposes Jonah themes in ways that emphasize God's faithful preservation of the faithful of Israel vis-à-vis the nations. The "great fish" motif is the initial point of contact and serves the theme of God's providential care for Israel's faithful through the perils of life in Gentile dominated contexts, where the forces of death are lurking, like Tobias's menacing great fish in the River Tigris. The fish theme is, therefore, woven into the larger themes of Jonah, serving the mercy of God towards Israel's faithful. By way of a particular comparison with the Sign of Jonah pericopes in Matthew and Luke, the association of the "great fish" with exorcism in Tobit is of interest. Both Matthew and Luke set the Sign of Jonah pericope closely alongside the Beelzebul controversy and the saying about the unclean spirit's return (Matt 12:22–50; Luke 11:14–36). Tobit may help one perceive

an underlying thematic connection between these pericopes, associating the Sign of Jonah with conflict with death and the demonic or chaotic elements.[40]

Tobit G[1] then incorporates the prophecy of Jonah into this *Tendenz*, likely reflecting awareness of the historical fate of Nineveh as well as the twinned, opposing legacies of the city in Nahum and Jonah. The dialectic relationship between judgment and mercy thus finds a place in Tobit G[1]'s ancient reception of Jonah. God's mercy is strongly slanted towards the faithful (14:5), reflecting a prioritization of Israel's election over a universalist picture; while Assyrian Nineveh, Tobit reveals, will finally fall as Jonah the prophet proclaimed (14:4).

Judith

The heroic narrative of Judith, probably written between the death of Nicanor in 161 BCE and the beginning of Roman rule in Judea in 63 CE,[41] engages Jonah similarly to Tobit, through motivic adaptation. Judith opens with an un- or meta-historical reference to the rule of the historically Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar's rule over the *Assyrians* "in Nineveh, the great city" (ἐν Νινευὴ τῇ πόλει τῇ μεγάλῃ).[42] This description of Nineveh appears to be a direct allusion to Jonah 1:2 and 3:2 LXX, where the prophet is commissioned to go to "Nineveh, the great city" (Νινευη τὴν πόλιν τὴν μεγάλην, cf. 3:3; 4:11). No other ancient Jewish text refers directly to Nineveh in this way.[43] It seems likely that the conflation of Nebuchadnezzar with Nineveh reflects his and the city's status as paradigms of pagan imperialism in Jewish thought.[44]

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40. Cf. Chow 1995, 144, where the emphasis is laid on the word of God as delivering from Satan.

41. Gera 2014, 38–39; Wills 2019, 14–16.

42. Hanhart (ed) 1979, 69–70. Subsequent citations of the Greek of Judith are from this edition.

43. Vorpahl 2021, 167. Genesis 10:12 is a near exception, but it is technically Calah which is there designated "the great city."

44. However, it is not obvious, as has sometimes been argued, that this conflation would signal the narrative's fictitiousness to its original audience; *pace* e.g. Wills 2019, 175.

This invocation of "Nineveh, the great city" is, however, more than a mere hand-waving gesture in that it sets up a dramatic reworking of material from the Jonah narrative in Judith's fourth chapter.

In Jonah, a prophet from Israel brings a message to Nineveh that prompts a total fast, in which even animals (τὰ κτήνη) participate as the Ninevites "cry out to God fervently" (ἀνεβόησαν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐκτενῶς) (Jonah 3:7–8). In Judith, when the fictitiously Ninevite Nebuchadnezzar's top general, Holofernes, encamps near the land of Israel (Jdt 3:9–10), it likewise prompts a total fast in which even animals (τὰ κτήνη) participate, and "all the men of Israel cry out to God in great fervency and humble their souls in great fervency" (ἀνεβόησαν πᾶς ἀνὴρ Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐν ἐκτενείᾳ μεγάλῃ καὶ ἐταπείνωσαν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἐν ἐκτενείᾳ μεγάλη, Jdt 4:9–10). A further description of the last two verses later may echo Jonah 3:8 even more closely: "they cried out to the God of Israel…fervently" (ἐβόησαν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν Ισραηλ…ἐκτενῶς, Jdt 4:12).[45] These seem to be intentional allusions to Jonah, and the Israelite fast may purposely outdo the exemplary fast of the Ninevites by covering even the Temple altar itself with sackcloth (Jdt 4:12; Vorpahl 2021, 168).

The effect of this reworking or reversal of Jonah material in the Judith narrative is implicitly to acknowledge Jonah's presentation of the Ninevites' fast as exemplary despite their status as a hostile foreign power. On the other hand, the Israelites are here shown to be more zealous even than Nineveh in their fasting. Furthermore, while the book of Jonah narrates no loss to Israel consequent upon the sparing of Nineveh, in Judith not only is Israel spared, Nineveh is also defeated. Judith may, therefore, reflect both an admiration of Jonah's narrative as well as

45. Beentjes gestures towards a potential reversal in the fasts; 2004, 233. Gera develops the point in terms of the verbal echoes; 2014, 183, 185. The allusion to Jonah is, however, noticed in earlier scholarship, e.g. Enslin and Zeitlin (eds) 1972, 82; Zenger 1981, 469.

some discomfort with it, reflecting a focus on the particular (Israel's election) over the universal (Gentile repentance). It is also worth noting that Judith engages with the tradition of Nineveh's repentance, and thus with the themes of mercy/judgment and election, but not with Jonah's miraculous deliverance. As we will see, this is a rare move among Jewish reception of Jonah in antiquity in that most other adaptations of Jonah material typically include some reference to Jonah's miraculous deliverance from the great fish.

Sirach

The earliest mention of the canonical twelve Minor Prophets as an entity occurs in the book of Sirach, typically dated to the early second century BCE and preserved primarily in Greek:[46] "May the bones of the Twelve Prophets sprout afresh (ἀναθάλλω) from their place, for they comforted Jacob and redeemed them in hopeful faith (49:10)."[47] Since Jonah is alluded to via the reference to the Twelve, it is interesting that there is an apparent reference to resurrection here, but nothing conclusive can be said about the author's interpretation of Jonah from this hint.

Joseph and Aseneth

The romantic narrative Joseph and Aseneth mythologizes Greek Jonah's "devouring great sea monster" in a manner which strongly resonates with Matthean and other, later readings of Jonah. Much recent scholarship continues to argue that Jos. Asen. reflects a Hellenistic Jewish setting in Egypt, perhaps between the early first century BCE and the turn of the second century CE, without denying its complicated textual history or ruling out Christian influences in the

46. Limburg 1993, 100; Corley 2021, 284.

47. The extant Hebrew is similar: "may their bones sprout forth from below" (תמ[....]ן פרתהי עצמתם; where most conjecture something like פרחת מתחתם); Egger-Wenzel (ed) 2022, 658.

origin and/or transmission of the text.[48] Others suggest a more straightforwardly Christian and later provenance, particularly in light of similarities with Syriac traditions (so, Kraemer 1998, 245–85; Nir 2012). In this narrative, what Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer terms the "monstrification" of the great fish reaches a zenith, at least among sources which might plausibly reflect ancient Jewish origins (2017, 54–55; 2022, 94).

After Aseneth's first encounter with Joseph, she repents of her former worship of Egyptian gods. During her prayer, Aseneth asks that the Lord will rescue her from the Devil, whom she identifies as the primeval "lion" and the father of the Egyptian gods, so that the Devil will not "cast her into the abyss of fire, and into the tempest of the sea (καὶ εἰς τὴν καταιγίδα τῆς θαλάσσης), and lest the great sea monster swallow her up (καὶ μή με καταπιέτω τὸ κῆτος τὸ μέγα)."[49] This seems to draw upon Greek Jonah 2:1, which similarly has, "The Lord appointed a great sea monster to swallow Jonah up (Καὶ προσέταξε κύριος κήτει μεγάλῳ καταπιεῖν τὸν Ιωναν)." Jonah is of course also cast into the sea, and Aseneth's reference to a "tempest" resonates with Jonah's tempest even if καταιγίδα is not used in Greek Jonah to describe the storm.[50]

Joseph and Aseneth's cosmic "great sea monster" appears to augment a trajectory already begun in Greek Jonah. There, a "great sea monster" (κῆτος μέγα) has of course assumed the

48. See Collins 2005; Hicks-Keeton 2018; Ahearne-Kroll 2020, 10–11. On the history of its transmission, see Wright 2025.

49. Jos. Asen. 12.9–10. I have given the quotation from Philonenko's shorter critical edition to show that the Jonah allusion is still present in this comparatively minimalist reconstruction; Philonenko 1968, 171. The longer edition of Burchard reads in the relevant portion (12.11 in his edition's verse numbering): "and that the storm would [not] surround me in the darkness and toss me into the depth of the sea, and the great sea monster which is from eternity swallow me" (καὶ ἡ καταιγὶς περιελίσσεταί με ἐν σκότει καὶ ἐ<κ>βαλεῖ με εἰς τὸν βυθὸν τῆς θαλάσσης καὶ καταπίεταί με τὸ κῆτος τὸ μέγα τὸ ἀπ᾽ αἰῶνος); Burchard, Burfeind, and Fink (eds) 2003, 162

50. Philonenko draws attention to this basic similarity in a brief footnote; 1968, 173; see further Angel 2006, 87–88; Tiemeyer 2017, 54–55; 2022, 94.

place of the simple "great fish" (דָּג גָּדוֹל) of Hebrew Jonah (Tiemeyer 2017, 55; cf. Angel 2006, 88). The Hellenistic-Jewish homily *De Jona*, working from the Greek text of Jonah, finds this κῆτος μέγα so terrifying that it would have been "able to kill by frightening before devouring" (*De Jona* 20.4). Greek Jonah's fish is thus on at least one ancient Jewish reading no longer merely a "benevolent sea creature" (*pace* Tiemeyer 2017, 55; cf. Angel 2006, 88). Nevertheless, Greek Jonah's κῆτος μέγα has not yet metastasized into the abyssal monster of Jos. Asen. (cf. Angel 2006, 88). It may be better, therefore to describe the development of the Septuagintal trajectory in Jos. Asen. as a "mythologization" of the already "monstrified" κῆτος μέγα of Jonah LXX (cf. Tiemeyer 2017, 54–55; 2022, 94).

Perhaps this hyperbolic mythologization of the κῆτος μέγα results in part from the poetic nature of Aseneth's prayer. If this is so, it is possible that the κῆτος μέγα should be understood no more literally to occupy the abyss of death than the Devil is literally to be understood as a "lion," "primeval" or otherwise (12:9). On the other hand, the mythologization of Jonah's "devouring κῆτος μέγα" does not seem to have been fabricated out of whole cloth, as if solely for the prayer's dramatic effect. Instead, it was more likely inspired by intertextual connections with the only other two Septuagintal κῆτη μέγάλα: (1) "And God made the κῆτη μέγάλα (Heb. תַּנִּין) and every living reptile" (Gen 1:21 LXX); (2) "Rather, may he who curses that day curse it— he who is about to subdue τὸ μέγα κῆτος (Heb. לִוְיָתָן)" (Job 3:8 LXX). Both of these scriptural κῆτη μέγάλα are occupants of the cosmic deep, even if the potential cosmogonical resonances of the underlying Hebrew words לִוְיָתָן and תַּנִּין have been subsumed under the one God's creative sovereignty in Jewish Scripture.[51] However, neither of these are said in the LXX to καταπιεῖν

51. Cf. Noegel 2015, 240–58; Tiemeyer 2022, 103. See further Blenkinsopp 2011, 35–39.

anything (or anyone). The "devouring great sea monster" motif is a Jonah distinctive in the Greek Old Testament.

It is true that תַּנִּין is usually translated with δράκων in the LXX (12/14 times, with one untranslated), just as לִוְיָתָן is typically also translated with δράκων ("dragon"; 5/6 times).[52] However, the Gen 1:21 translation of תַּנִּין as κῆτος μέγα may have wielded outsized influence given its prominent place at the beginning of Jewish Scripture. Furthermore, the identification of Jonah's κῆτος μέγα with the one in Job 3:8 LXX is directly made by at least two ancient readers.[53] In fact, precisely the rarity of κῆτος μέγα in the LXX may have encouraged the contemplation of the three places in which the phrase occurs in light of one another. Thus, it seems likely that an interweaving of the three scriptural texts which speak of κῆτη μέγάλα amplifies the trajectory already begun by the Septuagintal translation of דָּג גָּדוֹל as κῆτος μέγα. This interweaving creates the conditions for the hyperbolic, mytho-poetic expansion of the "devouring great sea monster" motif of Jonah 2:1 LXX in Jos. Asen. 12.9–10.

For this reason it is unnecessary to posit early Christian influence in order to explain this particular development in Jos. Asen. Instead, this poetic expansion could reflect ancient Jewish theological developments based on inner-scriptural logic which are analogous to the early Christian-Jewish theology expressed in Matt 12:40's typological association of Jonah's κῆτος with death.[54] On the other hand, Matthew may have influenced Jos. Asen. What is striking is that

52. Cf. Tiemeyer 2017, 55. Aquila translates with κῆτος in three places where the LXX has δράκων. See Exod 7:9; Job 7:12; Isa 27:1. Theodotian makes the same decision at Isa 27:1. Angel exaggerates the tendency in Aquila by citing additional places which in fact lack any use of κῆτος; cf. Angel 2006, 112. Notably, neither Theodotian nor Aquila introduces a κῆτος *μέγα*; Field 1875, 1:91; 1875, 2:15, 476.

53. Origen's *De oratione* 13.4; Ambrose's *Explanatio psalmorum* XII 43.85; see further Duval 1973, 193.

54. Tiemeyer spots a similar but distinct trajectory for the κῆτος in T. Jud. 21.7: "Those who rule will be as κῆτη, swallowing (καταπίνω) people like fish"; 2017b, 55–56; de Jonge (ed) 1978, 74. However, we do not have a κῆτος μέγα here but only multiple metaphorical κῆτη that καταπίνω human beings. Tiemeyer may, therefore, be correct to see the influence of Jonah 2:1 LXX in this text, but it seems not to rise clearly to the level of a deliberate

the "great sea monster" in Jos. Asen. 12.9–10 is identified as directly with death as Jonah's fish (or indeed whale) will ever be in the subsequent millennia of reception. Perhaps Matt 12:40 is the explanation, or perhaps the decision of Greek Jonah's translators to render דָּג גָּדוֹל as κῆτος μέγα thus creates the intertextual conditions for the fish's (further) mythologization in Jos. Asen. It seems likely that these intertextual linkages in the LXX have affected Matt 12:40. Jos. Asen. does not, however, explicitly engage with other Jonah themes in which we are interested, such as tensions between election and the universal or between mercy and justice.

3 Maccabees

Remaining with narrative receptions of Jonah and his miraculous deliverance, we turn to the divine rescue of the Alexandrian Jews from the persecutions of Ptolemy Philopater IV in 3 Maccabees. Contemporary scholarship continues to favor an Egyptian provenance for this historical romance and a date in either the first century BCE or CE (e.g. Dyer 2021, 188). The events it recalls ostensibly take place in the third century BCE.[55] The story goes that Ptolemy, angered by a recent humiliation in Jerusalem, intended to subject Alexandria's Jewish population to a brutal registration that, unless they joined in pagan worship practices, would brand their bodies with the ivy leaf of Dionysus and relegate them to a subservient status (2:27–30). When faithful Jewish resistance proves this an impossibility, the matter escalates until Ptolemy has all Alexandrian Jews forcibly rounded up in the hippodrome at the city's outskirts. In this massive, enclosed space he plans to have them trampled by elephants that have been maddened with wine (4:11–5:2).

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allusion. I cannot identify these κῆτη as a definite development Jonah's sea monster in particular; cf. Tiemeyer 2017, 55–56; 2022, 94–95.

55. Josephus *Ap*. 2.50–55 relates a similar story involving drunken elephants under a later, second-century BCE Ptolemaic ruler, which may have a better claim to a kernel of historicity and may be related to that found in 3 Macc. 2:25–7:23; Croy 2006, xiv–xv.

At the last moment, the venerable priest Eleazar calls upon God to remember his historic rescues of Israel, summoning five moments of deliverance in his prayer: (1) the Red Sea crossing; (2) the defeat of Sennacherib; (3) the Three Young Men in the furnace; (4) Daniel in the den of lions; and (5) "Jonah, who was wasting away in the belly of a deep dwelling sea monster, you looked upon and restored him unharmed, O Father, to all the people of his country" (τόν τε βυθοτρεφοῦς ἐν γαστρεὶ κήτους Ιωνᾶν τηκόμενον ἀφιδὼν ἀπήμαντον πᾶσιν οἰκείοις ἀνάδειξας, πάτερ; 3 Macc. 6:8).[56] Eleazar's prayer for deliverance is then answered by a dramatic angelic intervention.

Several things here are relevant to the present analysis. Firstly, 3 Maccabees remembers Jonah not primarily as a prophet (as in G^1 Tobit 14:4, 8) or a preacher of repentance (cf. Matt 12:41; Luke 11:32), but firstly as a hallmark member of the "catalogue of God's rescued."[57] As in multiple other ancient Jewish sources, Jonah keeps close company with Daniel and the Three Young Men in their stories of deliverance.[58] Furthermore, the description of Jonah as "wasting away" or "dissolving" (τηκόμενον) may refer not only to his psychological languishing but also literally to the wasting away of his flesh.[59] This could suggest that for the author of 3 Maccabees Jonah is raised at least from the very brink of death, and perhaps from death itself, with potential implications for interpreting the Sign of Jonah in terms of death and resurrection.

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56. Text and (modified) translation from Croy 2006, 24–25. Croy's text reflects Codex Alexandrinus, but here his translation reads ἀνέδειξας for the ἀνάδειξας of A; 2006, 100–101. On Jonah's return to "the people of his own country" (my own translation), cf. Josephus *Ant.* 9.214 and Liv. Pro. Jeremias argued from 3 Macc. 6:8 that Jonah's deliverance is known to all his "hearers" (πᾶσιν οἰκείοις); 1964, 409n26. Cf. more recently Bayer, who makes the case that this should be read as "associates" and include the Ninevites; 1986, 136. Neither is finally convincing since the emphasis in 3 Macc. 6:8 is on Jonah's safe return to his countrymen.

57. Beck 2000, 100; cf. Chow 1995, 28.

58. *De Jona* 25.2–4; Apos. Con. VII 37 (*Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers*).

59. Cf. "She watched the flesh of her children melted by the fire (τὰς σάρκας τῶν τέκνων ἑώρα περὶ τὸ πῦρ *τηκομένας*)…; 4 Macc. 15:15.

Secondly, Jonah's deliverance is associated closely with the paradigmatic moment of salvation, the exodus from Egypt, by a chiastic structuring of the list of five examples. The Red Sea crossing and Jonah, which both obviously involve deliverance from the sea, are the first and last mentioned (6:4, 8). Then, the second and fourth examples involve deliverance explicitly from the "earth" (γῆ), in the former case the "earth" (γῆ) covered by Sennacherib's armies and in the latter from within the "earth" (γῆ) of the lion's den (6:5, 7). The central, third entry then involves deliverance from a third natural element, the fire of the furnace (6:6) (Vorpahl 2021, 173–74). As I will further illustrate, this chiastic pairing of Jonah and the Red Sea finds a striking parallel in another deliberately chiastic or "antiphonal" identification between them in the recently uncovered floor mosaics at the (probably) fifth-century Huqoq Synagogue in Galilee,[60] as well as in several other ancient Jewish sources drawing a similar connection between Jonah and this foundational saving event.[61] The widespread connection between Jonah and the Red Sea, which may indeed already be present in Jonah 2:6 Heb,[62] increases the plausibility of a core claim of this thesis, namely that Jonah was a central kerygmatic text for Luke-Acts and Matthew. The exodus is itself, of course, indisputably central to early Christian understandings of Jesus's saving death and resurrection.

Thirdly, while it may not at first be obvious, all five of these examples recall God's deliverance of Israel in the face of oppressive foreign powers comparable to Ptolemaic Egypt: (1) Ancient Pharaonic Egypt (Red Sea); (2) Assyria (defeat of Sennacherib); (3 and 4) Babylon (Three Young Men and Daniel); (5) Nineveh/Assyria (Jonah). From one point of view, Jonah

60. Magness et al. 2018, 111.

61. E.g. *De Jona* 25; Fragment Targum and Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13; Targum Jonathan to Jonah 2:6; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers*.

62. Jonah 2:6 has "reeds (סוּף) were wrapped around my head."

may even appear to be the odd one out of this list in that the corresponding Gentile nation in Jonah is *spared* rather than defeated or humiliated through the deliverance of Jonah (cf. Vorpahl 2021, 175). Furthermore, it might be objected that in the Jonah narrative Nineveh is not actually described as an enemy of Israel. However, this is likely because the memory of Nineveh was already by definition one of a "bitter and long lasting yoke," and to point that out within the narrative would have been redundant (Sasson 1990, 70). I noted earlier that Tobit and, particularly, Judith trade in these sorts of associations with Nineveh without any need for further comment within the narrative. Moreover, Nineveh may in fact be "overthrown" as a hostile power in Jonah precisely by their repentance, itself involving the humiliation of fasting (see *De Jona* 48.3–7). Yet even the peaceful quality of Nineveh's "defeat" in Jonah fails to single Jonah out completely from the other exemplars (cf. Vorpahl 2021, 175–76). While the other examples do result in the demise of Israel's enemies, none of them involve any fighting by Israel. There is thus a theme of non-violence on the part of Israel which runs through all five examples.

It is interesting, in this light, that Jonah, Daniel, and the Three Young Men keep consistently close company in ancient Jewish and indeed Christian sources.[63] In addition to their spectacular deliverances, the stories share the motif of the non-violent overthrow of Israel's enemies. In Jonah itself, the dialectic between divine judgment of Israel's enemies and the extension of divine clemency towards the nations finds a distinctive kind of resolve. 3 Maccabees thus exhibits a reading of Jonah that may provide highly significant context for Jonah's reception in the New Testament as a text which can allude to the peaceful "overthrow" and perhaps conversion of Israel's enemies while exemplifying God's deliverance of his own

63. *De Jona* 25.2–4; Apos. Con. VII 37 (*Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers*); cf. Clement of Alexandria's *Strom.* 1.21; Origen's *Cels.* 7.53.

people. It is striking that 3 Macc. 6:8 can suggest this by an allusion to Jonah's wasting away in the sea monster, placed skillfully within a particular context.

Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*

The reception of Jonah in Josephus's magnum opus, *Jewish Antiquities*, composed in Rome for a Roman audience during the reign of Domitian in 93/94 CE (*Ant.* 20.67; Schwartz 2016, 36), is of a nature different from the ones discussed to this point. It is a selective re-narration of biblical testimony to Jonah in the context of a comprehensive account of Jewish history from creation to the first Roman-Jewish War. Josephus comes to his discussion of Jonah ben Amittai via his first appearance in Jewish Scripture, prophesying to Jeroboam II in 2 Kings 14:25. The author narrates this cameo straightforwardly, following Scripture to record Jonah's prophecy that Jeroboam II would restore the political borders of the northern kingdom to their ideal dimensions, from Lebo-Hamath (Amatho) in the north to the Dead Sea (Lake Asphaltitis) in the south (*Ant.* 9.206–207). On this note, it is rarely observed, but the fact that Jonah prophesies the restoration of Israel's ideal territory may be significant not only in explaining why the figure of Jonah is chosen by the author of Jonah to be challenged by a Gentile city's repentance,[64] but also in how Jonah's memory might continue to be associated with hopes for Israel's restoration, particularly in northern territories. This is of course not directly foregrounded by Josephus, but it is significant given his chronological proximity to the Evangelists that the historian attends to this side of Jonah's scriptural profile. Even given his Roman audience, he does not hesitate to include this politically and territorially pro-Jewish prophecy. I will come back to this point in relation to Matthew's interest in Jonah.

64. So, Day 1990, 46.

After recording this scriptural cameo, Josephus then turns to Jonah the book, ostensibly to keep his promise of giving an "exact account" (τὴν ἀκρίβειαν τῶν πραγμάτων) of Jewish history as he finds it written (*Ant*. 9.208; Thackeray [trans] 1930, 108, 110). Here, however, he exerts censorious editorial control over the narrative, entirely omitting Nineveh's repentance and the whole issue of the truthfulness of Jonah's prophecy as well as the "conversion" of the sailors. Jonah's mission is to go to "the kingdom of Ninos" and proclaim that it will lose its dominion over Asia (*Ant.* 9.208, 214). Jonah flees from this command via Joppa towards "Tarsus in Cilicia" (εἰς Ταρσὸν ἔπλει τῆς Κιλικίας, *Ant.* 9.209). Most of the account is dedicated to the dramatic episode of the storm without much alteration. Jonah's "three days and as many nights" in the κῆτος are then relayed with the distancing excuse that "the story has it" (λόγος; cf. Herodotus *Hist.* 9.179: "the story goes" (λόγος ἐστί); *Ant.* 9.213). Jonah's prayer is moved, perhaps more believably, to the time after he is cast upon the shore, where it becomes a prayer of forgiveness. The shore in question, Josephus tells us, is the Euxine (Black) Sea (*Ant.* 9.214).[65] Jonah then preaches to the Ninevites and departs the city. There Josephus unceremoniously ends his account of Jonah, an abrupt closure for readers familiar with the biblical tale but one which Josephus again assures us he has "recounted…as [he] found it written down (ὡς εὗρον ἀναγεγραμμένην)" (*Ant.* 9.214).

Scholars debate the reasons for Josephus's omission of Nineveh's repentance and the related incident of the sailors' prayers to Israel's God. Jewish proselytism might potentially have

65. This would of course not bring Jonah all that much closer to Nineveh than the Mediterranean shore. One recalls Melville's hilarious description of Nineveh, (deliberately?) misreading Jonah 3:3, as "very much more than three days' journey across from the nearest point of the Mediterranean coast." He speculates that for the "whale" alternatively to "have carried [Jonah] round by the way of the Cape of Good Hope…would involve the complete circumnavigation of all Africa in three days, not to speak of the Tigris waters, near the site of Nineveh, being too shallow for any whale to swim in. Besides, this idea of Jonah's weathering the Cape of Good Hope at so early a day would wrest the honor of the discovery of that great headland from Bartholomew Diaz, its reputed discoverer, and so make modern history a liar"; 1851, 407.

been unpalatable to Josephus's Roman audience (Feldman 1992, 23–25). On the other hand, Josephus describes the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism without reservation in several places throughout *Antiquities*, including even under compulsion or threat (e.g. *Ant.* 11.285–86; 13.257–58; Höffken 2001, 392). He may possibly have omitted Nineveh's repentance in order to make his narrative work with Nahum's prediction of Nineveh's destruction in *Ant.* 9.239–242 as well as with the historical fact of Nineveh's downfall (Höffken 2001, 400). Why, however, would Josephus dwell on Nineveh's destruction to begin with? This seems best explained by the imperial interests of Josephus's Roman audience, since it is "dominion over Asia" which Nineveh was to lose (*Ant.* 9.208, 214), and which Rome, by the time of Josephus, had gained (cf. Feldman 1992, 25). Thus Jonah, like Josephus himself (*J.W.* 3.399–402), becomes a prophet whose prophecy serves the interests of the Roman empire. In this, Josephus finds a simultaneously pro-Jewish and pro-Roman take on Jonah, but not one which reflects anxieties about Jewish particularism vis-à-vis the Gentile nations (*pace* Vorpahl 2021, 267).

In terms of a more pointed comparison with the New Testament reception of Jonah, it is worth noticing again that the majority of Josephus's retelling is taken up with the storm episode. If Josephus is any indication, the episode may evidently have proven appealing for first-century readers of Jonah. The second salient point of comparison could potentially have significant implications from a specifically Lukan perspective. This is the identification of the Tarshish to which Jonah flees as *Tarsus* in Cilicia (9.209). As Feldman notes:

> Cf. Josephus, *A* 1.127, who, paraphrasing the Table of Nations found in Genesis, chapter 10, comments on the verse that gives the name of one of Japheth's sons as Tarshish (Gen. 10:4). Josephus there declares that Tarshish was the ancient name of Cilicia, as is proven by the fact that its principal and capital city was called Tarsus. It is perhaps tempting to see a connection between this identification of Tarshish as Tarsus and the fact that a contemporary of Josephus, the apostle Paul, was, like Jonah, involved in a shipwreck; but Josephus nowhere mentions Paul or his mission; and if the passage were interpolated by a Christian one would have

> expected a more precise reference to Paul as well as to the gospel which he preached (1992, 6).

Feldman here contemplates the possibility of an intentional reference to Paul by Josephus; however, it is more likely that Josephus merely reflects a widely circulating view that made this identification of Tarsus in Cilicia with Tarshish.[66] The conflation between Tarsus and Tarshish may simply have been a common one, although Josephus is the oldest I have found.[67] The presence of the conflation in Josephus, a near contemporary of the author of Luke and Acts, shows that the conflation between the hometown of Saul-Paul and the Tarshish of the book of Jonah was already widely made during the time of Luke-Acts' composition.

M. Ta'anit

In turning to m. Ta'anit, I begin discussion of ancient Jewish sources which clearly postdate the New Testament. The Mishnah was likely edited around the turn of the third century CE (Stemberger 1996, 109, 139; Cohen and Lapin 2022, 1). It seems reasonable to assume that liturgical passages, such as the description of the fast day liturgy in m. Ta'an. 2:1–5, reflect at least somewhat older traditions. The incorporation of Jonah into this fasting liturgy is rich despite its brevity and deserves some attention here.

The ritual is prescribed in the immediate context as a fast for rain in times of drought (m. Ta'an. 1:1–7), although historical fast days such as the seventeenth of Tammuz, the ninth of Av,

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66. This conflation is also attested in the Targums, including Fragment Targum and Neofiti 1 to Gen 10:4; see Hengel and Schwemer 1997, 175. See also Tertullian *Fug.* 10.20: "[Jonah] had crossed over from Joppa towards Tarsus" (*ab ioppe tarsum*); Thierry 2010, 10.20. Some scholars believe Luke and Acts (and the case is admittedly stronger for Acts) show knowledge of Josephus's *Antiquities*; see further Mason 1993, 185–225, esp. 204–213. However, well-known differences between Luke and Josephus in their narration of common historical events may indicate that any acquaintance could have been personal rather than literary, given a potential Roman provenance for Luke-Acts.

67. This connection, as I will note in Chapter Five, is observed in relation to Jonah and Paul's shipwreck in Zeno's *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah* (1.34.5/2.17.5) and Paulinus of Nola's *Epistles* 49.9.

and Yom Kippur are mentioned later (4:6–8). The *Nasi*, *Av Bet Din*, and all the people are to be sprinkled with ash, and then an elder is to come forward to admonish the people and lead a prayer. He says, "Our brethren, it is not said of the people of Nineveh that 'God saw their sackcloth and fasting (וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת שַׂקָּם וְאֶת תַּעֲנִיתָם),' rather 'God saw their deeds and how they turned from their evil way (וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם, כִּי שָׁבוּ מִדַּרְכָּם הָרָעָה).'"[68] Thus, the Ninevites serve as a positive example of heartfelt repentance and fasting for Israel despite their Gentile status (*pace* Vorpahl 2021, 322).

After the elder recites the Amidah, six additional blessings are added in which brief scriptural prayers are paired with thematically related rescues. For example, "I turned my eyes to the mountains" (Ps 121:1) is paired with the blessing: "May he who answered Elijah on Mount Carmel answer you…" (m. Ta'an. 2:3–4). The blessing related to Jonah pairs with Ps 130:1: "Out of the depths I call you, O Lord," with, "May he who answered Jonah in the belly of the fish (מִי שֶׁעָנָה אֶת יוֹנָה מִמְּעֵי הַדָּגָה) answer you and listen to the voice of your outcry this day. Praised are you, who answers in times of distress" (m. Ta'an. 2:3–4). In addition to Jonah and Elijah, also mentioned are Abraham, the Red Sea, Joshua, Samuel, and David and Solomon, placing Jonah again among an illustrious catalogue of God's rescued (cf. 3 Macc. 6:8).[69]

It is interesting that here the Ninevites' positive example in their fasting and Jonah's exemplary prayer leading to his spectacular deliverance are recalled closely together. In m. Ta'anit, Jonah and the Ninevites are understood as equally desperate, such that the Ninevites' fasting and Jonah's prayer are equally powerful scriptural resources for an Israel in need of

68. M. Ta'an. 2:1. Translations of m. Ta'an. are from the *Oxford Annotated Mishnah*; Cohen et al. 2022. Hebrew text is taken from the critical edition of Correns (ed) [1989] 2019.

69. Correns argued that since the order in m. Ta'an 2:4 runs Jonah-David-Solomon, then the Jonah-Solomon connection in the Sign of Jonah saying (Matt 12:41–42; Luke 11:31–32) may share a common source with the fasting liturgy; Correns 1980, 91–94. This, however, overlooks the thematic connection between the blessings and the prayers in the Amidah.

salvation (in the form of merciful rain). In this way, Nineveh's salvation is not perceived as a threat or necessarily in competition with Israel's own. Both Jonah and Nineveh are saved, and both form part of the warp and woof of Israel's scriptural inheritance which may be drawn upon for Israel's good. The particularity of Israel's election and the universal possibility of repentance and salvation are not in ultimate conflict, and the emphasis is laid upon the mercy of Israel's God as a response to repentance and fasting. Jonah's prayer from the fish is integrated into the book's wider theme of God's merciful responsiveness to prayer.

Such an interpretation may also bear witness to a trajectory in the interpretation of Jonah which eventually leads to Jonah's inclusion as the Yom Kippur Haftarah, the afternoon liturgical reading from the prophets, by the time of the Babylonian Talmud's final redaction around 600 CE (b. Meg. 31a; Neusner 1994, 185). I will return to a fuller discussion of this trajectory in relation to the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, but for now one simply notes that m. Ta'anit provides no evidence that this formal association of Jonah with the holiday is yet in effect.

Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers **(Apos. Con. VII 33–38)**

A consensus holds the prayers in the Apostolic Constitutions VII 33–38 originally to have been Jewish since they very closely mirror the Seven Benedictions.[70] The Apostolic Constitutions were probably compiled around 380 CE in Antioch, but the prayers themselves are generally believed to have been composed in the third century, also being of probable Syrian and perhaps Antiochene origin.[71] Jonah is included in a list of scriptural heroes in Apos. Con. VII 37, the first paragraph of which corresponds closely to the fifth benediction, the *Avodah* ("service"; Fiensy 1985, 130).

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70. Fiensy 1985, 153–54; 1989; van der Horst and Newman 2008, 9–22.

71. Fiensy 1989, 26–27; van der Horst and Newman 2008, 21–22.

In the second paragraph, Jonah is listed alongside Daniel and the Three Young Men among those whose "sacrifice" God saw and accepted. God receives the "sacrifice…of Daniel in the den of the lions, of Jonah in the belly of the sea monster (Ἰωνᾶ ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους), of the three young men in the furnace of fire…"[72] I have of course already noted this association with Jonah and the Three Young Men in 3 Macc. 6:6–9, and it will appear again in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* 25 (cf. m. Ta'an. 2:4). Nevertheless, it is difficult to be certain whether the long list of heroes in Apos. Con. VII 37 is the work of its Christian compiler or if it belonged to the prayers' originally Jewish source (cf. Fiensy 1985, 207; van der Horst and Newman 2008, 87). With some degree of caution, the list's association of Jonah with Daniel and the Three Young Men might add to the evidence that the list derives from the compiler's Jewish source. Jonah's presence alongside these figures from the book of Daniel in yet another potentially Jewish "catalogue of God's rescued" adds weight to the implications of that grouping mentioned in relation to 3 Macc. 6:8.[73]

The Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*

The Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* and *De Sampsone* were among the texts in the Philonic corpus translated into Armenian in the fifth or sixth century by the translators of the "Hellenizing School," probably in Byzantium.[74] A third, fragmentary text on Jonah joins them in the manuscript tradition, but it appears to reflect another, probably Armenian, author's correction of

72. Greek text from the critical edition of Metzger; 1987, 88.
73. See pp. 38–42 above.

74. See Lewy 1936, 9–16; Siegert (ed and trans) 1980, 2–3. On the dating and activity of the "Hellenizing School," see further Mercier 1978; Terian 1982; Muradyan 2014. On the possibility of translation outside the capital city, see Vardazaryan 2025, 301–302.

the uncomfortable detail of Jonah's (suicidal?) leap into the sea in *De Jona* 14.3.[75] Both *De Sampsone* and *De Jona* are homiletical in character, if also expressive of careful written composition.[76] Their styles are consistent with the rhetoric of the Second Sophistic,[77] expanding imaginatively and entertainingly on the biblical narratives in a manner no longer thought closely to resemble Philo's own allegorical technique.[78] *De Jona* is framed as an encomium or panegyric to Jonah (*De Jona* 1.1–4), an emphasis on rhetoric which is sustained in the expansive speeches of the characters throughout the narrative.[79] These speeches provide much of the distinctive material in *De Jona* which fosters comparison with the New Testament Jonah.

A liturgical setting on Yom Kippur has been suggested for this sermon, but in my opinion it has not been proven likely, particularly given the late evidence for the reading of Jonah as the *haftarah* for Yom Kippur. One can say *De Jona* stands in a trajectory which led to Jonah's eventual association with the holiday by the time of the redaction of the Babylonian Talmud in 600 CE.[80] The earliest clear evidence for the reading of Jonah as the *haftarah* on Yom Kippur is b. Meg. 31a (rightly, Stemberger 2008, 47). However, a probably fourth-century Christian text called *De solstitiis et aequinoctiis conceptionis et nativitatis Domini nostri Iesu Christi et Iohannis Baptistae* appears mistakenly to attribute ancient Jewish observance of Yom Kippur to the memory of Jonah's preaching and the Ninevites' repentance (Ezra 2003, 253). Yet, despite

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75. Siegert 1992, 52; I have taken the numbering of *De Jona* from Muradyan and Topchyan (trans) 2013 since this edition will be the most accessible to English-speaking readers. English translations, occasionally slightly modified, are from this edition.

76. See further Siegert (ed and trans) 1980, 5–6; 1992, 7–29; 2008, 37–39; Stemberger 2008, 45–48.

77. So, Lewy 1945; Kamesar 1994, 527–29.

78. So, already, Freudenthal 1869, 141; Lewy 1936, 3n10; Siegert (ed and trans) 1980, 2; 1992, 36, 40, 300–301.

79. See further on genre, Siegert and Roulet (ed and trans) 1999, 20–25. Also noted in Lewy 1945.

80. Cf. Siegert 1992, 29–30; Siegert and Roulet (ed and trans) 1999, 27–29; Ezra 2003, 57–59.

the good work of Naomi Cohen in showing Philo's potential acquaintance with an emerging *haftarah* cycle between the 17th of Tammuz and Yom Kippur, no evidence of Jonah as one of those readings is forthcoming in Philo or other earlier sources (Cohen 2007, 55–69). This is true despite Luke-Acts forming early evidence for a liturgical reading from the Latter Prophets (Luke 4:16–30; Acts 13:27). Earlier rabbinic writings do not make a Jonah–Yom Kippur connection explicit, which is particularly telling in the case of m. Ta'an. 2:1–5, which deals with the Ninevites as an example of repentant fasting.[81]

The sermons are relatively neglected in New Testament scholarship, and despite its probable composition in the second or third century CE (as I will argue), the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* is still of great value for interpretation of the New Testament Jonah—not least because it is the single Jewish text from antiquity that engages the entire Jonah narrative in detail. I will return to the text's Jewish origins and relationship to early Christian readings of Jonah presently, but first a closer look at questions of dating and provenance is in order.

Date and Provenance

The Armenian Philonic corpus stems from the collection of the "Library of Caesarea," which began with Origen's personal library and was expanded by Pamphilius and Eusebius through the early fourth century. The later restoration efforts of Euzoius (bishop of Caesarea from 376–79) brought the Philonic manuscripts into mainstream Byzantine tradition.[82] Since the

81. *Pace* Ezra, the Ninevites' wearing of their best garments during their repentance (*De Jona* 38.4) and dancing (40.7) does not appear to reflect m. Ta'an. 4:8, which says that on Yom Kippur "Jerusalemite girls go out in borrowed white dresses—so as not to shame those who owned none." The Ninevites humble themselves in their best garments, but the purpose of the clothing in m. Ta'an. 4:8 is to emphasize simplicity and equality; Neusner (ed and trans) 1988b, 315; cf. Ezra 2003, 55n219, 57–59.

82. On the transmission of Philo to the mainstream of Byzantine tradition through the "Library of Caesarea," and particularly through Euzoius's copying efforts, see Runia 1993, 16–31; 1996; Sterling 2019, 307. A serendipitous agreement between a Viennese Greek manuscript referencing Euzoius's restoration of Philonic texts and the extant Armenian Philo confirms the connection of the Armenian Philo to the broader manuscript tradition

extant writings of Origen never allude to *De Jona* or *De Sampsone*, he likely had not brought them with him among treasured volumes in his move to Caesarea from Alexandria. This indicates they likely entered the collection in Caesarea in the third or early fourth century, during the height of the library's period of text collection and contact with Jewish communities in Palestine.[83] Thus, the composition of both *De Jona* and *De Sampsone* is likely to have taken place in the third century or earlier. The false attribution to Philo probably occurred after Eusebius's death since his list of Philonic works to which he has access does not refer to *De Jona* or *De Sampsone* (Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 2.18.1–8). Further evidence that the Philonic association predated the work of the Armenian translators comes in the attribution to Philo of a line from *De Sampsone* 20, which survives in Greek in the eighth-century *Sacra Parallela* of John of Damascus.[84]

This transmission history opens the possibility of a Palestinian or Antiochene provenance while not utterly ruling out the Alexandrian origin and first-century date favored by Folker Siegert on internal grounds.[85] The similarity of the homilies to Greek rhetoric of the Second Sophistic also allows for such a provenance. The timing, however, of the flourishing of the Second Sophistic in and around Palestine, which extends at least until the fourth century school of Libanius in Antioch (see e.g. Hidary 2018, 6–10), may favor a date later than the first century.

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derived from Caesarea, for which see Runia 1993, 21–22; 1996, 478–82. On the history of the library, see Carriker 2003, 1–36. On Philo in Armenian tradition broadly, see recently Vardazaryan 2025.

83. On the collection habits of Origen, Pamphilius, and Eusebius, including in relation to Jewish texts, see Grafton and Williams 2006, 57–65; 178–84.

84. The *Sacra Parallela* included a single line of *De Sampsone* 20 in Greek, incorrectly cited as from Philo's *De gigantibus* (Samson was often depicted as a giant in antiquity); Evangelatou 2017, 418; Royse 1991, 89–92; see Siegert 1992, 39. For Samson as a giant, see e.g. the images and discussion in Britt and Boustan 2021.

85. Given cultural challenges for Egyptian Jews in the wake of the Diaspora Revolt, he finds a first or second century date likeliest but does not rule out a date as late as the fourth century; 1992, 39–52; Siegert and Roulet (ed and trans) 1999, 34–41. Cf. also Muradyan and Topchyan (trans) 2013, 750–51.

Some further support for an Antiochene or Palestinian provenance might also be drawn from the evident popularity of Jonah and Samson in fourth- and fifth-century Galilean Jewish culture, given their public presence in synagogue artwork there.[86] The homiletic character of *De Jona* and *De Sampsone* strengthens their probable connection to the synagogue, which might on the one hand seem to militate against an Alexandrian or other Egyptian provenance after the Diaspora Revolt of 115–117 CE (Siegert 1992, 44). On the other hand, if recent leading scholarship is correct then Egyptian Jewish synagogue life may well have flourished enough in the second and third centuries to have produced homiletical masterpieces such as the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* and *De Sampsone*.[87]

Finally, *De Jona* may reflect contact with Christian interpretations of Jonah as proof of the resurrection of the flesh which are otherwise extant only beginning with the fifth book of Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*, that book being composed as late as the 190s CE (Behr 2013, 69). There, Jonah is listed alongside Elijah and the Three Young Men as proof that God can preserve and resurrect the flesh for eternal life (*Haer.* 5.5.2). In the 1826 edition of *De Jona* by Aucher (Awgerean), the editor already interpreted the relevant line as "a passage certainly about the resurrection of the flesh."[88] It has been rendered variously in the modern translations, but Muradyan and Topchyan have: "For if one can open the innards of a beast and keep alive its living spirit separated from the body, why should He not keep unharmed that which was made from the earth and was given back to the earth in pledge?" (*De Jona* 25.6; 2013, 788). This

86. They also feature in nearby Cilicia, but whether the building in Mopsuestia is a church or synagogue is disputed. See the further discussion below in the section on the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics; see further Britt and Boustan 2019; Avi-Yonah 1981; Magness 2013; Magness et al. 2018, 114–15.

87. This comment is informed by Meron Piotrkowski's recent lecture entitled "Early Jewish-Christian Relations in Egypt" at the Oxford New Testament Graduate Seminar on 13 June 2025 (Piotrkowski 2025); see also Piotrkowski 2018, 143–73.

88. "*Certus de resurrectione carnis locus*"; Aucher (ed) 1826, 529n1.

slightly convoluted sentence follows an important passage, to which I will later return, about Jonah's experience of being swallowed and spat out again inspiring faith in God for those who contemplate it (25.5). The protasis of the sentence is slightly obscure, but the apodosis appears clearly to draw an analogy between Jonah's sojourn in the fish and the burial of human bodies "made from the earth." In this sense, the translation "pledge," rendering աւաննդ (παραθήκη, παρακαταθήκη, ὑποθήκη, *depositum*),[89] is misleading, as it seems to indicate that God gave Jonah back to the earth temporarily in the fish as a pledge before finally doing so permanently upon his death. This, however, destroys the sense of Jonah's experience as a paradigm in which one can learn to trust in God for one's own life which provides the context for this line (25.5). The notion of a "deposit," which rather than "pledge" is the standard rendering of աւաննդ (Bedrossian 2010, 80), conveys a much different sense, namely that one might later *withdraw* what was deposited. This is how Lewy takes it, comparing it to 1 Enoch 51:1: "In those days, the earth will give back what has been entrusted to it, and Sheol will give back what has been entrusted to it, and destruction will restore what it owes."[90] Thus, the sense of the passage would appear to be that Jonah was entrusted to the earth in the fish's belly and later withdrawn, just as human bodies are entrusted at death and then, at the resurrection of the dead, withdrawn.[91] In this way, Jonah becomes the example of faith which he is described to be in the previous line (25.5).

89. Armenian-Greek equivalents are drawn from the *Nor Baṙgirk' Haykazean Lezui* (*New Dictionary of the Armenian Language*) Նոր Բառգիրք Հայկազեան լեզուի; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:389. The Armenian of *De Jona* is taken from the edition of Lewy (ed) 1936. Throughout, I usually indicate equivalents with an "equals sign" (=) but not in order to indicate exactitude or perfect knowledge. Any retroversion, even at the level of the word and much less the level of syntax, must be considered provisional; see further Muradyan 2011, 52. Hence, I regularly list, following the *NBH*, multiple potential Greek equivalents.

90. Lewy 1945; Translation of 1 Enoch is from Nickelsburg and VanderKam (eds and trans) 2012.

91. Cf. Siegert 1992, 165–66, in which it is argued that the survival of the spiritual part of the person is more likely envisaged.

It is of course possible that *De Jona* is the first text to employ Jonah thus as "proof" of the resurrection of the body, but it is also equally possible that it reflects knowledge of Christian interpretation of Jonah.[92] After Irenaeus, Tertullian also picks up on this theme in the early third century (*Res.* 32). The author of our Greek language homily would perhaps more likely have known Irenaeus's writings than Tertullian's, but it is also possible that this interpretation of Jonah was becoming widely known, particularly for educated Jewish and Christian biblical interpreters. Therefore, the homily's use of Jonah's experience to support the resurrection of the dead may place a *terminus a quo* of roughly 200 CE upon the homily, but one cannot be certain about this. All in all, a third-century date seems most likely, and a provenance where educated Jews and Christians were in close contact most probable, perhaps Caesarean, Antiochene, or Alexandrian. I favor a Palestinian context due to the connection to the Library of Caesarea discussed above.

A Jewish Sermon

One should not overread the above evidence to mistake *De Jona* for a Christian text, whether Jewish-Christian or otherwise. We may rely on the direct witness of the author regarding its Jewish provenance (on the likely assumption that the author of *De Sampsone* and *De Jona* is one and the same—they being companions in the manuscript tradition and distinct from any comparable ancient Jewish texts[93]). In response to Samson's riddle, the author comments: "As it seems to me, this is beyond even our understanding, though we, Samson's fellow tribesmen (համաւսնիմ = ὁμόφυλος),[94] are expected to comprehend his riddles, while to

92. See the suggestive comments in Duval 1973, 80.
93. Siegert 1992, 36–39.

94. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:22. Armenian of *De Sampsone* is taken from Aucher (ed) 1826.

the Philistines they are incomprehensible" (*De Sampsone* 42.3).[95] The author thus directly lays claim to Jewish ethnicity. Furthermore, the interest in Jonah and Samson is, as noted above, something shared with later synagogue architecture in Huqoq in Galilee and potentially also Mopsuestia in Cilicia.[96] This does not, of course, rule out a Jewish-Christian authorship, but against such an authorship, contact with Christian interpretation of Jonah seems otherwise very limited if indeed present at all.

For instance, while Chow's brief discussion of this homily mistakenly assumes a reference to a "sign" in *De Jona* 25.5, the homily refers in fact to Jonah as an "image" (կերպարան = μορφή) of rebirth.[97] The Greek word σημεῖον is equivalent instead to նշան.[98] There is thus no mention of a "sign" of Jonah, surely the most distinctive feature of ancient Christian interpretation, nor is there any reference to the typology of Jonah with Christ, which is of course very widespread in ancient Christian interpretation of Jonah. Furthermore, sacrificial interpretations of Jonah's actions, such as those arguably found in *De Jona* 14.3–15.1, also have a closer parallel in Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1)[99] than any explicit New Testament interpretation of Jonah, even if it may be granted that sacrificial readings of Jonah emerge in patristic sources from the fourth century.[100] The relevant section of *De Jona* has it that

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95. Siegert 1992, 40n5; citing Freudenthal 1869, 142; noted also in Muradyan and Topchyan (trans) 2013, 773 note on 41.1–46.5.

96. See footnote 86 above.

97. Bedrossian 2010, 343; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:1092.

98. Bedrossian 2010, 532; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:433.

99. The material from Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1) is discussed below. See further Siegert 1992, 134–35 on the sacrificial themes of this section of *De Jona*.

100. Siegert argues similarly without the reference to Mek; 1992, 48. See Chapter Five pp. 221–242 for comparable patristic readings.

> …[Jonah] threw himself into the raging sea. This suffering (ա֊ուո = πάθος)[101]…was pitiful, for the man undertook to save [others]; compelled by necessity and forced by the lot, by God, and by the [other] men, he sentenced himself to death and, in his anxiety for others' rescue, disregarded his own salvation (փրկութիւն = σωτηρία).[102]

While it is of course impossible to rule out Christian influence here, it is in fact difficult to point to a Christian text which is earlier than *De Jona* (or Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, discussed below) that contains anywhere near as explicit a sacrificial interpretation of Jonah.[103] A more fruitful point of comparison path probably lies in cognate developments in Jewish interpretation of Isaac, who becomes a willing (near) sacrifice with atoning significance. These developments are probably contemporaneous with and may even predate the New Testament (e.g. Jub. 17:15–16; 4QpsJub^{a} (4Q225)).[104] Moreover, the theme of a *willing* and vicarious sacrifice is arguably more clearly present in Jonah even than in the Aqedah (Ps.-Philo's Jonah makes the leap overboard himself; *De Jona* 14.3).

The consensus view is, therefore, in my opinion correct to regard *De Jona* as a non-Christian, Hellenistic-Jewish text,[105] while recognizing that the boundaries between Judaism and Christianity remained permeable in antiquity.[106] Nevertheless, in light of its dating, comparison with New Testament reception of Jonah must remain only suggestive, reflecting what one Hellenistic-Jewish author in antiquity saw in the narrative of Jonah. The distinct advantage,

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101. Lewy also retroverts as πάθος here (15.1 / 60); 1945.

102. *De Jona* 14.3–15.1; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:964.

103. 2nd or 3rd century CE for *De Jona*, 3rd or 4th century for Mek.

104. See e.g. Vermès 1973, 193–227; Daly 1977; Davies and Chilton 1978; Davies 1979; Swetnam 1981, 23–80; Levenson 1993, 173–99; Huizenga 2010.

105. Siegert (ed and trans) 1980, 2; 1992, 40; 2008, 25–44; Stemberger 2008.

106. Lieu rightly cautions that *De Jona* and *De Sampsone* are potential examples of this permeability; 2001, 161; also noted in Gathercole 2024, 103n9.

however, of consulting this relatively neglected text is its comprehensive engagement with the details of the text of Jonah, and as I will show it offers intriguing comparative material for the reception of Jonah in the New Testament. The following sections analyze *De Jona*'s reception of the three themes in focus in this chapter. *De Jona* also provides further scope for comparison with the New Testament Jonah, but discussion of some of this material is reserved until the treatment of Luke-Acts and Matthew in the following chapters.

Justice and Mercy in *De Jona*

As Siegert rightly observes, the principal theme of *De Jona* is God's "love for humanity" or "philanthropy" (մարդասիրութիւն = φιλανθρωπία).[107] God is himself the "Lover of humanity" or "Philanthropist" (Մարդասէր = φιλάνθρωπος,[108] e.g. 3.1; 15.3; 50.1). A second key theme, which balances and complements the first, is God's inescapability (անփախչելի = ἄφυκτος, 3.2),[109] expressed through repeated discussions of the futility of Jonah's "fleeing" (փախչիմ = φεύγω).[110] Siegert regards the theme of divine inescapability as primarily concerned with Jonah's flight and the theme of philanthropy as primarily concerned with the Ninevites (1992, 308). This is true to some extent, but in my view these two dominant themes are more closely interrelated than this assessment allows.

107. Explicitly in e.g. 7.6; 13.1–2; 15.2, 4; 16.1; 23.4; 25.1; 35.3, 6; 38.4; 39.3; 42.1; 46.8; 50.1; 53.3. NBH lists φιλὰνθρωπία, ἀνθρωποφίλια, τὸ φιλάνθρωπον as equivalents; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:222. See Siegert 1992, 106–108.

108. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:221.

109. NBH lists ἄφευκτος, ἄφυκτος, ἀναπόδραστος as equivalents; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean, eds (1836) 1:199. Lewy retroverts as ἄφυκτος at the programmatic statement in 3.2 (9); 1945. Siegert recognizes it as the second primary theological theme of the homily, following the divine φιλανθρωπία (1992, 110).

110. E.g. 6.1–3; 21.1–2; 23.2; 24.1; 41.1; 42.1; 44.1–5; see Jonah 1:3 LXX. NBH gives φεύγω, καταφεύγω, διαφεύγω, ἀποδιδράσκω as equivalents; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:923.

For instance, the theme of divine inescapability also highlights God's knowledge of the sins of the Ninevites. As Jonah can no more hide from God than from the stars (21.2), the Ninevites know God plainly from the wonders of the stars without giving him thanks (33.3; 34.2–5; 35.2). God narrates the sins of Nineveh beforehand exactly to Jonah (5.1–5), and Jonah then does so exactly to the Ninevites (27.1–28.3). The inescapability of God might initially involve the threat of death, but what one ultimately meets is the divine philanthropy: "You have many punishments, but it is your philanthropy (մարդասիրությունդ = φιλανθρωπία) that arrives; you chastise the sinners with a judge's wrath, but you take care of them with kingly love" (23.5). This is said by Jonah from within the fish about his own experience, but it is clearly meant as a universal comment applying equally to the Ninevites' experience of Jonah's prophecy and its consequences. The divine physician thus cures by "fire and water," threatening death, exposing sin, and healing with "philanthropy" after human beings are provoked to repentance (2.2). It is therefore not only true that *De Jona* explores a tension between God's goodness and severity (Siegert 1992, 308), but it also attempts to resolve it. Jonah knows from the beginning that this resolution will lead to God's relenting from punishment. He knew, more precisely,

> that God was not sending the death sentence for killing and that in fact He was not going to ruin but to build…that God makes His peace with those who pray: He does not tolerate tears and does not stand the mourning of sufferers. He changes the gloomy expression of His face and grants, [thanks] to the words of prayer, deliverance from death. (*De Jona* 41.2–4)

God indeed defends to Jonah his prerogative "to annul a death sentence" (46:8). The homilist recognizes the prophecy as "threatening ruin…death and devastation" but resulting finally in "the favor of salvation" (2.2–3).

Jonah's flight is motivated, for *De Jona*, by concern for his reputation as a prophet (41.1), with no hatred of Nineveh ever implied but only a relative indifference to the city's well-being in

comparison to his own honor (50.1–6). God of course sees that this is ultimately an accusation against himself (46.6) since Jonah prophesied only what he was divinely given. Perhaps for this reason, adding an extra layer of irony, Jonah's prophecy proves to have contained a hidden, inner meaning. The "overturning" of Nineveh happens in the heart, turning godliness into piety (48.6–7). The Armenian կործանեմ ("overturn") is given in the aorist passive subjunctive/second future in *De Jona* (կործանեսցի, 48.3). The Ps.-Philonic homilist likely followed the future passive indicative καταστραφήσεται of Jonah 3:4 LXX (so, Lewy 1945). This wordplay is, however, even better served by the נֶהְפָּכָת of Hebrew Jonah 3:4, where the Niphal stem lends the verb an inherent ambiguity between the passive and reflexive sense.[111] The exploitation of this ambiguity in *De Jona* is not, however, in my view a universal statement about prophecy, as if all apparently unfulfilled threats contained a secret inner meaning proving them to have been fulfilled. If it were meant this way, it would undermine Jonah's statement about God's response to prayers and tears, quoted above (41.2–4). Moreover, God expressly claims the authority "to annul a death sentence" (46.8). The hidden meaning within Jonah's prophecy seems more likely to be, for Ps.-Philo, a special dispensation divinely allowed to Jonah, rendering the prophet's disobedience even more ironic.[112]

It is important to point out that this divine philanthropy works in tandem with human repentance—the Ninevites' repentance and fasting are narrated extensively from 28.1–40.1. The work of the divine physician is therefore to heal by threatening disaster, which provokes repentance, serving the humane and merciful purpose of God (2.1–3). It also depends on the

111. See e.g. Sasson 1990, 234–35.

112. Cf. Siegert, who thinks two different solutions to the issue of false prophecy are set side by side; 1992, 208–9.

prophet's actions, which means that Jonah himself must first be healed before he can become an instrument of salvation (3.1–2).

Israel and the Gentiles in *De Jona*

The divine Philanthropist of *De Jona* expresses his universal love for humanity through the salvation of the Gentile Ninevites. As the "cause of cities," including Gentile cities, God also possesses the knowledge and will to be their healer (2.1). *De Jona*'s universalism, however, is expressed programmatically in covenantal terms: The "Legislation" or "Giving of the Law" (օրինադրութիւն = νομοθεσία)[113] is the ship which God built and upon which he sits as Pilot, "rightly steering this world toward the salvation of everyone" (1.4). This comment on Torah is not directly provoked by the text of Jonah and thus should be taken even more seriously as reflecting the covenantal and Jewish theological perspective of the Ps.-Philonic author.[114]

Supporting this, the sins which Nineveh commits are characteristically Gentile, founded in the failure to acknowledge or thank God (cf. Wis 13:1; Rom 1:21; Lewy 1945; cf. Vorpahl 2021, 292). Jonah's sin is not of course characteristic of Israel or even of its prophets but is instead singular. It is nevertheless only possible because of Jonah's knowledge of God's merciful character (41.2–4), a knowledge based on Israel's covenant and proper to a Jewish prophet's vocation. Conversely, Jonah remembers God's rescue of Noah, the patriarchs, Israel at the Red Sea, Daniel, and the Three Young Men as he contemplates his experience of being swallowed by the sea monster and reborn (*De Jona* 25.1–4).[115] His rescue is consistent with these historic acts of the one God of Israel's salvation of his people.

113. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:1033.
114. See further Siegert, 1992, 98–99.

115. Duval notes these associations rightly as a point of connection between *De Jona* and other ancient Jewish and Christian reception of Jonah; Duval 1973, 80.

De Jona, therefore, like other ancient Jewish texts, understands the book of Jonah as expressive of a universalism which is grounded in a particular covenantal view of Israel's God. Israel's salvation is not, therefore, threatened by Nineveh's salvation but rather, insofar as Jonah's rescue is of a piece with the history of God's saving acts in Israel, forms its instrumental basis.

The κῆτος and the Mission in *De Jona*

The Ps.-Philonic homilist cannot be accused of focusing on one aspect of the Jonah narrative at the expense of another. I noted above the way in which Jonah's experience of divine inescapability and philanthropy intersects with Nineveh's (23.5). The sermon also integrates Jonah's salvation and Nineveh's within the divine purpose of "dispatching a human for the salvation of humans," "curing" the prophet in order to "cure" the Ninevites (3.2). Narrating this sequence later to Jonah, the author has God say:

> Do you not see how, on account of [the Ninevites'] former ignorance they were depriving me of thanksgiving, but from (ի = ἀπό) [your] second birth (ծնունդ = τοκετός, γένεσις)[116] and from preaching (քարոզութիւն = κήρυγμα),[117] converting unto life anew, they confess praise to me only? (46.4)

The "rebirth" of Jonah, along with his prophetic κήρυγμα, here plays an instrumental role in securing the Ninevites' repentance. The ablative case ծննդենէն ("from birth") clarifies the instrumental sense of the preposition ի used here (= ἀπό). This is true even though the Ninevites believe Jonah not because of the miracle at sea but due to Jonah's supernatural knowledge of their particular sins (27.2).

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116. Lewy retroverts the Armenian underlying "second birth" (յերկրորդ ծննդենէն) as τῆς δευτέρας γεννήσεως; 46.4 (184); 1945. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:841.

117. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:999.

That miracle is, however, something which should be contemplated, as the prophet reveals in the following extract:

> "Seeing (տեսանեմ = εἴδω, ὁράω) the witness (վկայ = μάρτυς) of these things, even me, the one who slept and searched out the form of birth (ծնունդ = τοκετός, γένεσις)[118] anew (վերստին = ἄνωθεν)[119], they will find me credible for their own lives and, after they have found me an embodiment of the truth, though seeing (տեսանեմ = εἴδω, ὁράω) in part (մասն = μερίς, μέρος),[120] they will believe in you in all matters." (25.5)[121]

One notes the description of Jonah's deliverance as birth "anew" (վերստին = ἄνωθεν). This chimes with the Ninevites' "converting unto life (Կենդանութիւն = ζωή)[122] anew (վերստին = ἄνωθεν)" (46.4). Jonah's and the Ninevites' experiences thus further conform to one another in the renewal of a languishing life. Jonah's own "birth anew" also leads into Ps.-Philo's citation of Jonah as "proof" of *carnis resurrectio*. For our author, the prophet becomes a paradigm of resurrection as well as spiritual and indeed natural birth (25.7–8).[123] Jonah's paradigmatic sojourn is, to be sure, narrated with imaginative playfulness, such as when the sermon's fish utters Jonah's prayer for him (21.4) and gives the prophet a tour of the undersea world (17.1–4; 42.1–43.4).[124] All this lends the homily an entertaining lightheartedness, but Jonah's experience

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118. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:1022.

119. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:817. Siegert suggests a retroversion of ἀναγέννησις, 1992, 163. This is also plausible in light of the tendency of Armenian to capture compound Greek words in doublets (*hendiadys*); Muradyan 2011, 54.

120. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:210.

121. I have modified the translation of Muradyan and Topchyan (2013, 788) in light of Lewy's translation (1945) and towards a slightly more literal word-for-word rendering of the Armenian. Lewy does not have this sentence in his Greek retroversion.

122. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:1087.

123. Duval notes ancient Christian parallels in Justin's *1 Apol.* 19; Cyril's *In Ionam* 2.1; see also Siegert 1992, 167.

124. For a similar tour taken by Jonah, suggesting the tour eventually became something of a trope, see the early medieval Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 10.

is nevertheless depicted with seriousness as an example to inspire faith (25.5). The exemplary quality of Jonah's rebirth further integrates the episode into the wider narrative, particularly when one notices that the ship has a "belly/womb" (որովայն = κοιλία or γαστήρ)[125] into which Jonah descends (7.5), just as he will be eventually drawn into the "belly" (որովայն = κοιλία or γαστήρ) of the κῆτος to be reborn (16.4; 17:1). I will revisit these themes more fully in the discussions of the Sign of Jonah in Luke-Acts and Matthew.

Summary

De Jona, therefore, presents ample comparative data for the three primary themes of interest for this analysis. The tension between divine justice and mercy is worked out in terms of God's inescapability and philanthropy, which administer the healing remedy by threatening destruction and following with humane mercy. The relationship of Israel's election to Gentile Nineveh's salvation expresses a distinctive universalism which is nevertheless grounded in Israel's covenantal, Torah-based knowledge of God as the One who makes peace with those who pray. Finally, Jonah's rebirth from the belly of the sea monster is both instrumental to the Ninevites' saving repentance as well as paradigmatic of the severe remedies of the inescapable divine Philanthropist, who saves Israel and the world.

Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael

Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, classed traditionally as halakhic midrash, treats a mixture of legal and narrative sections of the book of Exodus. It is generally thought to date from the third or fourth century, which places it within the boundaries of the present survey.[126] Tractate Pisḥa 1, in commenting on Exod 12:1's discussion of God's address to Moses and Aaron in the land of

125. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:534.
126. Stern and Lauterbach 2004, 1:ix; Stemberger 1996, 255.

Egypt, mentions Jonah's story as proof, counterintuitively, that the Shekinah does not reveal itself outside the land of Israel. After all, the commentary runs, could Jonah have possibly been so absurd as to flee from the inescapable Lord of Israel himself (Jonah 1:3; citing e.g. Ps 139:7ff.; Zech 4:10)? No, he ran to where the *Shekinah* does not reveal itself (שאין שכינה נגלית) lest he implicate Israel (הן שלא לחייב את ישראל) because the Gentiles were (by contrast) close to repentance (שהגוים קרובים לתשובה).[127] The *mashal* given for this compares Jonah to the slave of a priest who ran to the cemetery to escape from him, not knowing that the priest could send other slaves after the slave, just as God sent the winds after Jonah (Jonah 1:4). The conclusion drawn by the midrash is that, by fleeing the *Shekinah* to rescue the honor of Israel, Jonah was a type of prophet who sought after the honor of the son (Israel) and not the Father (God).[128] This is why the Lord ceases to speak with Jonah after a necessary, reiterative "second time" in Jonah 3:1.[129]

Expanding on this line of interpretation, R. Nathan is credited with saying that Jonah only ever fled in the first place in order to drown himself (Jonah 1:12). Like Moses in Exod 32:32 and David in 2 Sam 24:17, Jonah's actions prove, "that the patriarchs and the prophets offered their lives on behalf of Israel" (האבות והנביאים נתנו נפשם על ישראל). That is, Jonah would rather have died than provide the Ninevites a chance to shame Israel by their prompt repentance.[130] Given the previous assessment of Jonah's lack of concern for God's honor, this might appear to be

127. *Pace* Stern (2004, xiv–xv), who suggests that Jonah is raised as a potential exception to the rule that the divine glory does not manifest outside the land of Israel. Lauterbach correctly notes that the way in which Israel would have been implicated is by contrast with the repentant *goyim*; 2004, 1:4n7. Subsequent English translations (sometimes modified) and citations of Mekilta's Hebrew are from the edition of Lauterbach [1933] 2004.

128. Elijah seeks after God's honor and not Israel's, while Jeremiah seeks after the honor of both God and Israel; i.e., of the Father and the Son; Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1). See further Tiemeyer 2022, 34–35.

129. *Pace* Stern, the midrash mentions the second word of the Lord to Jonah in 3:1 not as an exception to the Shekinah manifesting itself outside the land of Israel but as proof that the Lord responds to Jonah's seeking only Israel's honor instead of God's. I.e., there is no third speech of God to Jonah; rightly, Lauterbach 2004, 1.6n3.

130. Hengel misreads this statement as having to do with Jonah's willingness to sacrifice his life for those on the ship (1986, 251–52), but that is not the logic in context; see also Tiemeyer 2022, 71.

damning Jonah by faint praise. However, the association with Moses's and David's sacrificial wishes arguably elevates Jonah's self-sacrificial zeal for Israel's honor to a somewhat nobler status. The section ends on this slightly ambiguous appraisal of the prophet.

Readers of the New Testament have noticed similarities between Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1) and the Sign of Jonah pericope (Matt 12:38–42 // Luke 11:29–32) in the explicit way the Ninevites' repentance as Gentiles is here contrasted with an Israel slower than they to repent. Some have surmised that this reflected a traditional theme in Jewish readings of Jonah (Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:358), but it is not especially pronounced in the extant ancient Jewish sources. It is possible, on the other hand, that this text displays knowledge of or is a reaction to early Christian perspectives on the book of Jonah. This is not, however, necessarily the case. For as already noted, Judith implicitly acknowledges the exemplary quality of the (enemy) Ninevites' repentance while also depicting an Israel who outstrips them in fasting. It may be that the book of Jonah itself encourages such a comparison, although this is not made explicit in the text of Jonah and is a debated point.[131] What is important for present purposes is that this perspective on Jonah is maintained in Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1) alongside a qualified but ultimately positive appraisal of Jonah's zeal for Israel's honor. Jonah's motives are equated at least in part with those great shepherds of Israel, Moses and David, both of whom would have died in Israel's place. Thus, Mek. exhibits a reading of Jonah which valorizes Jonah's concern for Israel while finding in the book an implicit critique of Israel (and, of course, of Jonah himself) similar to the one in the Sign of Jonah pericope.[132]

131. See e.g. Wolff 1965, 16–18; 1987, 86–87, as well as the cautious if somewhat indecisive comments in Vorpahl 2021, 367–68.

132. Reiser appears to suggest Jesus might have known these rabbinic traditions, but it seems more probable that the book of Jonah is generative of such readings; 1997, 308.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that this partial justification of Jonah's flight is kinder to Jonah than some other contemporaneous and later rabbinic judgments. Both t. San. 14:15 and SifreDeut 177.1 censure Jonah as a false prophet worthy of death because he suppressed his prophecy (expanding on m. San. 11:5). Y. San. 11:5 picks up the language of Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1) about the nearness of the Gentiles to repentance while following t. San. 14:15 and SifreDeut 177.1 in censuring Jonah's suppression of his prophecy, even though done for Israel's honor.[133] Still, the positive reception of Jonah predominates in ancient Jewish sources as well as later ones, such as the very famous treatment of Jonah in the early medieval Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 10, which falls outside the chronological limits of this treatment. The partial valorization of Jonah's flight in Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1), interpreted as self-sacrificial concern for Israel's honor, cannot therefore be ignored within the parameters of the present study. It integrates Jonah's flight and swallowing by the fish into the book's theme of mercy, valorizing Jonah's concern for Israel's election while also acknowledging the universalistic nature of Jonah's mission.

Fragment Targum (V) and Targum Neofiti

The dating of Targum Neofiti and the Fragment Targums (Frg. Tg.), Palestinian Targums that reference Jonah, is difficult to establish with precision. The third century CE seems possible if not altogether certain (Flesher and Chilton 2011, 155–158). Jonah appears in both Neofiti and Frg. Tg. (V) to Deut 30:12–13:

> The Law is not in the heavens, that one should say: Would that we had one like Moses the prophet, who would go up to heaven and fetch it for us, and make us hear the commandments that we might do them! Nor is the Law beyond the Great Sea (ולא מן עבר לימה רבה היא אוריתה), that one should say: Would that we had one like Jonah the prophet (כיונה נביא), who would descend into the depths of the Great

133. Cf., less harshly to Jonah and more laconically, b. San. 89b. Cf. Vorpahl 2021, 369–72.

> Sea and bring it up for us (די יחות לעמקוי דימה רבה ויסק יתה לן), and make us hear the commandments that we might do them (וישׁמע לן פיקודייה ונעבד יתהון)![134]

Since Thackeray, scholars have speculated whether Paul might have known this targum or a tradition it is based upon given his loosely comparable treatment of these verses in Christological terms in Rom 10:6–8.[135] The dating of these targums renders this *a priori* unlikely, however. Moreover, Paul's reworking places Christ in the role of the Law which is either brought down or raised up, but Neofiti and Frg. Tg. (V) imagine Moses and Jonah as those who might have brought the Law to Israel. They are probably chosen by the targumist primarily because they are the ones who paradigmatically ascend to heaven (Sinai) and descend to the sea's depths (in the great fish) (*pace* e.g. Goldberg 1970, 131). Nevertheless, it is striking in the context of Jonah's association with the Red Sea crossing elsewhere in the ancient Jewish sources that he is directly paired with Moses in these targums. Even if the "Great Sea" in mind is likely the Mediterranean (as in the ימה רבה of Targum Neofiti to Num 34:6) and not the Red Sea, the strong association of Moses with the crossing of the Red Sea may further connect Jonah's descent to this other paradigmatic deliverance through deep waters. In this way it probably reflects, like 3 Macc. 6:8 and *De Jona* 25.4, the influence of the potential allusion to the Red Sea in Jonah 2:6, which has it that "reeds (סוף) were wrapped around [Jonah's] head." This is something which Fragment Targum (V) and Neofiti have in common with Targum Jonathan to the Prophets.

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134. I have given the version of Targum Neofiti, but Frg. Tg. (V) is nearly identical. This English translation of Neofiti is from McNamara, M.S.C. 1997, 141; and the Aramaic is from the critical edition of Díez Macho 1978, 255. For the critical text of this extract in Frg. Tg. (V), see Klein 1980, 1:223; and for an English translation, see Klein 1980, 2:181.

135. Thackeray 1900, 187; cf. e.g. McNamara, M.S.C. 1966, 72–78; Goldberg 1970; Black 1971, 8–9.

Targum Jonathan to the Prophets

Targum Jonah

Targum Jonathan to the Prophets is thought in some recent scholarship to have grown in stages, spanning both the Tannaitic and Amoraic eras.[136] It has been argued that Jonah Targum itself exhibits the theology of the Amoraic period. For instance, the king of Nineveh's confidence that repentance will certainly bring about forgiveness in 3:9 ("Whoever knows that there are sins on his conscience let him repent of them and we will be pitied before the Lord") joins with the fuller statement of this theme in Joel Targum 2:14 to identify repentance as practically equivalent to sacrifice:

> Whoever knows that he has sins on his hands, let him turn back from them, and he will have compassion on him; and whoever repents, his sins shall be forgiven, and he will receive blessings and consolations, and his prayer will be like that of a man who presents offerings and libations in the sanctuary of the Lord your God.[137]

This, to be sure, is a more pronounced theology of individual repentance than, for instance, the communal picture of repentance in, e.g., the fasting liturgy in m. Ta'anit 2.[138] However, if the Jonah Targum did indeed reflect a fully developed theology of individual repentance and forgiveness as a substitute for Temple worship, it seems likely that at 1:16 the translator would

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136. See Flesher and Chilton 2011, 226–27. In broad strokes, the framework developed in the analysis of the Isaiah Targum in Chilton 1982 can be characterized as one in which the transformations of Isaiah's Hebrew meaning reflect first "Tannaitic eschatology" and then "Amoraic transcendence"; Flesher and Chilton 2011, 196. Particularly the theology of the *Shekinah* and the land suggests a post 70 CE *terminus a quo* for Targum Jonathan; Cathcart and Gordon (eds) 1989, 16–18.

137. So, Flesher and Chilton 2011, 225–26. English translations from Cathcart and Gordon (eds) 1989, with their italics indicating additions to the Hebrew text removed. I have retained these translators' usage of masculine pronouns, which follows the Aramaic text, in order to preserve the focus on individual repentance in these passages while also keeping them readable in English.

138. I do not see any clear evidence of a liturgical use of Jonah for Yom Kippur in this, *pace* Levine 1975, e.g. 89. Absence of evidence does not of course prove Jonah was not in use as the *haftarah* by the time Targum Jonah was written, but it may point in that direction.

have spiritualized the sailors' problematic *extra muros* sacrifices rather than merely adding the note that they *promised* to sacrifice (implicitly, in the Temple). Therefore, to assign the Jonah Targum, as Flesher and Chilton do, to the latest stage in Targum Jonathan's development, perhaps the fifth century, may be too late (2011, 227). I include the Jonah Targum in this survey because a fourth-century date for its composition seems possible at the least, and perhaps likely.

By far the largest number of transformations in Targum Jonah involve theological refinements of the Hebrew text which preserve the transcendence of God or simplifications and clarifications of syntax. For a few examples of the former, prayer consistently occurs "before" (קדם) the Lord rather than as direct speech to the transcendent God (1:14; 2:3; see also 3:9).[139] Famously here as elsewhere, the *Memra* or "word" (מימרא) of the Lord mediates between God and human beings (2:5; 3:5; 4:2). The sailors also explicitly discover in 1:5 that their idols are useless (לית בהון צרוך). Any suggestion that God "repents" (נחם) is removed (3:9–10). These changes are of course consistent with the wider tendencies of Targum Jonathan (see further Smolar and Aberbach 1983, 130–50). There are, however, two transformations of the Hebrew text distinctive to the Jonah Targum which bear on our investigation.

The first I have already alluded to at the end of the previous section. Instead of Hebrew Jonah's statement in 2:6 that "reeds (סוף) were wrapped around my head," Targum Jonah has "the Red/Reed Sea (ימע דסוף) was suspended above my head" (see Levine 1975, 15). This very obviously identifies Jonah's descent into the depths with the exodus and Red Sea crossing. Thus, Targum Jonah, even though postdating the New Testament, attests a trajectory running from Hebrew Jonah through 3 Macc. 6:8, *De Jona* 25.4, Neofiti and Frg. Tg. (V), and, we will see, Huqoq Synagogue mosaics. Viewing the stickiness of such a trajectory over time is a key reason

139. The best edition of Targum Jonah, from which the Aramaic of that Targum is drawn here, is Levine 1975.

why sources like this, which postdate the New Testament, are included in this survey. As I noted earlier in this chapter, the widespread connection between the paradigmatic saving event of the exodus and Jonah in the belly of the fish in ancient Jewish sources, ranging across a considerable timespan, increases the likelihood that Jonah could have been a scriptural resource for central early Christian kerygmatic claims.[140]

The second salient transformation is the removal of any reference to Sheol or the land of death in Jonah's prayer. Jonah merely descends to the "bottom of the deep" (מארעית תהומא) in 2:3.[141] To be sure, this could conceivably be a reaction to Christian typological usage of Jonah in light of Christ's death and resurrection (so, Vorpahl 2021, 219–20). This translational decision is also, however, consistent with the tendency of Targum Jonathan to render poetic language easily intelligible so that it is not misunderstood by its audience. This is reflected, for example, in the tendency to transform metaphors into similes (Cathcart and Gordon [eds] 1989, 2). Jonah's descent to Sheol might have been read as metaphorical rather than literal by the Targumists, who would have been aware of similar usage of Sheol in the psalms (e.g. Ps 139:8). Furthermore, the connection between Jonah's descent and the Red Sea crossing might be a further reason to have Jonah descend into the depths rather than Sheol, *per se.*

Targum Nahum

Finally, a brief note concerning Jonah's appearance in Nahum Targum 1:1, where Jonah is mentioned as having previously prophesied to Nineveh, leading to repentance, only for Nineveh to sin again, setting the stage for Nahum's prophecy of Nineveh's destruction (Cathcart

140. Vorpahl ventures a nice theological interpretation of this connection, pointing out that it aligns Jonah with Israel, for whom God always cares, and thus suggests that God takes it upon himself in the narrative similarly to care for Jonah; 2021, 221–22.

141. This is also noted in Levine 1975, 15.

and Gordon [eds] 1989, 131). This text resolves the tension between divine judgment and clemency in Jonah differently from, for example, Josephus's *Ant.* 9.208–214 or Tobit G^{I} 14:4, 8, in which Jonah is presented as accurately predicting Nineveh's downfall (cf. Ego 2003, 160). In Targum Nahum 1:1 there is no need for Jonah to have done so since Nahum will subsequently prophesy against Nineveh. It is therefore unlikely that the addition of "finally" (בסוף) in Jonah Targum 4:5 looks ahead to a fulfillment of Jonah's prophecy beyond the scope of the narrative, since Nahum Targum 1:1 records that Jonah's prophecy led to repentance.[142]

Lives of the Prophets

Traditionally attributed to Epiphanius of Salamis, a fourth-century bishop, Lives of the Prophets came in modern scholarship to be reclassified as a Palestinian Jewish work from the first century CE (see further Satran 1995, 1–2). Liv. Pro. consists of a series of miniature biographies, highlighting particularly the births and deaths of twenty-three Old Testament prophets, including Jonah. These brief accounts are surprisingly rich in detail, greatly surpassing the biographical information given about these figures in most ancient Jewish texts. The account of Jonah is among the longer ones, and it has understandably attracted special attention in New Testament scholarship, with some even claiming it directly explains the Sign of Jonah.[143]

An influential 1995 reassessment of Liv. Pro. by David Satran, however, cast doubt on this modern scholarly redating, especially for the final form of the work. Satran reminds us that: (1) Manuscript evidence for Liv. Pro. begins in the sixth century; (2) Transmission occurs exclusively in Christian circles; and (3) No patristic or early rabbinic source explicitly displays knowledge of Liv. Pro. (Satran 1995, 29–32). Furthermore, certain features of Liv. Pro. are,

142. *Pace* Levine (ed) 1975, 93–94; Jones 1995, 229; cf. Cathcart and Gordon (eds) 1989, 109n7.
143. Cf. Schmitt 1978, 125–29; Schwemer 1996, 82; 2008, 222–23.

Satran argues, more at home in the world of early Byzantine Christianity than in first century Judaism, including especially (1) the consistent identification of the prophets as workers of "wonders" (τέρας) and intercessors in connection with (2) an intense interest in the physical sites of their births and burial. These recurring features likely reflect the context of a burgeoning "cult of the saints" in which precise geographical details concerning the Holy Land gained new salience, as new churches were built on traditional (and indeed novel) sites and pilgrimages to the Land become more common (Satran 1995, 56–58, 110–117). However, Anna-Maria Schwemer in particular has continued to argue forcefully for the early Jewish origins of at least the majority of the material in Liv. Pro. (2021).

Satran does not deny, however, that some of the traditions in Liv. Pro. are of early Jewish origin, only that these are much more difficult to discern than it might initially seem. With Stemberger and others,[144] I think Satran's caution is warranted. The resulting final form of the text can reasonably be said to occupy a "border zone" (Satran 1995, 119) between Judaism and Christianity, perhaps around the fourth century or later, as was in fact traditionally held. For present purposes, however, I am interested specifically in the Jewish reception of Jonah in antiquity, and it is my opinion that the portion of the Jonah Vita which has been adduced as "background" for the Sign of Jonah is more likely to be "foreground" in the sense of reflecting the influence of Christian concerns.[145] We turn to that portion briefly before moving on to the elements of the Jonah Vita which, despite the final form of Liv. Pro. likely reflecting an early Byzantine Christian milieu, likely emerged within an ancient Jewish context prior to the late fourth century.

144. E.g. Stemberger 2000, 107n53; Kalmin 2014, 154; Keener 2019, 122–23.

145. Vorpahl fails to reckon with Satran's arguments and thus to consider the implications of a potential later dating for the final form of the text; 2021, 241–55.

Jonah's "Wonder"

The section which some have suggested explains the Sign of Jonah runs, in the oldest recension (exemplified in the sixth century Codex Marchalianus): "And [Jonah] gave a wonder (τέρας) concerning Jerusalem and the whole land, that when they should see a stone crying out pitifully (λίθον βοῶντα οἰκτρῶς), the end is near (ἐγγίζειν τὸ τέλος); and when they see all the nations in Jerusalem (καὶ ὅτε ἴδωσιν ἐν Ἰερουσαλὴμ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), then the entire city will be destroyed to its foundations (ὅτι ἡ πόλις ἕως ἐδάφους ἠφάνισται ὅλη).[146] Götz Schmitt argued (followed closely by Schwemer) that this text has influenced the Gospel traditions about Jonah and the destruction of the Temple.[147] The crying stone and the prediction of the Temple's destruction Schmitt then adduced as background for Luke 19:40, 44: "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out (οἱ λίθοι κράξουσιν)…They will crush you to the ground (ἐδαφιοῦσίν), you and your children with you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another…" (Schmitt 1978, 125–26)

Considering, however, the strong evidence for a late date for Liv. Pro., any influence is more likely to run the other way, from the Gospel traditions to Liv. Pro. For instance, the Jonah τέρας may reflect the influence of other Synoptic material such as Luke 21:20: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near (Ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων Ἰερουσαλήμ, τότε γνῶτε ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ ἐρήμωσις αὐτῆς); and 21:24b: "and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (καὶ Ἰερουσαλὴμ ἔσται πατουμένη ὑπὸ ἐθνῶν, ἄχρι οὗ πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν). Like Liv. Pro., the apocalyptic discourses in all three Synoptic Gospels display an interest in the

146. I.e., the *Recensio Anonyma*, exemplified primarily by Codex Marchalianus (Vat. Gr. 2125) [An]; Satran 1995, 10, 125–26. This is Schermann's "D," typically designated Q in reference to Marchalianus in more recent literature dedicated to Liv. Pro.; Schermann 2011, 84.

147. Schmitt 1978, 125–29; cf. Schwemer; 1996, 82; 2008, 222–23.

proximity of the "end" (τέλος) (Matt 24:6, 13–14; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:9; cf. Πάντων δὲ τὸ τέλος ἤγγικεν 1 Pet 4:7). The language of the Jonah Vita is in fact so close to the language of the Synoptic Gospels in these places that, if it were known by the Evangelists, it could qualify as one of the most influential sources on the apocalyptic discourses. However, given its late manuscript attestation and lack of attestation by other ancient sources, this seems unlikely. The influence more probably runs in the other direction.

Furthermore, the argument that the τέρας which Jonah gives in Liv. Pro. provides an explanation for the σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ignores the fact that no less than seven prophets "give a τέρας" in Liv. Pro. (in the principal recension).[148] It is something of a fixed formula throughout, and fully three of seven concern the destruction of Jerusalem and/or the Temple.[149] In every case, these "wonders" do not have the character of a "sign" but instead function as portentous prophecies of future events. Therefore, whatever one thinks of an interpretation of Jonah's Sign which involves a promise of the inevitable destruction of Jerusalem (a widespread interpretation which is rejected in this thesis), Lives of the Prophets cannot provide supporting evidence demonstrably derived from a Jewish context for it. The "wonder" given by Jonah in Liv. Pro. cannot plausibly provide background for the σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ but instead very likely stands in the Gospels' "foreground."

Jonah as the Son of the Widow of Zarephath

By way of contrast, earlier portions of the Jonah account in Lives of the Prophets probably do derive from ancient Jewish traditions about Jonah, even if those traditions are only attested in late antiquity. The principal recension has it that:

148. *Pace* Schmitt 1978, 125–29; Schwemer 1996, 82; 2008, 222–23.

149. See further Satran 1995, 63–64.

> After he was cast ashore out of the sea monster and went to Nineveh and returned, he did not remain in his own land, but taking his mother as well he dwelled in Sour, a region of foreign nations. For he said, "Thus I will remove my disgrace, for I spoke falsely when I prophesied against Nineveh, the great city." At that time, Elijah was rebuking the house of Achab and, after he invoked famine on the land, he fled. And he came and found the widow with her son [Jonah], for he could not remain among the uncircumcised, and he blessed her. And when her son [Jonah] died, God raised him again from the dead (πάλιν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν ὁ θεὸς) through Elijah, for He desired to show him that he is unable to run from God. (Satran [trans] 1995, 125–26, modified; Schermann 2011, 83–84)

This remarkably anachronistic (from the point of view of the narrative in 1–2 Kings) conflation of Jonah ben Amittai with the resurrected boy of the widow of Zarephath is, perhaps surprisingly, attested in two fifth-century Jewish texts, y. Sukka 5:1, 55a and Gen. Rab. 98:11,[150] and two later Jewish texts, Pirqe R. El. 33:2; Midr. Pss. 26:7 (Beck 2000, 66–68). Additionally, Jerome recounts in the preface to his Jonah commentary (396/97 CE) that,

> the Hebrews hand down the tradition that [Jonah] was the son of the widow of Zarephath, whom the prophet Elijah raised from the dead. After this the mother said to him: 'Now I know that you are a man of God, and the word of the Lord in your mouth is of truth.' And for this reason the boy himself was named Truth. For in our language *Amittai* means 'truth,' and because Elijah spoke true, the one who was raised up is said to be a son of Truth.[151]

However imprecise in the minutiae Jerome's presentation of this midrashic reasoning may be, its basic outlines may accurately report the *gezera shewa* exegetical logic of the connection via אֱמֶת between Jonah 1:1; 2 Kings 14:25; and 1 Kings 17:24.

The Jonah Vita may then illuminate this reasoning further, for the issue of Jonah's response to the perceived falseness of his prophecy of course hangs over the end of Jonah's final verse (4:11). Liv. Pro. resolves the question, still somewhat indirectly but in keeping with the

150. For the dating of Gen. Rab., see Stemberger 1996, 279. On the Palestinian Talmud, see Stemberger 1996, 170–171.

151. Scheck (trans) and Bray (eds) 2016, 245; Beck 2000, 65.

thrust of the book of Jonah, by ensuring that Jonah learns that God is inescapable (see also *De Jona* 3.2). He gains this knowledge by experiencing "again" (πάλιν) what had already once happened to him: resurrection from the dead (πάλιν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν ὁ θεὸς). Of course, this implicit description of Jonah's deliverance from the κῆτος as a resurrection from the dead could potentially reflect the influence of Christian receptions of Jonah. On the other hand, a common motif of "resurrection" might also have provided one link in the midrashic chain connecting Jonah with the raising of the widow's boy.[152]

A close reading of the Jonah Vita suggests that this midrashic connection already existed by the time it was written. For Liv. Pro. appears to use Jonah's shame about his "false" prophecy to explain how Jonah ever came in the first place to dwell with his "mother" in a Gentile land (cf. Schwemer 1996, 63). This then further reinforces a later dating of Liv. Pro. in its final form since the other ancient Jewish sources which identify Jonah with the widow's boy do not show any knowledge of this explanation for the connection. It is, however, possible that the connection is nevertheless an older tradition, and it is at least attested by Jerome in the late fourth century. Interestingly, Seder Olam Rabbah (SOR) 18 and SifreNum Shelach 14:34 name Jonah ben Amittai as that member of the "sons of the prophets" whom Elisha sends to anoint Jehu king (2 Kings 9:1). SOR 19 then has Jonah further prophesy until the end of Jehu's reign. The dating of SOR is contested, but it is thought to consist for the most part of Tannaitic material, with its editing taking place perhaps in the early fourth century (Stemberger 1996, 326; Milikowsky 2006, 233–35). SifreNum may date earlier, possibly even to the early third century (Stemberger

152. Vorpahl 2021, 252. Other comparisons between the Jonah and Elijah narratives, such as between their similarly depressive death wishes under the gourd-vine and at Beersheba, respectively, have naturally suggested themselves to modern scholars; e.g. Sasson 1990, 285. These similarities may also lie in the background of this ancient midrashic connection, but we have no direct evidence this is so; cf. Schwemer 1996, 74.

1996, 270). Having Jonah as a "son of the prophets" at least dovetails with the identification of Jonah with the widow's son, and it may presume it.[153]

Thus, there may be some evidence that this tradition is not only widespread but is of some antiquity, even if of course postdating the New Testament. What is suggestive for present purposes is that for some ancient Jewish sources, those which connect Jonah to the widow of Zarephath, Jonah may be a figure who is raised from the dead. In Liv. Pro., he is raised not only by Elijah "again," but also, firstly, from the sea monster's belly.[154]

An Alternative Judean Grave for Jonah?

Finally, a brief note in relation to Jonah's burial place in Liv. Pro.: the "cave of Kenaz" (σπήλαιον Κενεξέου) in or near "the land of Saraar" (γῆ Σαραάρ, Schermann 2011, 84). Joachim Jeremias convincingly identified this with a Jonah tomb in Halhul (just north of Hebron) reported in medieval Islamic sources. "Saraar" refers to "Seir," and Kenaz likely refers to the Idumean/Edomite progenitor (Gen 36:15; cf. 15:19), possibly combined with Kenaz father of Othniel, judge of Israel (e.g. Joshua 15:17; Judges 1:13; Jeremias 1958, 88–90). When compared with Jerome's report of two conflicting Jonah tomb traditions, one in Gath-Hepher (his preference) and another near the similarly named Gath near Lydda (probably the same depicted on the sixth century Madaba Map), this adds a third Jonah burial tradition in antiquity (*Comm. Jon.* pref.; see further Jeremias 1958, 24–25). Is it likely, however, that Jerome would have been unaware of such a tradition, or could the report of Jonah's burial place in the cave of Kenaz be in

153. So, perceptively, Vorpahl 2021, 271.

154. Cf. Chow 1995, 43. On the assumption that Liv. Pro. dates to the first century, Chow (following Goodenough 1965, 167) suggests that the scene of Elijah's raising of the widow's son in the Dura Europos synagogue wall paintings reflects the belief that Jonah is her son; Chow 1995, 39–41. However, such a dating of Liv. Pro. is unlikely, and there are no obvious indications in the paintings themselves that the child is to be understood as Jonah. See the images and description in Hachlili 1998, 119–20.

fact even later than Jerome's Jonah commentary (396/397 CE)? Jeremias assumes a Jewish authorship of Liv. Pro., but this is not a safe assumption (cf. Jeremias 1958, 88–90). In either case, the significance of this probably late tomb tradition for the reception of Jonah in the New Testament is less than the tradition of a grave in Galilean Gath-Hepher.[155]

Summary

In summary, the places in the Jonah Vita which have been adduced as inspiration for the Sign of Jonah cannot plausibly be claimed to reflect that saying's Jewish context. Nor is the tradition of Jonah's burial in the cave of Kenaz of great significance for Jonah's reception in the New Testament. However, along with y. Sukka 5:1, 55a and Gen. Rab. 98:11, Lives of the Prophets remains an important witness to one potentially ancient Jewish interpretation of Jonah, namely, as a figure who was raised from the dead. Liv. Pro. makes it clear, furthermore, that Jonah's resurrection by Elijah is his second go-around. It accomplishes this through the narratively anachronistic, but surprisingly widespread conceit of identifying Jonah ben Amittai with the resurrected son of the widow of Zarephath.

Huqoq Synagogue Mosaics

Our final source is the stunning depiction of Jonah being tossed overboard amidst the tempest in the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics in eastern Lower Galilee. Dated to around 400 CE,[156] these mosaics are later than the other ancient Jewish sources analyzed in this chapter.[157] There is, however, an ongoing and lively debate about the dating of Galilean-type monumental synagogue buildings, with some leading archaeologists continuing to hold to a paradigm which assigns third

155. See Chapter Four pp. 178–181.
156. Magness et al. 2018, 64, 118; 2024, ix, 92.

157. With the possible exception, as noted just above, of the final form of Lives of the Prophets, which is included as a witness to older Jewish traditions and because the role it has played in New Testament scholarship.

and fourth century dates to at least some of these synagogue buildings.[158] The dating of the Huqoq Synagogue itself has, however, not been seriously contested, and a date of around 400 CE seems likely to continue to be favored at least in this particular case.

Nevertheless, close resemblances between the Huqoq mosaics and other nearby and similarly dated synagogue artwork suggest that these mosaics may not express, in the first instance, a singular artistic vision but rather a wider cultural and interpretative milieu in which certain biblical scenes held a particular resonance for ancient Jewish audiences.[159] The significance of Jonah in that milieu seems likely to predate the construction of the monumental synagogue at Huqoq given its apparent intelligibility for a worshipping Galilean Jewish public. The present analysis confirms that these mosaics, in fact, carry forward a reading of Jonah's significance which is traceable throughout the ancient Jewish sources from 3 Maccabees onward.

As one enters the nave of the Huqoq Synagogue and proceeds from south to north, the floor mosaics are encountered in the following order: Tower of Babel, Jonah, Helios-Zodiac cycle, Red Sea, and Noah's Flood.[160] Noah and the Tower of Babel are thus chiastically paired, and Jonah is paired with the Red Sea, revolving around the Helios-Zodiac cycle. The Jonah panel depicts the moment after the sailors have tossed Jonah overboard. Only Jonah's legs are visible as he is swallowed by three successive fish, each swallowing both Jonah and the previous fish.[161]

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158. E.g. Leibner 2009, 399–404; Leibner et al. 2018, 629–30; cf. the response in Magness 2024, 38–61.

159. See the very useful side-by-side photos in Britt and Boustan 2019 of the Huqoq mosaics and those at Khirbet Wadi Ḥamam, both of which feature very similar depictions of Samson, the Tower of Babel, and the Red Sea crossing. Samson, Noah, and potentially also Jonah may also be featured, as at Huqoq, at a building at Mopsuestia whose identity as a synagogue or church is contested; cf. Avi-Yonah 1981; Magness 2013; Magness et al. 2018, 114–15. The popularity of Samson and Jonah in the two hundred or so years prior to the construction of the Huqoq Synagogue may also be evident from their choice as subjects for the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* and *De Sampsone*.

160. The following analysis is drawn from the images and description in Magness et al. 2018; and Britt and Boustan 2021.

161. The tradition of Jonah being swallowed by multiple fish (the fish's change in grammatical gender in Jonah 2:2 is probably generative of this tradition) is attested in later Jewish midrashic interpretations of Jonah; Kamari 2016.

Harpies from Greek mythology are depicted above the boat to symbolize the tempest, and the sea is full of a chaotic abundance of creatures, including an octopus and a sea serpent wrapped around a swordfish.

The chiastic or "antiphonal" pairing, as Magness et al. have it (2018, 111), of the Jonah panel with the Red Sea mosaic is not only established by the panels' ordering but also by thematic connections between the panels. For example, the Red Sea mosaic depicts Egyptian soldiers (in Roman garb) being swallowed by fish in the same way the Jonah mosaic depicts fish devouring the prophet. One such soldier in the process of being swallowed occupies a prominent place in the center of the Red Sea panel. Both that panel and the Jonah mosaic depict the depths as a place of chaos and death (see Magness et al. 2018, 102–6). It is striking, therefore, that a strong connection between Jonah and the Red Sea can be traced across the ancient Jewish sources.[162]

I have already suggested that a strong association of Jonah with the foundational saving event of the exodus across the ancient Jewish sources adds weight to this thesis's claim that Jonah formed a central kerygmatic text for Luke-Acts and Matthew. The Huqoq mosaics, however, allow another dimension of the connection between Jonah and the Red Sea to be drawn out. Analysis of the fuller program of the mosaics throughout the Huqoq Synagogue has revealed the pervasive theme of the victory of God over Israel's enemies. The theme emerges clearly in the Samson panels, the panels depicting the elephants of 3 Maccabees, the Red Sea, the Three Young Men delivered from the fire, and, particularly, the aisle panels depicting Daniel 7's beasts from the sea (Britt and Boustan 2021, 514). For 3 Maccabees also, Jonah's deliverance exemplifies a peaceful defeat or "overthrow" of Israel's foreign enemies. It may be, therefore,

162. 3 Macc. 6:6–8; Frg. Tg. and Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13; Jonah Targum 2:6. Cf. also the interpretation of the crossing of the Red Sea's "depths" by comparison to Jonah in Mek. Shirata 5 (Exod 15:5–6).

that the pairing of Jonah and the Red Sea at the Huqoq Synagogue is expressive of the tension between two poles of this theme of victory over Gentile oppressors. One imagines a purely destructive end while the other holds out the possibility of the "overthrow" of Israel's enemies by their repentance. Particularity and universalism, justice and mercy find here a distinctive resolve, and Jonah's fish is integrated chiastically in the panels so as to suggest Israel's deliverance from its enemies.

Chapter Conclusion

In summary, and at the inevitable risk of some oversimplification, one may say the following about the three comparators which have guided this chapter's analysis. First, the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah typically foregrounds the responsiveness of divine mercy to repentance against the horizon of judgment as a real possibility. Josephus's censorious account would appear as the exception that proves the rule, given his particular historiographical and Rome-oriented concerns in *Antiquities*. This overwhelming tendency in the ancient Jewish sources places the burden of proof on the many scholars who argue that the Sign of Jonah announces unavoidable disaster.

Second, ancient Jewish authors usually understand the salvation of Nineveh as affirming rather than subverting the election of Israel. Jonah is remembered as a paradigm of God's rescue of his own people, and the Ninevites' repentance is understood as exemplary rather than competitive with Israel's salvation. A potential, partial exception is Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1), but even there Jonah himself is held up as a positive example of giving one's life for Israel. This overwhelming tendency throws into even sharper relief the a priori implausibility of conventional interpretations of the Sign of Jonah as announcing inevitable disaster for Israel itself. It also suggests that if the Sign of Jonah were to have implications for the salvation of

Gentiles, as I will argue is the case in Luke-Acts, then this does not imply that Israel is somehow logically excluded from salvation.

Third, ancient Jewish readers of Jonah regularly integrate Jonah's deliverance by the great fish/sea monster into the whole Jonah story, viewing the book's themes and plot as deeply interwoven. The consistent reception of Jonah as a paradigm of God's deliverance of Israel suggests that the Sign of Jonah likely also recalls this miraculous deliverance. However, New Testament scholarship has often assumed a bifurcation between the fish episode and Jonah's mission. By doing so, it has too often failed to perceive the literary unity of Jonah which, for example, *De Jona* so skillfully draws out by highlighting the divine inescapability and philanthropy. This suggests that the Matthean and Lukan Sign of Jonah would not be atypical if they refer to the Jonah narrative as a unity rather than merely to one isolated portion of the narrative, whether to the fish or to Jonah's mission of proclamation.

Chapter Three: The Sign of Jonah in Luke-Acts

Introduction

Luke's Sign of Jonah has long baffled interpreters. By comparison with Matthew, who clearly connects Jonah's Sign with the prophet's three days and nights in the sea monster's belly (Matt 12:40), Luke is enigmatic: "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be to this generation" (Luke 11:30). Modern scholarship has largely restricted consideration of the puzzling Lukan Jonah to this individual pericope (11:29–32), treating at most its immediate literary context (11:14–36).[1] The resulting picture is a passing reference either to Jonah's preaching or rescue from death as analogous to Jesus's. This chapter challenges such readings. It argues that the Sign of Jonah is both more extensive in its influence throughout Luke-Acts and more central to the books' core kerygmatic purpose than has previously been recognized.

In order to make this case, the present analysis investigates the Sign of Jonah within a potentially broader set of Jonah allusions throughout Luke-Acts.[2] That Luke makes many allusive references to Jewish Scripture is of course widely recognized (e.g. Docherty 2023, 514–515). As I will extensively note, such intertextual Jonah connections have been discerned by both ancient readers as well as modern scholars. Despite this, no synthetic treatment of Jonah's influence throughout Luke's writings exists.[3] The analysis also brings this potentially fuller

1. Notably, e.g. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 103–36; Edwards 1971, 89–95; Chow 1995, 95–145. See further the introduction to Chapter One.

2. Luke's two volumes are understood here as a literary unity if also, admittedly, an imperfect one. See Chapter One p. 15.

3. A very partial exception is a brief (eight-page) article by Mark Allan Powell treating Jonah echoes throughout the entire New Testament; Powell 2007. On the Matthean side, brief synthetic treatments whose

range of Lukan Jonah texts for the first time systematically into conversation with the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah, analyzed in Chapter Two.

The analysis begins with the Sign of Jonah pericope itself (11:29–32) before assessing the presence and significance of Jonah allusions in the Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47); Peter's journey from Joppa to preach to Cornelius's Gentile household (Acts 9:36–11:18); Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27); the Stilling of the Storm (Luke 8:22–25); and Simeon's "sign contradicted" (2:34). Throughout Luke's two volumes, the mysterious Sign of Jonah unfolds as a scripturally ordained sequence: the Messiah's suffering and death, resurrection on the third day, and subsequent proclamation of repentance to the nations. In contrast with many conventional interpretations, this Lukan Jonah Sign is here understood as intended to elicit Israel's saving repentance against the horizon of a threatened judgment.

The Sign of Jonah Pericope

The Request for a Sign

The Sign of Jonah saying occurs in a setting of controversy over the legitimacy of Jesus's exorcism of demons and his claim to represent the arrival of the kingdom by his actions (Luke 11:14–36). The NA28 gives the pericope as follows:

> **29** Τῶν δὲ ὄχλων ἐπαθροιζομένων ἤρξατο λέγειν· ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη γενεὰ πονηρά ἐστιν· σημεῖον ζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ. **30** καθὼς γὰρ ἐγένετο Ἰωνᾶς τοῖς Νινευίταις σημεῖον, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ. **31** βασίλισσα νότου ἐγερθήσεται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινεῖ αὐτούς, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς ἀκοῦσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε. **32** Ἄνδρες Νινευῖται ἀναστήσονται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν· ὅτι μετενόησαν εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε.[4]

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conclusions differ from the present analysis may be found in an early article of David Moffitt's (2011, 233–45) and in Rieske 2018.

4. In terms of textual variants with potential interpretative significance, the insertion of τοῦ προφήτου in some manuscripts at 11:29 after τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ clearly reflects assimilation to Matthew's version (12:39), as does

> **29** When the crowds were increasing, [Jesus] began to say, "This generation is an evil generation; it asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. **30** For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be to this generation. **31** The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and indeed, something greater than Solomon is here! **32** The people of Nineveh will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and indeed, something greater than Jonah is here!" (NRSVue modified)

The Lukan Jesus's reference to the request for a sign continues his response amidst increasing crowds to the demand for a "sign from heaven" (σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ) made by "some" (ἕτεροι) who witness his earlier exorcisms in 11:16. The specification ἐξ οὐρανοῦ demands an incontrovertible and perhaps cosmic, authenticating portent that, in contrast to the ambiguous nature of exorcisms,[5] would definitively dispel any uncertainty about Jesus.[6] In the terminology of modern semiotics, the signified (*signifié*) would be Jesus's legitimate authority, and the signifier (*significant*) would be the portent itself.[7]

In the New Testament, σημεῖον tends to refer to something which enables perception or understanding by making an impression on the visual sense, as in the kiss of Matthew's Judas (Matt 26:48) or the Lukan child in the manger (2:12) (see further Rengstorf 1964). The sign requested in this pericope must occur, however, against a cosmic horizon. Like Luke's, the

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the insertion of the complete Matthean explanation (Matt 12:40) in D and some Latin witnesses at the end of Luke 11:30; cf. e.g. Schürmann 1969–1994, 2:273n32. The omission of the entirety of Luke 11:32 in D is anomalous.

5. According to Josephus, God granted Solomon the "art" (τέχνη) of exorcisms as a form of Solomon's "understanding" (σύνεσις) and "wisdom" (σοφία) (*Ant.* 8.45–49). Thus, while exorcisms are potentially spectacular, they would not likely be thought of as an authenticating sign of the sort requested here. Even still, Jesus's exorcisms are presented as conducted with a distinctive authority in Luke (e.g. 4:36; 9:38–43). On this quality of Jesus's exorcisms discussed in conversation with Solomon in Josephus's *Antiquities,* see recently Patmore 2024.

6. Rightly, Huber 1998, 82; Bovon 2002–2013, 2:138; cf. Vögtle 1971, 110–11.

7. The terms are Saussure's; see further Labio 2017. If one prefers Peirce's categories, the requested portent is the Sign, Jesus's legitimate authority is the Object, and the understanding of the portent as proof granted to the questioners forms the Interpretant; see further Liszka 1996, 18–31.

Markan version also has Jesus's interlocutors (there, Pharisees) request a "sign from heaven" (σημεῖον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, Mark 8:11). Moreover, while only the second Matthean version explicitly includes such a specification (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, Matt 16:1), the initial Matthean reference to the Sign of Jonah strongly implies a contrast with a visible, cosmic sign by describing the Sign of Jonah as taking place "in the heart of the earth (ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς, Matt 12:40)" (rightly, e.g. Bayer 1986, 143). This is visible in table 1 below.

Table 1: The Sign Request Synoptically Presented

Mark 8:11	Matt 12:38	Matt 16:1	Luke 11:16
Καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ ἤρξαντο συζητεῖν αὐτῷ, ζητοῦντες παρ' αὐτοῦ σημεῖον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, πειράζοντες αὐτόν.	Τότε ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ τινες τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἀπὸ σοῦ σημεῖον ἰδεῖν.	Καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ Σαδδουκαῖοι πειράζοντες ἐπηρώτησαν αὐτὸν σημεῖον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπιδεῖξαι αὐτοῖς.	ἕτεροι δὲ πειράζοντες σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐζήτουν παρ' αὐτοῦ.

One also notes the undeniable "appearance" (φαίνω) of the "sign of the Son of Man in heaven" (τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν οὐρανῷ) in Matt 24:30, as well as the comparison of the Son of Man's coming to a flash of lightning visible to all the world (ἐκ τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰς τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν) in Luke 17:24.[8] Important scriptural precedents include the σημεῖα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (מֵאֹתוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם) in Jer 10:2 LXX, which refers explicitly to cosmic signs, as well as the polemic in Ep Jer 66 against idols that cannot show σημεῖα…ἐν οὐρανῷ, again referring to visible heavenly phenomena. The first heavenly σημεῖα/אֹתוֹת are of course the sun,

8. On the traditional notion of what is "under heaven" (תַּחַת הַשָּׁמָיִם / ὑπ' οὐρανόν) as visible to the entire world, see further Wolter 2016–17, 2:307.

moon, and stars of Gen 1:14. The portentous appearance of a sword and comet over Jerusalem in Josephus *J.W.* 6.285–89 also forms a useful comparison.

The demand for an irrefutable, perhaps cosmic, sign in a controversy setting thus forms the immediate context of the Lukan Sign of Jonah pericope. In Luke (as in Matthew), the denial of that demand is prefaced by a sharp rebuke of Jesus's contemporaries, "this generation" (ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη), as "an evil generation" (γενεὰ πονηρά) (11:29). Interpreters ranging from Rudolf Bultmann to E.P. Sanders have read out of the severe warnings in this passage (e.g. 11:24–26, 31–32) as well as, for example, the "Galilean Woes" (Luke 10:13–15 // Matt 11:20–24) an early Christian polemical response to widespread Jewish rejection of the gospel.[9] Such a view coheres with widespread conventional readings of Luke's Sign of Jonah as announcing an inevitable disaster, including in the influential judgments of Joachim Jeremias and Anton Vögtle as well as the more recent account of Michael Wolter.[10]

However, the judgment discourse of this section need not be read in that fashion. The γενεὰ πονηρά language is of course grounded in scriptural condemnations of the wilderness generation (Num 32:13 LXX; Deut 1:35; cf. Jub 23:14). For some scholars, the fact that the wilderness generation itself fails, excepting two individuals, to enter the promised land proves that a certain expectation of judgment attends this language.[11] The same severe discourse is, however, used in the Song of Moses addressing a later generation to provoke repentance (γενεὰ

9. Bultmann 1963, 112–13; Sanders 1985, 109–10.

10. Jeremias [1938] 1964, 409–410; Vögtle [1953] 1971, 133; Wolter 2016–17, 2:113; see also e.g. Zeller 1985, 521.

11. E.g. Ferda 2018, 238–42, although Ferda does not believe this language should be taken for Jesus's entire view of his Jewish contemporaries. It forms for him evidence that the historical Jesus theologized in response to rejection in Galilee; see also 2018, 253–54. I contend that this language is for Luke part of a severe but contingent warning of judgment.

σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη, Deut 32:5 LXX).[12] Luke himself portrays Jesus as the Prophet-like-Moses[13] who, descending the mountain after meeting Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration, addresses *his own disciples* as a γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη (9:41). This clearly recalls the same Deuteronomic language, and Jesus's disciples obviously are not condemned irreversibly thereby for Luke.

This admittedly severe Mosaic tradition directly shapes the context of the Sign of Jonah pericope. The ἕτεροι who request a sign are said to "test" (πειράζω) Jesus (11:16) like the wilderness generation "tested" (πειράζω) God, despite seeing his "signs" (σημεῖα, Num 14:22 LXX).[14] Luke's Jesus in fact shows particular attentiveness to his Moses-like role in context by his reference to casting out demons "by the finger of God" (ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ, 11:20; cf. Matt 12:28). This is the same phrase used by Pharaoh's magicians of the "signs" worked through Moses (δάκτυλος θεοῦ ἐστιν τοῦτο, Exod 8:15 LXX)[15] and in the description of God's emblazoning the commandments on the tablets of stone (τῷ δακτύλῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, Exod 31:18 LXX; ἐν τῷ δακτύλῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, Deut 9:10 LXX). Moses is of course the sign-worker par excellence, and therefore the request for a heavenly sign of authentication may draw upon expectations of the eschatological Prophet-like-Moses (Deut 18:15, 18; Lövestam 1995, 22). Acts once even has Jesus perform "signs" (σημεῖα) and "wonders" (τέρατα) as God did through Moses (Acts 2:22; Exod 7:3, 9; 11:9–10 LXX; Deut 4:34 LXX; etc.), supplying an intriguing

12. LXX text of Deuteronomy cited from the critical edition of Wevers (ed) 1977. This discourse also came to be applied to the generation of the flood; e.g. m. Sanh. 10:3; cf. Luke 17:26–27 // Matt 24:37–38; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:260–61, 354–55.

13. Explicitly in e.g. Acts 3:22; 7:37. Strongly emphasized throughout e.g. Moessner 1989 and Johnson 1991.

14. So, rightly Lövestam 1995, 24–25. LXX text of Numbers cited from the critical edition of Wevers (ed) 1982.

15. LXX text of Exodus cited from the critical edition of Wevers (ed) 1991.

contrast with the Synoptic Jesus's refusal to give a sign but nevertheless supporting the identification of Moses themes in the sign request.[16]

The portrayal of Jesus as Prophet-like-Moses and like/greater than Jonah (11:32) forms part of the larger Lukan theme of Jesus as prophet. This is according to the people's acclamation (7:16; 24:19) and in Jesus's own self-conception (4:24) as the prophet who cannot die outside Jerusalem and finishes his work "on the third day" (13:31–35).[17] The Lukan Jesus's sense of his mission to redeem Israel (24:21) includes an initial "rejection" (ἀποδοκιμάζω) by "this generation" (17:25) "until" (ἕως) the same Jerusalem who will reject and kill him as it has the prophets says of him, "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord."[18] Addressing the gathered men of Jerusalem as "Israelites" (3:12), the Peter of Acts offers repentance and eschatological refreshing precisely on the basis that Jesus is the initially "rejected" (ἀρνέομαι) Prophet-like-Moses whom God raised up and the Messiah "appointed for [them]" (προκεχειρισμένον ὑμῖν, 3:19–26). Such repentance may in Peter's view have resulted in the sending of Jesus as Messiah at his Parousia, even if not yet immediately (cf. Allison 2025, 14–15).

16. Cf. Rengstorf 1964, 240–43. The pairing of Jonah with Moses in a context about the accessibility of revelation is interesting in light of the similar pairing in Tg. Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13, which addresses an analogous question about the nearness of Torah. The Targum clarifies that Israel should not wish for one like Jonah to descend and retrieve the Torah from the depths, nor for one like Moses to retrieve it from heaven. See Chapter Two pp. 66–67. One might usefully compare the engagement with Deut 30:12's claim that the Torah "is not in heaven" in b. B. Meṣ. 59b, which concludes that despite the support given to Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus's halakhic interpretation by various miracles, including a moving tree, a reversing stream, and a *bat qol* from heaven, his halakhah is not proven thereby.

17. The prophet theme in Luke is well-known and is a leading idea in e.g. Luke Timothy Johnson's commentary; 1991.

18. Luke 13:31–35. See also 9:22, 44; 18:32. See further Schaefer 2012, 143–51; Oliver 2021, 83–89; Allison 1983, 75–84; 2025, 40–43; cf. Bovon 2:331–332, who seems to think Luke limits the offer of pardon until the end of Luke-Acts.

Jesus's combative response to the sign request, therefore, expresses disapproval at the motivations of his interlocutors in terms that deliberately recall tensions between the people of Israel and Moses in the wilderness but which in Lukan context do not express hopeless resignation on Jesus's part, even for the generation of Jesus's contemporaries. How could it, given that Jesus's own disciples are part of "this generation" of Israel?[19] The general reference to "this generation" in the Sign of Jonah pericope, as well as the reference to "the men of this generation" after the messengers from John the Baptist (7:31) should, therefore, be distinguished from the more pessimistic address to the authorities later in 11:50–51. There "this generation" refers in context to the authorities to whom Jesus is speaking, since the development of Luke's narrative makes clear that the people as a whole are not held responsible for Jesus's death (e.g. 23:27; cf. Runesson 2016, 304n233). Even on the other side of Jesus's death, which I will argue forms part of the Lukan Sign of Jonah, the call to repentance and expectation of Israel's restoration remains fully intact, as Luke's second volume attests.

Second and more briefly, the expectation of final judgment forms a central pillar in Jewish eschatological hopes.[20] Therefore, rather than signaling early Christian supersessionism or hardline sectarian withdrawal from Judaism, Jesus's urgent warnings of judgment would likely have been understood by Luke to continue to serve a call to repentance against an eschatological horizon. As Chapter Five will show, even Justin Martyr, despite his second-century context and undoubted supersessionist tendencies, interprets the Sign of Jonah as a continuous invitation to repentance for Israel (*Dial.* 107–108).[21] This is likely how Jesus of

19. See Runesson 2016, 307.

20. See e.g. 1 En. 1:1–2, 8–9; Pss. Sol. 14:9–10; 15:12–13; Jub. 23:11–31; 11QMelch (11Q13) II 9–25; 4 Ezra 6:18–28; extensively demonstrated in Reiser 1997, 43–143.

21. See Chapter Five pp. 197–216.

Nazareth would have meant such a warning (cf. Reiser 1997, 306–7), and I will argue that the invocation of Jonah is for Luke highly significant in this regard (so, e.g. Theissen 2003, 181–91).

The Sign of Jonah

This brings us to the Sign of Jonah saying itself. Luke has Jesus publicly denying the request for a sign "when the crowds were increasing" (11:29). Q theorists see this passage as an example of Mark-Q overlap. They attribute the exception clause, εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ, to Q, which Luke follows in this section.[22] For those inclined towards a Farrer hypothesis, Matthew is the one who introduces (or reintroduces)[23] the exception clause into the categorical denial of the sign request in Mark 8:12 (Matt 12:39 // 16:4). On the FH, Luke then follows Matthew. Table 2 below presents the data synoptically.

Table 2: The Response to the Sign Request Synoptically Presented

Mark 8:12	Matt 12:39	Matt 16:4	Luke 11:29
τί ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ζητεῖ σημεῖον; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον.	γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου.	γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ.	ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη γενεὰ πονηρά ἐστιν· σημεῖον ζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ.

Is Luke's Sign of Jonah, however, meant to be a genuine exception to that denial, such that the σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ constitutes a true authenticating miracle (*Beglaubigungswunder*)? Those who have understood the signifier in the Lukan Jonah Sign as Jesus's resurrection or the Parousia have often interpreted it in these terms. The resurrection is in this view typically held

22. E.g. Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg (eds) 2000, 248–49.

23. For it is of course possible that Mark's source had the exception clause featuring τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ, which that evangelist removed; so, e.g. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 110; Reed 1997, 133–34.

closely together with the Parousia as an authenticating sign which brings irrevocable condemnation on "this generation."[24] Or, as the analysis so far suggests, is the Sign of Jonah the sort of σημεῖον which, while not certifying Jesus beyond all doubt, nevertheless issues a fresh challenge to repentance when given?[25] The presence of εἰ μὴ cannot alone decide the matter. Luke usually employs this to name genuine exceptions[26] but can also use it to mean something like "but rather" (e.g. Luke 4:26–27). The force of Jesus's response must instead be sought in the entirety of the Lukan meaning of τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ.

That genitive phrase can be taken in the subjective sense (as the sign Jonah gave) or in the objective sense (as the sign given to Jonah). But an appositive function seems to work best in the Lukan context: the Sign of Jonah is the sign Jonah "became" or "was" (ἐγένετο, 11:30).[27] This, in my view, already begins to tell against conventional interpretations that reduce the Lukan Sign of Jonah either to Jonah's deliverance or his proclamation to Nineveh, since Jonah is a character in a narrative who is developed through both of those events. Luke's explanation of the Sign can in fact be read as capturing this narrative movement: "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites (καθὼς γὰρ ἐγένετο Ἰωνᾶς τοῖς Νινευίταις σημεῖον), so the Son of Man will be to this generation (οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ)" (11:30). The

24. Cf. the very influential treatments in Jeremias [1938] 1964, 410 and Vögtle [1953] 1971, 111–14, who both understood the authentication to occur at the Parousia, that is, after it is too late to respond. Cf. also Bultmann 1963, 118; Tödt 1965, 53–54.

25. E.g. Bayer 1986, 141–42.

26. E.g. Luke 5:21; 6:4; 8:51; 10:22; 17:18; 18:19 Acts 11:19.

27. Cf. e.g. Huber 1998, 82–86.

reference to Jonah's "becoming" a sign might allude to the narrative process by which Jonah *comes to be* a sign.[28]

Of course, the classic objection to the inclusion of Jonah's deliverance (his "resurrection" from the fish's belly) in the Lukan Sign of Jonah is that the Ninevites did not witness it,[29] and despite occasional attempts to find some evidence to the contrary this remains a salient observation.[30] It may not, however, carry the implication which is often supposed, for neither is the resurrection of Jesus visible to those who are addressed by the apostolic preaching of repentance. In this regard, one may compare a key scene in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*. Even though this text postdates Luke, it can nevertheless help us to imagine how the invisibility of the "resurrection" of Jonah to the Ninevites and of Jesus's to "this generation" may be part of what makes the analogy between the Ninevites and "this generation" work, *mutatis mutandis*.[31]

The Ps.-Philonic homilist has Jonah say, from the sea monster's belly:

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28. There are similar Lukan uses of γίνομαι in the aorist in e.g. Luke 6:16: "who became (ἐγένετο) a traitor"; 13:19: "it grew and became (ἐγένετο εἰς) a tree"; and 23:12: "Herod and Pilate became (ἐγένοντο) friends." Cf. with a slightly different emphasis, Vögtle: "Das ἐγένετο könnte sogar sehr wohl von Haus aus den Vorgang als solchen bezeichnen wollen, durch den Jonas, ein Zeichen *wurde*', nämlich dessen wunderbare Errettung, und nicht auf die Beziehung des Jonaswunders auf die Nineviten abheben wollen, also auf die Aussage, daß ‚Jonas *den Nineviten* ein Zeichen wurde'"; [1953] 1971, 133.

29. E.g. Huber 1998, 86; cf. Seidelin 1951, 121–22.

30. Jeremias famously argued that Jonah's deliverance might have been known to the Ninevites from the fact that the sailors see the "signs" (אותות) in PRE 10 and from Jonah's appearance "to all his kinsmen" (πᾶσιν οἰκείοις) in 3 Macc. 6:8; 1964, 409n26. Cf. Bayer, who makes the case that οἰκείοις should be read as "associates" and include the Ninevites; 1986, 136. Neither is finally convincing since the emphasis in 3 Macc. 6:8 is on Jonah's safe return to his own countrymen and because Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer is a medieval text.

31. See Chapter Two's discussion of this probably second or third century CE Hellenistic synagogue homily and the methodological justification of comparing it with the New Testament Jonah, pp. 48–63; cf. Lewy 1945; Siegert 1992, 39–52; Muradyan and Topchyan (trans) 2013, 750–51.

> But these sufferings (ախտ = πάθος)[32] [on the ship] are among the visible things (տեսեցեալ (past participle) = εἴδω, ὁράω),[33] while the confinement in this narrow place [within the fish] is invisible (անտեսանելի = ἀόρατος)[34] to all human beings except for the one who has borne [the sufferings] and is a witness (վկայ = μάρτυς).[35]

Ps.-Philo's Jonah later continues:

> Seeing (տեսանեմ = εἴδω, ὁράω) the witness (վկայ = μάρτυς) of these things, even me, the one who slept and searched out the form of birth (ծնունդ = τοκετός, γένεσις)[36] anew (վերստին = ἄνωθεν)[37], they will find me credible for their own lives and, after they have found me an embodiment of the truth, though seeing (տեսանեմ = εἴδω, ὁράω) in part (մասն = μερίς, μέρος),[38] they will believe in you in all matters.[39]

In these complex passages, Jonah is presented as a μάρτυς of what took place under the sea, and one can discover in Jonah-as-witness the image of "birth anew" despite having seen only "in part." Granted, the Ps.-Philonic homilist does not describe the Ninevites as hearing about Jonah's time in the fish. However, when the homilist has God narrate the Ninevites' repentance to Jonah, he does so in the following manner:

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32. The Armenian edition of *De Jona* used here is that of Lewy 1936. Greek-Armenian equivalents are cited from the classic *Nor Baṙgirk' Haykazean Lezui (New Dictionary of the Armenian Language)* (NBH); Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:17.

33. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:867. Lewy retroverts as τῶν ἐμφανῶν; 20.4 (75); 1945.

34. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:245.

35. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:825. *De Jona* 20.4.

36. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:1022.

37. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:817. Siegert plausibly suggests ἀναγέννησις, 1992, 163. On *hendiadys* in Armenian translation of Greek, see Muradyan 2011, 54.

38. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:210.

39. *De Jona* 25.5. Here I have modified the translation of Muradyan and Topchyan (2013, 788) in light of Lewy's translation (1945) and towards a slightly more literal word-for-word rendering of the Armenian. Lewy does not have this sentence in his Greek retroversion.

> Do you not see how, on account of [the Ninevites'] former ignorance they were depriving me of thanksgiving, but from (ի = ἀπό) [your] second birth (ծննւնդ = τοκετός, γένεσις)[40] and from preaching (քարոզութիւն = κήρυγμα),[41] converting unto life anew, they confess praise to me only? (46.4).

As these extracts show, for *De Jona* both Jonah's "rebirth" from the fish and his preaching are instruments of the Ninevites' conversion. The fish is, however, not only integral to their repentance, but it is also a matter to be contemplated, despite its invisibility. Jonah becomes a witness to it, much as, I will argue, the apostles become for Luke witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus.

Jonah's Proclamation

Thus, despite the likelihood that Jonah's "resurrection" is included within Luke's version of the Sign of Jonah, the majority view of the Lukan Jonah Sign as proclamation has much to commend it. In the double saying of 11:31–32, both Solomon and Jonah are presented as having messages to be heard, suggesting Jonah's preaching is in view to some extent.[42] One should not bracket the double saying entirely away from the Sign of Jonah, whatever its tradition-historical origins are, as is evident from the skillful interweaving of Solomon into the present context. According to Josephus, God gave Solomon to learn the "art" (τέχνη) of exorcisms as a form of Solomon's "understanding" (σύνεσις) and "wisdom" (σοφία) (*Ant.* 8.45–49). This is of course precisely the activity which prompts the sign request (Lövestam 1995, 33–35) and links Jesus to Solomon's wisdom. But this thematic linkage to the larger context remains under the surface,

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40. Lewy retroverts the Armenian for "second birth" (յերկրորդ ծննդենէն) into Greek as τῆς δευτέρας γεννήσεως; 46.4 (184); 1945. The ablative case ծննդենէն ("from birth") clarifies the instrumental sense of the preposition ի used here = ἀπό; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:841.

41. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:999.

42. Cf. e.g. Landes 1996, 147–50; Green 1997, 464.

and instead Solomon's success as a sage is foregrounded in parallel to the success of Jonah's message, both addressing Gentiles. Jonah's role as a preacher and the Ninevites' repentance feature prominently in the ancient Jewish sources, including in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* 27 and the fasting liturgy in m. Ta'an. 2:1–5. Jonah is also remembered explicitly for his proclamation of judgment and repentance in early Christian sources, such as in 1 Clement 7, and in second-century sources such as Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* (107) and Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* (3.20.1). It is thus plausible that Jonah's proclamation could be included in his Sign. Many who hold this Sign-as-preaching view understand it to allow for repentance and the avoidance of disaster (e.g. Edwards 1971, 94–95; Landes 1996, 147), while others interpret the proclamation as a definite announcement of judgment.[43]

Despite, however, the reference to τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ (11:32) in the Solomon-Jonah double saying, the Sign-as-preaching interpretation runs into difficulties in trying to explain the future tense ἔσται in the Lukan explanation (11:30) since Jesus has already been preaching. To resolve this, some interpreters take ἔσται in 11:30 in a gnomic sense, in parallel with "will be given" (δοθήσεται) in 11:29, such that in the narrative present the Son of Man already *is* or already gives the Sign of Jonah. Jesus's proclamation of judgment and repentance, and/or his person as it comes through in that preaching, would then make up the Sign of Jonah.[44] One may grant as support for this view the presence "here" (ὧδε) of "something greater than Jonah" (πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ, 11:32) and "greater than Solomon" (πλεῖον Σολομῶνος, 11:31), perhaps indicating a greater proclamation than Jonah's and greater wisdom than Solomon's.[45] It remains

43. E.g. Bultmann 1963, 118; Mora 1983, 76; Wolter 2016–17, 2:113–14; cf. Rusam 2003, 219.

44. E.g. Conzelmann 1960, 192; Rengstorf 1964, 233; Edwards 1971, 94–95; Fitzmyer 1981–85, 2:933; Landes 1996, 141–42; Klein 2006, 420; Wolter 2016–17, 2:113–14.

45. The neuter πλεῖον likely does refer also to Jesus, because Jonah and Solomon are persons; Theissen 2003, 184.

challenging, however, to understand how Jesus's preaching in the narrative present could constitute a σημεῖον, unless the saying is to be a pure negation rather than a qualified, if also paradoxical acquiescence.[46] But if the intent is a categorical denial then why designate Jonah's Sign as a σημεῖον at all? Furthermore, in context even Jesus's exorcisms and other miracles apparently do not qualify as authenticating signs.

Moreover, close syntactic parallels between the Lukan explanation (11:30) and other future Lukan Son of Man sayings suggest ἔσται should be read as a real future. Luke 17:26 (parr. Matt 24:37) has: καὶ καθὼς ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Νῶε, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ("For just as it was in the days of Noah, so also it will be in the days of the Son of Man"). This shares with the Sign of Jonah a protasis beginning with καθὼς ἐγένετο and an apodosis beginning with οὕτως ἔσται, and it undisputedly refers to the future. Luke 17:24 (parr. Matt 24:27) is also similar: ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ ἀστραπὴ ἀστράπτουσα ἐκ τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰς τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανὸν λάμπει, οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ("For as lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other, so will the Son of Man be").[47] The apodosis of this verse shares οὕτως ἔσται…ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου with Luke's explanation of the Jonah Sign (11:30). Like these Son of Man Parousia sayings, the Lukan explanation of the Sign of Jonah likely also points to a future fulfillment (Lührmann 1969, 40).

Some avoid this difficulty for the Sign-as-preaching view by recognizing Luke's Sign of Jonah as an event in the real narrative future while yet holding Jonah's proclamation to be the

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46. Many have objected thus, e.g. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 113; Schürmann 1969–1994, 2:273; Marshall 1978, 485.

47. Edwards famously argued that these syntactical forms constitute an "eschatological correlative" *Gattung* coined by the Q community; 1971, 85–86. This was refuted by Schmidt's demonstration that similar grammar exists in many places in the LXX; 1977, 517–22. For present purposes, what is important is not the establishment of an exclusively eschatological sayings genre, but rather that syntactically similar Lukan Son of Man sayings also deal with a real and not merely logical future.

essence of his Sign. For example, Jesus's preaching can be seen as continued in the preaching of the church (Chow 1995, 117–18). One scholar emphasizes the future success of that ecclesial proclamation as the vindication of Jesus which corresponds to Jonah's vindication as a successful preacher (Edwards 1971, 94–95). Others underscore the future, successful address of the gospel proclamation to Gentiles as its sign character, given either to cause Israel to repent (cf. Huber 1998, 84–85), or, alternatively, as marking the supersessionist movement of salvation history away from Israel.[48] These views attempt to do justice to the Gentile examples in the Solomon-Jonah double saying, the Queen of the South and Ninevites, both of whom are conspicuous as non-Israelites who are responsive to the wisdom and message of Israelites (rightly, Theissen 2003, 184). Indeed, a modification of this view in an anti-supersessionist form, which understands the apostolic preaching to Israel and the nations as part of the Lukan Sign of Jonah given to summon Israel to repentance, is offered in the present analysis. However, those who understand the proclamation of Jonah's Sign to herald an irreversible sentence of judgment have more in common with the Sign-as-Parousia interpretation than with the one to be offered here.

Jonah's Parousia?

Interpreting the Lukan Sign of Jonah as a Parousia saying, as e.g. Vögtle does ([1953] 1971, 133), at least does justice to the notion of a visible σημεῖον and to Jesus's "Son of Man" self-designation in Luke 11:30. Not only, however, does the biblical Jonah fail to manifest a glorious appearing which might resemble the Parousia, but this interpretation also arguably destroys a fundamental parallel between Jonah and Jesus: the opportunity for repentance on the

48. Wellhausen thought the meaning of Luke's Sign of Jonah lay in the fact that Jonah was successful with Gentiles and not Jews, as Jesus would be; [1905] 2018, 76; Mora sees the Sign of Jonah as marking the turning point in salvation history away from Israel towards Gentiles; 1983, 76, 83. Cf., analogously vis-à-vis Q, Meyer 1970.

part of those who receive the Sign.[49] Jonah announces an impending judgment to be sure, but the whole plot of the book turns on the prophet's anticipation of God's relenting from that judgment: "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing."[50] The warning of judgment is for Jonah definitionally contingent upon human response. Jehoiakim, for instance, might have rejected Jeremiah's prophetic warning (Jer 36:1–16), but the king of Nineveh by contrast repents (Jonah 3:6–9).[51]

Moreover, the entire tradition of ancient Jewish reception of Jonah traced in this thesis cuts against an interpretation which would recruit Jonah, of all prophets, as a sign of inevitable judgment,[52] much less *against Israel itself*. Not only are texts such as the fasting liturgy in m. Ta'an. 2:1–5 and the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* keenly sensitive to the way in which Jonah foregrounds God's mercy and, in *De Jona*, "love for humanity" (մարդասիրութիւն = φιλανθρωπία, *De Jona* 3.1; 25.1);[53] but the universalistic dimension is consistently coordinated with the election of Israel rather than subverting it. This is clear, for example, in the way 3 Macc. 6:8 understands Jonah as an example of the peaceful overthrow of Israel's Gentile oppressors (by

49. Rightly, Bayer 1986, 123–24. A partial but notable exception is Vogel 2020, where it is argued (not without a considerable Lukan basis, e.g. 2:38; 13:35) that the Parousia will be a time of salvation for Israel; cf. recently Bormann 2023. But the parallel with Jonah would seem to require a time for decision and the opportunity for repentance, or at the very least a gap between the giving of the Sign and the judgment to follow.

50. Jonah 4:2–3; see Exod 34:6–7; Joel 2:12–14. See e.g. Wolff 1965, 16–18; for a recent analysis of the phenomenon of conditionality in scriptural prophecy, leading to a constructive theological proposal, see Strine 2016, esp. 47–48.

51. See Wolff 1965, 16–18.

52. E.g. as a "sign of unsalvation (*Unheilszeichen*)"; Wolter 2008, 424–45; English trans. 2016–17, 2:113–14.

53. See Chapter Two p. 57.

their repentance).[54] Pervasively, the miraculous deliverance of Jonah is perceived as emblematic of God's rescue of his own people Israel.[55]

This fact is not by any means to say the warning of judgment signified by Jonah should be taken lightly, since another facet of Israel's God which Jonah discovers, and which becomes a keyword, for instance, in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, is the divine inescapability (անփախչելի = ἄφυκτος).[56] This applies to the Ninevites, who are spared only by turning away from evil, as well as to the prophet himself.[57] On the other hand, Jonah discovers that the salvation of God (in the form of a κῆτος / דָּג גָּדוֹל) possesses an inescapability of its own (cf. *De Jona* 23.5). It is the dialectic between judgment and mercy that is most plausibly signified by evoking Jonah's Sign, with the divine compassion foregrounded against the real possibility of judgment.

Jonah's Resurrection from the Belly of the κῆτος

There are, therefore, three principal reasons which have caused many interpreters of Luke to understand Jesus's death and resurrection as the signifier within the Sign of Jonah: (1) The Sign probably occurs in the narrative future but still issues an opportunity for repentance; (2) It is difficult to see how preaching could be a sign in and of itself; and (3) Jonah's rescue by means of the fish has proven the most memorable part of the book down through the ages.[58]

"Resurrection" verbs are of course used in both halves of the Solomon-Jonah double saying

54. Vorpahl 2021, 175.

55. 3 Macc. 6:8; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers* (Apos. Con. VII 37); Targum Neofiti and Frg. Tg. (V) to Deut. 30:12–13; Huqoq Synagogue Mosaics.

56. See Chapter Two p. 57.

57. Cf. Siegert 1992, 308.

58. E.g. Marshall 1978, 485; Bayer 1986, 141–42.

(ἐγερθήσεται, 11:31) and (ἀναστήσονται, 11:32), even if they refer to the general resurrection rather than Jesus's individual resurrection on the third day.[59]

Then, there is the ubiquitous reception of Jonah in the ancient Jewish sources as a paradigmatically rescued figure[60] who is associated with Israel's foundational saving event, the crossing of the Red Sea (3 Macc. 6:8; Targum Jonathan to Jonah 2:6; Huqoq Synagogue mosaics). The Red Sea connection is particularly suggestive in light of the Moses themes which shape the sign-request and Jesus's Moses-like denial of it, discussed above. The point of commonality between Moses and Jonah in ancient Jewish reception is consistently their deliverance through/from the depths (Red Sea/fish). Comparably, Targum Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13 pairs Moses and Jonah as those who paradigmatically ascended to heaven (Moses at Sinai) and descended to the depths (Jonah in the fish).[61] This trajectory of associating Jonah with Moses/the Red Sea crossing, which pre- and post-dates Luke, suggests that Luke's audience, and particularly Jewish readers and auditors, would likely associate any mention of a "sign" of Jonah naturally with the fish.[62]

The Sign-as-resurrection view is strengthened if one reads the Sign of Jonah in connection with the Lukan passion predictions.[63] Doing so is reasonable, firstly, because like

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59. Wright 2003, 432–33.

60. The general point about the prominence of the fish episode in ancient Jewish memory of Jonah has often been made; e.g. Seidelin 1951, 129–30; cf. in reference to Matthew Luz 2001–2007, 3:219. Chow ties Matthew's version of the Sign of Jonah much closer to this side of the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah than Luke's version; 1995, 88–89, 142–43.

61. See Chapter Two pp. 66–67 as well as footnote 16 above.

62. The Beelzebul controversy, with its focus on exorcism, reminds one that Tobit's "great fish" is used later in the narrative for exorcistic purposes (Tobit 6:8). Tobit thus provides further evidence for the suitability of a reference to Jonah's fish in the context of exorcism, perhaps due to the fish's association with death and chaos. This point of comparison may be added to those usefully traced in Docherty 2013, 81–94. See Chapter Two pp. 26–32.

63. Luke 9:21–22; 43–45; 18:31–34; also 17:25; 22:22.

those privately made predictions, the Lukan Sign of Jonah is a predictive Son of Man saying that does not appear to reference the Parousia.[64] Secondly, we know that at least *Matthew's* chief priests and Pharisees treat the Sign of Jonah precisely as a public-facing prediction of Jesus's resurrection. After the crucifixion, they tell Pilate, "We remember what that deceiver said while he was still alive: 'After three days I will rise again' (μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἐγείρομαι)" (Matt 27:63). Commentators recognize μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας here, which is expressed differently from the more precise τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ of the Matthean passion predictions (16:21; 17:23; 20:19), as a reference to the "three days and three nights" (τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας) of Matthew's Sign of Jonah (12:40), a moment for which Matthew's Pharisees are present (12:38).[65] Comparison with Matthew shows it is at least possible that Luke understood the Jonah Sign saying similarly.

Thirdly, understanding the Lukan Sign of Jonah as a veiled, public-facing passion prediction resolves the question of why Luke's explanation of the Sign (11:30) is more enigmatic than Matthew's (12:40). For on the grounds of its purportedly late and ecclesial character, the secondary nature of Matthew's explanation relative to Luke's vis-à-vis Q is often assumed (e.g. Bultmann 1963, 117–18; Lührmann 1969, 40). Indeed, a venerable opinion holds that Luke could not possibly have possessed this lucid Matthean explanation of the Sign of Jonah and altered it to his less explicit version (von Harnack 1908, 23). Maarten Menken puts the point sharply:

> [I]f Luke had found in Q the reference to Jesus' death and resurrection as prefigured in the OT, he would not have omitted it. Luke is clearly interested in this topic: not only did he borrow from Mark Jesus' three announcements of his death and resurrection…but he also added another one (17,25) as well as flashbacks to them (24,6-7.46), and emphasized the fulfillment of the OT in Jesus' death and resurrection (18,31; 24,25-27.44-46). (2004, 253–54)

64. See pp. 98–100 above.

65. So, rightly, Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 3:654; Novakovic 2012, 180; Konradt 2020, 434.

This critical insight, in fact, calls further into question whether Luke could have missed the significance of Jonah as a symbol of death and resurrection *even if* he had not found it in Matthew or Q. That is, Luke's interest in Jesus's scriptural vocation raises the strong possibility that his enigmatic Sign of Jonah does in fact refer to death and resurrection given Jonah's pervasive presence in ancient Christianity as a resurrection symbol.[66] However, Matthew's explanation is not of course a problem *per se* for Q-theorist interpreters of Luke's Sign of Jonah since Luke's is for most such interpreters simply a more primitive approximation of the Q text. A Farrer Hypothesis reading, however, must offer a rationale for Luke's change of Matthew, particularly given the closely similar syntactical structure of Matt 12:40 and Luke 11:30.[67]

One suggestion is that Luke balked at the "three nights" of Matt 12:40 since Jesus was only in the tomb for two nights.[68] It was already noticed by M. J. Lagrange, though, that Esther 4:16 LXX records a fast which is called "for three days, night and day" (ἐπὶ ἡμέρας τρεῖς νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν) but is in fact terminated "on the third day" (ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ, 5:1).[69] Comparably, Matthew's Pharisees only require the tomb to be guarded "until the third day" (ἕως τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας) despite their memory of Jesus's prediction of a resurrection "after three days" (μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας, Matt 27:63–64).[70]

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66. See the discussion in the introduction to Chapter One.

67. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 124; Lindars 1983, 39; Hampel 1990, 92.

68. McNicol et al. (eds) 1996, 181. Cf. Goulder 1994, 511–12.

69. Hanhart (ed) 1983; noted in Lagrange 1923, 230. A later midrash, Esth. Rab. 9.2, connects Esth 5:1, Jonah 2:1 Heb/LXX, and a few other "third day" texts with the affirmation that Israel is never left in trouble for more than three days. Gen. Rab. 56.1 similarly includes the "three days and three nights" of Jonah 2:1 with other "third day" texts such as Hos 6:2, commenting on Gen 22:4; See further McArthur 1971, 85; Gathercole 2022, 145. Vögtle similarly rejects this solution as not providing positive proof; [1953] 1971, 126.

70. Rightly, Novakovic 2012, 180–81.

There would, however, appear to be a better solution, albeit one which requires recognition of the practical and hermeneutical distinction between the pre- and post-Easter setting in Luke. To import Matthew's Sign of Jonah without alteration would have violated the architectural plan of Luke's Gospel. In Luke, predictions of Jesus's death and resurrection as forthcoming as the Matthean Sign of Jonah are reserved for the disciples in private,[71] not shouted (yet) from the rooftops.[72] Only after the resurrection does the prophetic witness of the Scriptures to the Messiah's suffering and resurrection become perceptible (24:25–27, 31–32, 44–49).[73] In fact, by having Jesus make such an open statement predicting his death and resurrection, Matthew arguably introduces a slight tension into his own version of the motif of the privacy of the passion predictions (e.g. Matt 16:21; 17:22–23; 20:17).[74] It seems likely from an FH perspective that Luke detects and eases this Matthean tension in accordance with his intense interest in the Scriptures' prophetic witness to the Messiah's death and resurrection. By doing so, Luke makes the Sign of Jonah less explicit so that he does not have Jesus revealing too much publicly in a pre-Passion setting, while still allowing for the Sign's meaning to become apparent from the retrospective vantage point of Easter.

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71. Luke 9:21–22; 43–45; 18:31–34; cf. 17:25; 22:22.

72. Cf. Luke 22:67–69: "They said, 'If you are the Messiah, tell us.' He replied, 'If I tell you, you will not believe; and if I question you, you will not answer. But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.'" Even in this relatively open statement late in the Gospel, Jesus cannot indicate suffering and death as the pathway to the Son of Man's exaltation; Wolter 2016–17, 2. 499.

73. See further e.g. Hays 2014, 55–57.

74. Matthew and Luke have adopted this motif from Mark, where it intersects with the distinctive Markan secrecy motif (e.g. Mark 9:9 // Matt 17:9). The Gospels share an understanding of the resurrection as the hermeneutical key to Jesus's life, although the evangelist Mark never shows the disciples grasping this crucial revelation. However, as Goodacre points out, "Luke makes good on Mark's lack, and develops the insight by adding the element of 'remembering'" in the angelic instructions to the women at the empty tomb; Luke 24:5–8; cf. John 2:22; 12:16; Goodacre 2025; see also 2021, 88. My thanks to Prof Goodacre for allowing me to read a copy of the manuscript in advance.

Furthermore, in addition to the Pauline formula of 1 Cor 15:3–4, in the entire New Testament only the third Lukan passion prediction (18:31–33), Matthew's Sign of Jonah (Matt 12:40), and the Opening of the Scriptures to the Eleven (24:44–47) explicitly connect the prophetic scriptural witness to Jesus's resurrection on the third day (Novakovic 2012, 124). It seems, therefore, fitting considering this striking convergence that, as I will further argue, the *Lukan* Sign of Jonah should reemerge in Luke at precisely the point where the Lukan passion predictions and the prophetic scriptural witness are unfolded to the disciples in the light of Easter (24:44–47).

This interpretation of Luke's Sign of Jonah as in part a veiled passion and resurrection prediction explains not only why Luke changes Matthew's explanation of Jonah's Sign (12:40), but indeed why Luke's version should be enigmatic at all. This is something which interpreters persuaded of Luke's dependence on Q must also explain. For FH readers of Luke, an apparent difficulty thus turns out to offer an insight into the Lukan Sign of Jonah as an appropriately veiled passion-resurrection prediction. For any interpreter of Luke, such a view of the Sign of Jonah makes sense of its riddling quality. The reference, however, to the Ninevites (11:30) along with the direct mention of τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ in the Solomon-Jonah double saying (11:32), points towards the saliency of Jonah's preaching also for his σημεῖον.[75] While many previous interpretations have seen these elements as opposed, the following analysis of Luke's account of the Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47) will confirm the relevance of death, resurrection, *and* preaching of repentance to Jonah's Sign.

75. See the discussion in Chapter Five pp. 197–216 of Justin's omission of Matt 12:40 in his discussion of the Sign of Jonah in *Dial.* 107.1, where Justin also wants to include Jesus's death and resurrection as well as the post-resurrection preaching of repentance in the Sign of Jonah.

The Sign of Jonah and the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures

Where in Jewish Scripture is it really "written" (γέγραπται) that the Messiah must (1) suffer, (2) rise from the dead on the third day, and that (3) repentance must be preached to all nations in his name (Luke 24:44–47)? For modern scholars, the Isaianic Servant, the Prophet-like-Moses (Deut 18:15, 18), and the suffering righteous of the Psalms are the leading intertextual candidates. As I will show fully in Chapter Five, some ancient Christian sources understood the Sign of Jonah as just such a sequence: suffering and death, third-day resurrection, then proclamation of repentance to all nations.[76] At least four of those patristic authors, furthermore, connect this interpretation of Jonah's Sign, either explicitly or implicitly, to the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47).[77] Taking a cue from Luke's ancient readers, this section demonstrates that Jonah, via the Sign of Jonah pericope, is a crucial intertext for this climactic Lukan appeal to Jewish Scripture.

Intertextual Candidates

This Lukan claim, made by the risen Jesus first to Cleopas and the other disciple on the road to Emmaus,[78] runs in a fuller form in the appearance to the Eleven:

> **44** Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." **45** Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, **46** and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer

76. E.g. Augustine *Epistles* 102.6, Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 3.3–4a; Chromatius of Aquileia *Tractates* 50A.

77. Justin *Dial.* 106–109; Hilary of Poitiers *Comm. Matt.* 16.2; Ephrem the Syrian *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron* 11.1–4; and the Ps.-Chrysostomic *Quod mari similis sit haec vita*. See Chapter Five pp. 197–234.

78. The phrase "opening of the Scriptures" is of course from Luke 24:32, where Cleopas and the other disciple recall their hearts burning during Jesus's "opening of the scriptures" to them (διήνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς), as narrated in 24:25–27. In the appearance to the Eleven, it is in fact the disciples' "minds" which are "opened" to understand the scriptures (τότε διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς); *pace* Bates 2010; rightly e.g. Mann 2016. I use "Opening of the Scriptures" throughout to refer to Jesus's interpretation in 24:44–47 because of the simplicity of this phrasing by comparison with "opening of the disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures" and because these two moments of scriptural interpretation by the risen Jesus are interlinked through the διανοίγω terminology. On the relationship of "opening" (διανοίγω) to rabbinic usage of פתח in the context of inspired scriptural interpretation, see Visotzky 2016, 145–53.

> and to rise from the dead on the third day **47** and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (NRSVue)
>
> 44 Εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς· οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι μου οὓς ἐλάλησα πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἔτι ὢν σὺν ὑμῖν, ὅτι δεῖ πληρωθῆναι πάντα τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ νόμῳ Μωϋσέως καὶ τοῖς προφήταις καὶ ψαλμοῖς περὶ ἐμοῦ. 45 τότε διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς· 46 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι οὕτως γέγραπται παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, 47 καὶ κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη· ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ· (NA28)[79]

Pace those, such as Kenneth Litwak, who find only a hand-waving reference to broad scriptural patterns here,[80] multiple intertexts are likely in view to varying extents, although wider patterns probably also inform this sweeping Lukan claim.

Before discussing the leading candidates, however, it is worth first observing Markan influence on the passage. Mark 13:10 is very likely relevant: "And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations" (καὶ εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη πρῶτον δεῖ κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, see Dupont 1974, 131–34). Furthermore, the formulation κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν (Luke 24:47) resembles the Markan summary of John the Baptist's preaching, κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, which Luke also carries over in his account of John (Mark 1:4 // Luke 3:3). This suggests an analogy between the task of the Baptist and the apostles in Acts.[81] However, neither Markan connection should

79. The only textual variants of potential significance for the present argument are the insertion of "and thus it is necessary" (καὶ οὕτως ἔδει) after "Thus it is written" in 24:46, probably recalling 24:26, and the omission of ἐκ νεκρῶν from v. 46 in a few manuscripts including D. The latter is poorly attested and unlikely. The former is immaterial to the analysis of this chapter except in emphasizing the passage.

80. Litwak argues for an appeal to the general pattern of the rejection and vindication of Israel's prophets and the righteous; 2005, 124–46.

81. See the linkage between "repentance" and "forgiveness" in e.g. Acts 2:38; 5:31; 8:22; 10:43.

discourage interpreters from taking seriously Luke's direct appeal to the Jewish Scriptures, as the discussion below makes clear.

The strength of viewing the Psalms as the primary intertext for our passage is the explicit mention of the Psalms in the tripartite description of the canon in 24:45, as well as allusive references in the Passion narrative[82] and the use of the Psalms in the apostolic preaching in Acts.[83] The psalms referenced in Acts, however, are not cited in support of the preaching of repentance to the nations nor resurrection *on the third day*, and lexical contact between the Psalter and the key words which according to Luke's Jesus are "written" (γέγραπται, 24:46) has not been demonstrated.[84]

Similarly, that Jesus is the Prophet-like-Moses whom God "raised up" (ἀνίστημι) is explicitly claimed in Acts 3:22 and 7:37, with potential paronomasia on ἀνίστημι as alluding to Jesus's resurrection (but cf. the metaphorical usage in Acts 3:26). The view of Moses in Stephen's speech as a "rejected" prophet (ἀρνέομαι, Acts 7:35) with a successor who is also "rejected" (3:13–14) and "raised up" is significant (Dupont 1979a, 132–36; Juel 1988, 83–84). This does not, however, establish a Moses connection as the primary intertext for the Messiah's *suffering*, resurrection *on the third day*, and *proclamation of repentance* that follows (cf. e.g. Moessner 1989, 55–56).

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82. E.g. Pss 21, 30, 68 (LXX); e.g. Luke 22:34–37, 46–47; cf. Bock 1987, 148; Doble 2004, esp. 88–89; 2006, 277–80; Jipp 2010, 260–64.

83. E.g. Pss 2, 15, 88, 109, 118, 131 (LXX); Acts 2:25–35; 4:11, 25–26; 13:22, 33–35; see Dupont 1979a 146–50; 1979b; Juel 1988, 14; Doble 2004, esp. 88–89; 2006, 271–77; Jipp 2010, 269–73.

84. Cf. Novakovic, who although rightly pointing to Luke's interest in the risen flesh of Jesus in Luke 24:39–42 and the Petrine exegesis of Ps 15 LXX in Acts 2:25–32, acknowledges the lack of lexical contact between Ps 15 LXX and Luke 24:44–47; 2025, 166–70.

Of the three leading options, the Isaianic Servant view has the most to commend it. The parallel statement by Paul in Acts 26:22–23 clearly supports Isaiah as one scriptural source for the proclamation of repentance to the nations (Luke 24:47).[85] Paul claims to be,

> saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place (οἱ προφῆται ἐλάλησαν μελλόντων γίνεσθαι καὶ Μωϋσῆς): that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles (εἰ παθητὸς ὁ χριστός, εἰ πρῶτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν φῶς μέλλει καταγγέλλειν τῷ τε λαῷ καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν).

The last clause is a clear allusion to Isa 49:6, quoted expressly by Acts' Paul with reference to Barnabas and himself: "I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth (τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν τοῦ εἶναί σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς).[86] The language of the ἐσχάτος τῆς γῆς also appears, of course, in a programmatic position in Acts 1:8.[87]

Furthermore, the explicit citation by Luke's Jesus of Isa 53:12 LXX earlier, in Gethsemane, confirms the significance of the Servant's sufferings for Luke: "'For I tell you, this scripture must be fulfilled in me, "And he was counted among the lawless (καὶ μετὰ ἀνόμων ἐλογίσθη)"; and indeed what is written about me is being fulfilled'" (Luke 22:37).[88] The Isaianic Servant's sufferings (Isa 53:7–8 LXX) are also explained by Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch in

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85. The point is well made in Dupont 1974, 138–40 and Pao 2000, 84–91.

86. Acts 13:47; cf. Isa 49:6b LXX: ἰδοὺ τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν τοῦ εἶναί σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς. See edition of Ziegler (ed) 1983. Cf. Pao 2000, 96–101. On the transference of Isaianic Servant motifs to the apostles in this passage, see further Beers 2015, 154–64.

87. See Pao 2000, 91–96. Further potential allusions to Isaiah include the "preaching" (κηρύσσω) that leads to "forgiveness/release" (ἄφεσιν) in 24:47, which connects to the quotation of Greek Isa 61:1 in the Nazareth Manifesto in Luke 4:18: "to proclaim release/forgiveness to the captives" (κηρύξαι αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν). Also significant is the reference to the apostles as "witnesses" (μάρτυρες) in 24:48, which may recall Israel's role as μάρτυρες in passages such as Isa 43:10, 12 and 44:8; Mallen 2008, 80–84; cf. Beers 2015, 119–25.

88. Cf. Isa 53:12 LXX: …ἀνθ' ὧν παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀνόμοις ἐλογίσθη, καὶ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν καὶ διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη. So, Mittmann-Richert 2008, 172. *Pace*, e.g. Hooker 1959, 86.

terminology reminiscent of the parallel scene when Jesus interprets the Scriptures on the road to Emmaus.[89] A linguistic connection to the Isaianic Servant may appear there where the risen Jesus speaks not of the Messiah's "rising on the third day" but of his "entering into his glory" (εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ) (24:26). The Isaianic Servant is likewise "glorified" (δοξάζω, 53:12); however, the Danielic Son of Man also receives service from πάντα τὰ ἔθνη and their "glory" (δόξα, OG Dan 7:14; see πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in Luke 24:47).[90]

Thus, while the importance of the Isaianic background is well established, the Danielic Son of Man connection brings into focus the fact that Luke's Jesus introduces our passage by recalling his passion predictions, which themselves point back to Jewish Scripture's paradoxical vocation for "the Son of Man" (24:44; cf. 18:31–33).[91] Although Jesus speaks of himself as the Messiah (Χριστός) in his scriptural interpretation on the road and to the Eleven (24:25–27, 44–47), the angelic men at the empty tomb remember the passion predictions in their original "Son of Man" terms: "Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over into the hands of sinful people (δεῖ παραδοθῆναι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἁμαρτωλῶν),[92] and be crucified, and on the third day rise again (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστῆναι)"

89. "And Philip opened his mouth and beginning from this scripture he proclaimed Jesus to him" (ἀνοίξας δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς ταύτης εὐηγγελίσατο αὐτῷ τὸν Ἰησοῦν, Acts 8:35). Cf. "And beginning from Moses and all the prophets he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (καὶ ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν προφητῶν διερμήνευσεν αὐτοῖς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς τὰ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ, Luke 24:27). Cf. e.g. Juel 1988, 14.

90. OG text of Daniel is taken from Ziegler, Munnich, and Fraenkel (eds) 1999; cf. Beers 2015, 123–24.

91. Justin's reading in particular highlights this connection. Introducing the Sign of Jonah, Justin recalls from Luke 24:44–47 that Jesus convinced the apostles after his resurrection, "that even before he suffered had been saying to them that he must suffer these things and that these things had been publicly proclaimed by the prophets" (ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τοῦ παθεῖν ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι ταῦτα, αὐτὸν < ἔ>δει παθεῖν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν προφητῶν ὅτι προεκεκήρυκτο ταῦτα, 106.1). Justin *Dial.* 106–109. See further Chapter Five pp. 197–216.

92. This element of the passion predictions is likely derived in substantial measure from the "handing over of everything into the [fourth beasts'] hands" (παραδοθήσεται πάντα εἰς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ); OG Dan 7:25; Schaberg 1985, 209–213; Ferda 2024, 455–56.

(24:6–7). The passage therefore unfolds the scriptural backdrop of the Lukan passion-resurrection predictions. The Sign of Jonah, as a predictive Son of Man saying (11:30), fits naturally into such a context.[93] Granted, Jonah 2:1 Heb/LXX is sometimes thought to be a potential source of a scripturally attested third-day resurrection (24:7, 46), usually as part of a wide-ranging "third-day motif."[94] However, Jonah and his Sign likely play a considerably larger intertextual role in the formation of this central Lukan text.

Jonah/the Sign of Jonah as Key Intertext

For even the Isaianic Servant intertexts leave at least two crucial aspects of Luke's Opening of the Scriptures underexplained: (1) the strong sense of a preordained, tightly ordered *triple sequence* of suffering, resurrection on the third day, and subsequent proclamation of repentance to all nations; and (2) the *centrifugal* motion of the mission outward to the nations from Jerusalem as opposed to the centripetal movement of the nations in pilgrimage to Zion. This centrifugal movement, programmatically stated in Luke 24:47 and Acts 1:8, and narrated throughout Acts, is understood by leading interpreters as *counter to* or *transformative of* the Isaianic vision of the pilgrimage of the nations (e.g. Isa 60:3–18).[95] A typological connection, however, with Jonah provides both (1) and (2), while also exhibiting closer lexical contact with

93. The linkage in ancient Jewish sources of Jonah with the rescue of Daniel from the lions' den and the Three Young Men from the fire (3 Macc. 6:8; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers* (Apos. Con. VII 37); Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* 25) is suggestive, particularly if there is an association of the fate of Daniel, surrounded by lions and lifted up and out (סלק, Dan 6:23), with the elevation of the "one like a son of man" over the beasts who come up and out (סלק) from the sea in the vision of Dan 7 (7:3, 8, 20). The first beast of the vision is "like a lion" (Dan 7:4; noted in Wright 1992, 295).

94. Esp. Hos 6:2; see e.g. *Gen. Rab.* 56.1; cf. Novakovic 2012, 124–33; Dillon 1978, 48.

95. E.g. Green 1997, 857; Pao 2000, 229; Mallen 2008, 109–13.

the key words in Luke 24:46–47 than any other scriptural text. This suggests that Jonah/the Sign of Jonah[96] forms one of the thickest intertextual strands for this crucial Lukan scriptural claim.

To see this close lexical and conceptual linkage, one should first observe that the distinctive vocabulary of Septuagint Jonah appears in the Sign of Jonah pericope. For example, in Luke 11:32, the people of Nineveh will "rise" (ἀνίστημι) and condemn "this generation" in the judgment because they "repented" (μετανοέω) at the "proclamation" (κήρυγμα) of Jonah. Similarly, in Jonah 3:2 LXX the prophet has a κήρυγμα (קְרִיאָה), which in 3:6 causes the king of Nineveh to "rise up" (ἐξανίστημι / קום)[97] and call the fast leading to repentance (μετανοέω / נחם). Note that although in Septuagint Jonah it is God himself who "repents" (μετανοέω / נחם ; 3:9, 10; 4:2),[98] Luke explicitly has the Ninevites "repent" (μετανοέω, 11:32). Luke thus, unsurprisingly, uses the vocabulary of Greek Jonah to summarize the Jonah narrative.

It is striking, therefore, that in Jonah 1:2 LXX and again in 3:2, Jonah is told by God to "rise" (ἀνίστημι / קום) and "preach" (κηρύσσω / קרא) to the Ninevites before they, according to both Luke (11:32) and Matthew (12:41), "repent" (μετανοέω). Thus, the Jonah of Greek Jonah, in this order, descends into Sheol in the belly of the κῆτος for three days (τρεῖς ἡμέραι, 1:17), then "rises" (ἀνίστημι, 3:2) and subsequently "preaches" (κηρύσσω, 3:2) to Gentile Ninevites who, according to the narration of Luke 11:32 // Matt 12:41, "repent" (μετανοέω). This narrative is extremely close in wording and sequence to the Lukan claim that the Messiah is to suffer and then "rise" (ἀνίστημι) "on the third day" (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρα) and that "repentance" (μετάνοια)

96. Allusions to Jonah in Luke-Acts appear, naturally, to be influenced by the Sign of Jonah saying, and here the lexical connections run from Greek Jonah, through the Sign of Jonah pericope (11:29–32), to the Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47). The book of Jonah and Jonah's Sign must therefore be held together in this context.

97. Compare Paul's use of ἐξανάστασις to refer to the general resurrection in Phil 3:11, where the ἐξ likely has an emphatic, intensifying function; Bockmuehl 1997, 218–219.

98. 8ḤevXIIgr has ἐπιστρέφω instead of μετανοέω at 3:9, 10.

should be "preached" (κηρύσσω) to all nations in his name. These are in fact almost the exact same terms, placed in the same logical and temporal sequence.[99]

It might, however, be objected that Jonah's "rising" (3:2) occurs only after he has already been spat onto the shore by the fish (2:10) and, thus, cannot be read as a "resurrection." Against such an objection, though, one should note that "rising" (ἀνίστημι / קום; 1:2, 3, 6; 3:2, 3, 6) and "descending" (καταβαίνω / ירד; 1:3, 5; 2:7) are leitmotifs in Jonah (used six and three times, respectively). Their use throughout is deliberate and thematically significant.[100] Moreover, the command for Jonah to ἀνίστημι/קום (3:2) is separated by only one short verse (3:1) from his return to dry land (2:11). The narrative appears to leave Jonah lying, spat onto the shore, when he hears the call a second time to "arise and go."

Another objection might suppose that these terms are common, but this is not in fact the case in the LXX. Although Greek Jonah makes up less than 0.5% of the Septuagint, it is nevertheless responsible for fully 12.5% of Septuagintal uses of μετανοέω (three of twenty-four); 16% of uses of κηρύσσω (five of thirty-one),[101] and a full 25% of uses of κήρυγμα (one of four). Jonah is also the only OT prophet said to have a κήρυγμα (as in Luke 11:32).[102] In other words, the vocabulary of "preaching" and "repentance" is distinctive to Septuagint Jonah. In fact, the key terms of "rising" (ἀνάστασις/ἀνίστημι), "preaching" (κήρυγμα/κηρύσσω), and "repentance"

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99. Satisfying Allison's second and third criteria for allusions, regarding word order and rarity; 2000, 11–12.

100. Cf. Sasson 1990, 80; Niditch 2023, 42. Of particular significance for the Gospels, in light of the Stilling of the Storm, is Jonah 1:6 LXX, where Jonah is commanded to "rise" (ἀνίστημι) from his sleep.

101. Allison rightly notes the incidence of κηρύσσω twice in Josephus's account (*Ant.* 9.208, 214), picking up on this distinctive of Septuagint Jonah; Allison 2000, 125.

102. Note the repeated use of "preaching" terminology in Jonah 3:2 LXX: κήρυξον ἐν αὐτῇ κατὰ τὸ κήρυγμα τὸ ἔμπροσθεν; cf. Heb Jonah 3:2: וְקְרָא אֵלֶיהָ אֶת־הַקְּרִיאָה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי דֹבֵר אֵלֶיךָ; 4QXII[a] (4Q76) has הקרי]אה כזות, potentially further enhancing the proclamation theme by implying that God repeated the instructions; Gelston (ed) 2010, 63. Data on word usage across the whole LXX is derived from Rahlfs and Hanhart (eds) 2006.

(μετάνοια/μετανοέω) are not clustered so closely together *anywhere else in the LXX and NT* as they are in the Sign of Jonah pericope (Luke 11:32 // Matt 12:41) and Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (Luke 24:46–47). The latter refers, moreover, to resurrection "on the third day" (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ), often already thought to be drawn either from Hosea 6:2 LXX and/or Jonah 2:1 LXX.[103]

It might, then, be further objected that Septuagint Jonah exhibits no lexical connection to the Messiah's "suffering" (πάσχω, 24:46, 26). Πάσχω is not, however, a common term in the LXX. It is not used, for instance, in either the Servant Songs of Greek Isaiah or in the lament Psalms, and so one should not expect to find a usage of πάσχω in Greek Jonah. Jonah's psalm (Jonah 2:3–10 LXX), however, does depict suffering conceptually (albeit not of an innocent), and this through apparent intertextuality with some of the very psalms quoted and alluded to in the Lukan passion narrative.[104] Moreover, the structural pattern of Jonah's psalm (2:3–10) matches the narrative pattern which one scholar identifies as crucial to the Psalms' relevance to our Lukan text. The pattern is that the lamenting psalmist "undergoes intense suffering, repeatedly appeals to God for deliverance and vindication, and consistently concludes his prayers with praise and thanksgiving."[105] Furthermore, that Jonah suffered is recognized explicitly in at least one ancient Jewish source, albeit one that postdates Luke. The Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* speaks

103. Cf. McArthur 1971, 81–86; Dillon 1978, 48; Novakovic 2012, 124–33. Note also the strengthening of the "three days" theme in the LXX by the reduction of Nineveh's "forty days" to repent to a mere τρεῖς ἡμέραι, which itself follows the description of Nineveh as a three days' journey across; Jonah 3:3–4 LXX. 8ḤevXIIgr grants Nineveh "forty days" to repent in 3:4, following Jonah 3:4 Heb.

104. E.g. Ps 31:6 in Jonah 2:8; Ps 31:22 in Jonah 2:5; Ps 69:1 in Jonah 2:5; see further Magonet 1976, 44–49. It seems unlikely that the character Jonah regards himself as innocent, even if Jonah's psalm draws on motifs from psalms of the righteous sufferer; *pace* Gandi 2025, 96–97.

105. Hays 2016, 234.

expressly of Jonah's πάθος (ա֊ուն)[106] in multiple places. One suggestive passage, discussed further below, runs:

> "…[Jonah] threw himself into the raging sea. This suffering (ա֊ուն = πάθος)[107]…was pitiful, for the man undertook to save [others]; compelled by necessity and forced by the lot, by God, and by the [other] men, he sentenced himself to death and, in his anxiety for others' rescue, disregarded his own salvation (փրկութիւն = σωτηρία)."[108]

Jonah is, therefore, the only scriptural figure who can plausibly be said to have performed the three verbal actions of Luke 24:46–47: suffering (παθεῖν), rising on the third day (ἀναστῆναι… τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ), and proclaiming repentance (κηρυχθῆναι…μετάνοιαν) to Gentile nations, *in that order*. He is certainly the single scriptural figure credited in the Gospels with "preaching" (κήρυγμα) that leads Gentiles (or indeed Jews) to "repent" (μετανοέω) (Luke 11:32 // Matt 12:41). This close verbal, sequencing, and conceptual connection suggests Luke was influenced by Greek Jonah and the Sign of Jonah pericope (11:29–32) in composing the Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47).[109] Luke's readers, who are already aware of a Sign of Jonah to be given to "this generation,"[110] are thus meant to hear Jonah prominently among other scriptural

106. E.g. *De Jona* 20.4; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:17.

107. Lewy also retroverts as πάθος here (15.1 / 60); 1945.

108. *De Jona* 14.3–15.1; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:964. This quotation is discussed in detail below under the heading "Excursus on Jonah's Self-sacrifice."

109. Luke came into possession of the pericope in his sources, probably either Matthew or Q, even though he of course incorporates it into his own gospel.

110. The famous observation of Schubert regarding the central interest in "proof from prophecy" in Luke 24 had to do firstly with the Lukan Jesus's extension of scriptural prophecy in the passion-resurrection predictions, which I have argued properly should include the Sign of Jonah; 1954, 174.

texts, such as the Isaianic Servant Songs, which are allusively present in this dense and climactic text.[111]

For even though Jonah is a largely narrative text, albeit one with a prophet as its protagonist, its inclusion in the Book of the Twelve could well have encouraged a prophetic interpretation of the book, comparable to Qumran *pesharim* of other so-called Minor Prophets.[112] As a prophetic scriptural narrative, Jonah can prefigure a sequence of events while holding them together within its own narrative logic. This is something which poetic texts like Isaiah and the Psalms can do only to a lesser extent given that they are defined by tension and plot only to a lesser degree.[113] It is true, to be sure, that not *all* elements of the Jonah narrative are activated by this intertextual connection, but it is the nature of literary allusions that only specific elements of the text alluded to form part of the intertextual patterning that constitutes the allusion. The priorities of the alluding text determine which elements these are, and the expectation of a "Sign of Jonah" suggests that only certain elements of the Jonah narrative are in play (see further Ben-Porat 1976, 107–109). Furthermore, such a usage of Jonah is thoroughly consistent with Luke's historiographical use of the motif of recurrence throughout his two volumes, not only with respect to Old Testament parallels like Joseph, Moses, and Elijah but also through internal

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111. Allison's criteria for discerning allusions are therefore thoroughly satisfied by the Jonah allusion here. Briefly, (1) the history of interpretation supports it; (2) there is strong lexical and word order continuity; (3) these words are not commonplace in the LXX; (4) Jonah is prominent in Luke's tradition; (5) Luke directly mentions Jonah and sets the expectation of a "sign" of Jonah to come; and (6) the Jonah allusion enhances meaning in a manner consistent with Luke's purposes; see Allison 2000, 10–13; cf. Hays 1989, 29–32.

112. Cf. 1QpHab; 4QpNah (4Q169); 4QpHos$^{a–b}$ (4Q166–67); 4QpZeph (4Q170), although see Chapter Two's discussion of the textual Jonah for the prophet's muted reception at Qumran, pp. 23–26. What matters from the point of view of the first century is not *why* Jonah came to be included in the Book of the Twelve but rather the fact that it was so included, apparently encouraging the reading of its narrative as prophecy.

113. Scholars of Luke have attempted to capture this way of reading scriptural narrative as prophetic through various terminology, e.g. "typological-prophetic" (Bock 1987, 49–50, 275–77; 1994, 282), "pre-announcement" (*Vorankündigung*); Rusam 2003, 494–96.

narrative repetition, as in the well-known Jesus–Stephen and Jesus–Peter–Paul parallels.[114] Allusions to Jonah in crucial Petrine and Pauline passages in Acts involving mission to the Gentiles (Acts 9–10, 27) lend considerable further strength to this interpretation, as will shortly be detailed.

However, against the potential objection that in the Sign of Jonah it is Jesus's preaching and not the apostles' that is paired with Jonah's, one might consider the close parallel to our passage which Luke places in the mouth of Paul before Agrippa II, noted earlier. There the Messiah is himself the one who "would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles" (εἰ …ὁ χριστός…μέλλει καταγγέλλειν τῷ τε λαῷ καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, Acts 26:22–23). This statement is given in the context of justifying Paul's own mission, and Paul cites the "light to the nations" passage (Isa 49:6) of himself earlier in Acts 13:47, yet here he accredits the proclamation to Jesus the Messiah and not to himself.[115] Significantly, Luke's Paul also emphasizes here that the post-resurrection preaching of "light" which the Scriptures foreordained is addressed both to Israel and the nations, even if the proclamation to Gentiles constitutes the new and surprising element.

Ancient Jewish reception of Jonah also renders it a suitable and likely intertext. As a reminder, the celebration of Jonah's rescue in these sources often pairs Jonah with the

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114. On historical recurrence in Luke-Acts, and particularly parallels between Peter and Paul, as well as between both these, Stephen, and Jesus, see further Radl 1975; Talbert 1975, 15–23; Trompf 1979, 116–78; Moessner 1986; Green 1996; Rothschild 2004, 99–141. For an older example, cf. Rackham 1904, xlvii. For a discussion of Luke's typological engagement with the Elijah–Elisha narrative in Luke 4:23–27; 7:11–17; 9:10–17, 51–62; see e.g. cf. Bock 1987, 110–116; Otten 2020, 375–89. See further, for the influence of the Elijah-Elisha cycle on the composition of Luke, Brodie 2000; Kloppenborg and Verheyden (eds) 2014. A typological pairing of Jesus and Stephen with aspects of the Joseph and Moses stories appears in Stephen's speech in Acts 7:9–53; see further e.g. Keener 2012–2015, 2:1363–64. There is likely a typological significance to the appearance of Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration in 9:30–33; see Moessner 1983, 575–605.

115. See further Dupont 1974, 240; Moessner 1986, 253; Tannehill 1986, 1:297–98.

foundational and paradigmatic rescue of Israel in the Red Sea crossing during the exodus.[116] Sacrificial interpretations of Jonah's actions in e.g. *De Jona* 14.3–15.1 and Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1) which are discussed further below, are also suggestive given widespread early Christian interpretations of Jesus's death as a sacrifice, even if these Jewish sources are in fact later than the first century.[117] One should, furthermore, remember Jonah's enormous material and cultural footprint in ancient Christianity as a symbol of resurrection, which lends at least an *a priori* plausibility to Jonah's playing a role in key early Christian claims regarding Jesus's resurrection as prefigured in Jewish Scripture.[118] It may also be significant, as supporting evidence, that much ancient Christian reception of the Pauline formulation of the similar *traditum* in 1 Cor 15:3–4, also detects Jonah's influence.[119]

Summary

Read prophetically or typologically through the lens of the Sign of Jonah saying, the Jonah narrative is therefore particularly suited as an intertext that can hold together the sense of movement throughout this synthetic Lukan scriptural claim. It accounts better than other leading intertexts for the strong sense of a preordained, tightly ordered *triple sequence* of suffering, resurrection on the third day, and the subsequent proclamation of repentance to all nations. Furthermore, the *centrifugal* motion of the mission outward to the nations from Jerusalem is more closely anticipated by Jonah's journeying *outside of Israel* to Nineveh than by the Isaianic pilgrimage of the nations *into* Zion. In this way, the scriptural interpretation by Luke's risen

116. 3 Macc. 6:8; Targum Jonathan to Jonah 2:6; *De Jona* 25; Huqoq Synagogue mosaics.

117. Discussed in depth below under the heading "Excursus on Jonah's Self-sacrifice." Luke's understanding of Jesus's death as sacrificial or atoning is of course debated, for which see e.g. Wilson 2016.

118. See the discussion in the introduction to Chapter One.

119. See e.g. 3 Cor. 5.28–31; Tertullian's *De anima* 55.1–2; Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechetical Lectures* 14.20; Chrysostom's *Hom. 1 Cor.* 48.4.

Jesus retrospectively reveals the Sign of Jonah as comprising the sequence of suffering/death, resurrection on the third day, and the proclamation of repentance to Israel and the nations. The Sign of Jonah pericope (11:29–32) thus flows nicely into the redactional reference to offering "light" (φῶς) which people can see in Luke 11:33, which forms the transition from the Sign of Jonah to the saying about the eye as the body's lamp in 11:34–36.[120] What is initially a highly enigmatic saying unfolds over the course of Luke's narrative as a public-facing passion-resurrection predication that also anticipates the proclamation of repentance to the nations.

To my knowledge, this interpretation of Luke's Sign of Jonah is different from any on offer in contemporary scholarship. The closest comparable alternative appears to be Theodore Zahn's argument from over a century ago that the death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as Jesus's preaching and its continuation in the preaching of the apostles, are included in the Lukan Sign of Jonah. Zahn does not, however, draw the connection with the Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47) or the texts in Acts discussed in the following sections (1913, 468–69). The extent of Jonah's influence in the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures has passed unrecognized in modern biblical scholarship until now. Chapter Five will demonstrate its influence in the early centuries CE.

Peter's Inauguration of the Gentile Mission from Joppa

The Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47) forms part of the bridge from Luke's Gospel to Acts (see e.g. Tannehill 1986, 1:297–98). If the Sign of Jonah contributes substantially to this central episode, including in its programmatic statement about the proclamation of

120. The preaching of Jesus in the narrative present is in view to be sure, but given that the apostolic proclamation is often described throughout Luke and Acts in Isaianic terms as the φῶς going out to Israel and the nations (Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47; 26:23), this chapter's interpretation of the Sign of Jonah works well in context. Unconvincing if also imaginative and theologically attractive is the view of Theodore Zahn, who relates the "cellar" (κρύπτη) in which the lamp might have been hidden to Jesus's tomb; 1913, 470–71. Cf. parallels in Matt 5:15; 6:22–23; Gos. Thom. 33. On Lukan redaction in this Thomas verse, see further Gathercole 2011, 121–22.

repentance to the Gentile nations, one might therefore expect to find references to Jonah at crucial moments in the apostolic mission to those nations in Acts. This, I will argue, is exactly what one does find in allusions which infuse Peter's journey from Joppa to preach to Cornelius's God-fearing Gentile household (Acts 9:36–11:18) with a profound scriptural coloring and legitimacy. These are to my knowledge the only prominent Jonah allusions in the Gospels and Acts to which the extant ancient sources do not attend. Nevertheless, patristic authors commonly understood the apostles' preaching to Gentiles as a whole to form part of the Sign of Jonah.[121] The present analysis of the Lukan Jonah Sign (Luke 11:29–32; 24:44–47) suggests the possibility that this inaugural moment of apostolic proclamation to Gentiles should be interpreted as that part of the Sign of Jonah which consists in the apostolic proclamation of "repentance" (μετάνοια, Acts 11:18; Luke 24:47; cf. 11:32) to Gentiles.[122] Granted, this is only one dimension of the episode's significance, albeit an important one.

Previous discussions of these allusions have often been drawn in overly broad strokes, with some scholars even entertaining an unlikely Jonah typology extending through the death of Herod in Acts 12 (cf. Williams 1957, 152–53; Goulder 1964, 177–78). Moreover, prior analyses of these correspondences at the level of detail have been truncated as a rule, the widely cited article of Robert Wall (1987) notwithstanding.[123] Furthermore, not all the parallels cited by Wall are convincing, while some persuasive connections are overlooked there and in other previous scholarship.[124]

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121. E.g. Justin Martyr *Dial.* 106–109; Hilary of Poitiers *Comm. Matt.* 16.2; Ephrem the Syrian *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron* 11.1–4; Augustine *Epistles* 102.6; Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 3.3–4a; Chromatius of Aquileia *Tractates* 50A; and the Ps.-Chrysostomic *Quod mari similis sit haec vita*.

122. *Pace* Wall 1987, 80.

123. The detailed exegetical discussion is in fact less than two pages; Wall 1987, 79–80.

124. E.g. Pervo 2009, 255–57; Keener 2012–2015, 2:1730; Moxon 2017, 23–24.

The most striking point of contact is Acts' repeated emphasis on Peter's location in Joppa,[125] which is mentioned ten times from 9:36–11:13.[126] Joppa's seaside position is also stressed (10:6, 32),[127] highlighting its location at a boundary point.[128] Joppa is of course the port city from which Jonah embarks on his own circuitous route to Gentile Nineveh (Jonah 1:3).[129] Both Peter's commission to go to Caesarea and Jonah's commission to Nineveh are prompted by actions of those cities' residents which "ascend" (ἀναβαίνω) before God (Acts 10:4; Jonah 1:2 LXX).[130] Both must receive divine instruction "a second time" (ἐκ δευτέρου, Jonah 3:11 LXX; Acts 10:15; 11:9). The reluctance of both messengers is then overcome in a threefold manner, Jonah's by three days and nights in the fish's belly (Jonah 2:1 LXX) and Peter's by the thrice-repeated visionary command to kill and eat the unclean animals (Acts 10:16; 11:10).[131] After these crucial turning points, both messengers are commanded to "rise" (ἀνίστημι) and "go" (πορεύομαι) to their respective destinations (Jonah 3:2 LXX; cf. 1:2; Acts 10:20).[132] The Gentile

125. So, Wall 1987, 80 and others.

126. Acts 9:36, 38, 42, 43; 10:5, 8, 23, 32; 11:5, 13. Noted in Walton 2024, 614. This would appear if nothing else to satisfy Hays's criterion of "volume"; 1989, 29.

127. A fifth-century ivory plaque from Rome captures the seaside atmosphere of the raising of Tabitha in Acts 9:40–41 by the depiction of a fish engraved upon the wall behind her; image in Spier and Charles-Murray 2007, 237.

128. Hengel 1983, 116–18; Walton 2024, 614.

129. Joppa features prominently in Josephus's narration of the Jonah story (*Ant.* 9.209).

130. This point is overlooked in previous treatments, and it is a striking conceptual connection since the notion of something "ascending" before God is not common; cf. Allison's second and third criteria are fulfilled here; 2000, 11–12.

131. Intriguingly, the "sheet" (ὀθόνη) on which the animals descend in Peter's vision may specifically be a "sail"; Spencer 1997, 506. This is particularly likely given its description as a σκεῦος (10:11). Compare the nautical usage of σκεῦος in Acts 27:17; cf. σκευή in 27:19. On ὀθόνη as "sail," see further Bockmuehl 2010, 187, drawing attention to the rectangular sails of first-century fishing boats. These details can only add to the maritime coloring of the episode. See further Barrett 2004, 1:506; MacDonald 2003, 66n1.

132. Noted in Wall 1987, 80; Moxon 2017, 24. Again, there is common word order and structure; Allison 2000, 11–12.

recipients of the message then exhibit a "believing" response (πιστεύω, Acts 10:43, 45; 11:17; ἐμπιστεύω, Jonah 3:5 LXX).[133]

A central question in the discussions has been whether Simon Peter's patronym, Bar Jonah (Matt 16:17), is relevant to these likely Jonah connections. Luke never names Peter Βαριωνᾶ as Matthew does,[134] but perhaps a Palestinian source for the account could have known Simon as the son of Jonah.[135] It is suggestive, if only as an additional point in favor of the relevance of his patronym, that Peter is called "Simon" four times within this episode and nowhere else in Acts (Σίμων ὁ ἐπικαλούμενος Πέτρος, 10:5, 18, 32; 11:13; cf. James's "Simeon" in 15:14). Indeed, a particular emphasis seems to be laid upon the name "Simon" here given that Simon the tanner is himself also named four times within the account (9:43; 10:6, 17, 32).

However, whether or not Peter's patronym is in view here, the other Jonah allusions in the episode are clear. Thematically, these allusive references to the book of Jonah support the conclusion of Peter regarding Cornelius's household: "God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (10:35).[136] As argued above in relation to the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47), the ability of Jonah to prefigure a centrifugal movement outward to the nations appears important for Luke again here

133. Wall 1987, 80; Green 1996, 293. Less convincing, however, is the suggestion of some that Jonah's hostility to Nineveh's repentance in the book's fourth chapter mirrors the temporary dispute (διακρίνω) which arises between Peter and Jewish believers in Jerusalem over Peter's eating in a Gentile household (11:2). There is in fact no criticism of God's forgiveness of Cornelius's household, but rather a response of praise to God (11:18). *Pace,* Wall 1987, 80; Green 1996, 293. Nor does Jonah's conversation with God beneath the castor oil plant closely parallel God's conversation with Peter in the vision; *pace* Moxon 2017, 24.

134. A demonstration that Bar Jonah is indeed Peter's characteristically Galilean patronym, rather than a symbolic nickname, may be found in Bockmuehl 2010, 141–48.

135. Rightly, Wall 1987, 85–86; cf. Williams 1957, 152.

136. Cf. Wall 1987, 85. Congruence with the aims of the alluding author is a criterion for discerning allusions for both Hays and Allison; 1989, 30; 2000, 13.

in the scriptural legitimation of the inaugural apostolic mission to the Gentiles. This conclusion supports the interpretation of the Lukan Sign of Jonah as the sequence of death, resurrection on the third day, *and* proclamation of repentance to the nations. However, neither in Acts nor in Jonah, particularly as interpreted in contemporaneous Jewish sources, is this mission to the nations understood to negate the election of Israel.[137] Indeed, if readers of Acts are in fact witnessing the continuation of the Sign of Jonah through Peter's proclamation to Cornelius's household,[138] then this episode should be regarded as not only good news for Gentiles but also as a "sign" to Israel. I will return to this point after the analysis of Paul's voyage to Rome, which is commonly read as the culmination of a supersessionist movement away from Israel and towards Gentiles in the narrative of Acts.[139]

Before coming to that discussion, however, it is worth pointing out that missionary expansion to Gentiles is of course already in view earlier in Acts 9 during the calling of Saul of Tarsus, including explicitly with reference to Paul's role as a chosen vessel to carry the risen Lord's Name before Gentiles (9:15). The accounts are linked not only by the Peter-Paul pairing but also by the role of visionary experiences, which are had by both the apostles Paul and Peter and their counterparts Ananias and Cornelius, in bringing the characters into contact with each other (9:10–16; 10:3–16).[140] If Luke views Saul of Tarsus as a kind of reluctant messenger like Jonah (Acts 26:14), then it is perhaps fitting that Saul is rendered sightless for three days (9:9)

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137. See further the treatment of Peter's vision with respect to the abiding importance of *kashrut* in Acts in Moxon 2017.

138. *Pace* Wall 1987, 80. It may be significant, therefore, given that the Lukan Sign of Jonah consists also in death and resurrection, that Peter's stay in Joppa results in Tabitha's literal resurrection from the dead (Acts 9:40–41).

139. E.g. Sanders 1988, 74–75; cf. Jervell 1998, 631; Wolter 2020, 323.

140. The co-incidence of the paired visions confirms their validity, as Keener rightly notes; 2012–2015, 2:1732.

and later sent back to Tarsus (9:30). As was noted in Chapter Two in the section covering Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*, Tarsus in Cilicia (Paul's hometown; 9:11) was regularly conflated in antiquity with the Tarshish to which Jonah fled.[141] If Luke held to this widespread geographical conflation, then certain similarities between Saul/Paul and Jonah might have suggested themselves to him.[142] These connections are potentially, but not absolutely certainly, present in the calling of Paul in Acts 9.

The Voyage of Paul to Rome

However, the initial reluctance of Saul of Tarsus to listen to the divine prick of conscience (Acts 26:14), as well as the widespread conflation of his hometown with Jonah's Tarshish, may if nothing else help to render more intelligible the relatively clear allusive references to Jonah's first chapter in Paul's voyage to Rome. As Paulinus of Nola wryly put this likely point of contact between Jonah's tempest and Paul's voyage: *Habemus et navem Tharsis navemque Tharsensis*: "We have a ship bound for Tharsis and the ship of Tharsis."[143] Paulinus is, however, only one of a number of Acts' ancient readers who discern a mimetic connection between Jonah's tempest and Paul's shipwreck.

Hilary of Poitiers recalls that "through Jonah and Paul you taught the faithful that life is in the sea."[144] In a similar if also more creatively imaginative vein, Sulpicius Severus conflates Jonah's storm with Paul's shipwreck in Acts 27 and Paul's account of himself in 2 Cor 11:25:[145]

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141. See *Ant.* 1.127; 9.209; Tertullian *Fug.* 10.20; Fragment Targum and Neofiti 1 to Gen 10:4.

142. Cf. Feldman 1992, 6.

143. *Ep.* 49.9; Skeb 1998, 3:1025.

144. *[C]um per Ionam et Paulum docuisses fidelibus esse in mari vita In Constantium* 4; Rocher (ed and trans) 1987, 174–75.

145. "…Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea." The conflation of Jonah's "three days" with Paul's shipwreck is not entirely without a basis in the text of Acts (cf. τῇ τρίτῃ, Acts 27:19).

"the preacher to the Gentiles, whom the waves swallowed, after three days and the same number of nights, emerged restored from the deep waves."[146] Relevantly for present purposes, Paul's role as "preacher to the Gentiles" is understood by Sulpicius as crucial to the analogy between the apostle and Jonah. These ancient readings do not, of course, exemplify satisfactory exegesis from a modern, critical point of view.[147] Yet, one need not follow them in their particulars to recognize a certain perceptiveness within their imaginative, ancient mode of reading.

In fact, some modern critical scholarship has also perceived correspondences between Acts 27 and Jonah 1, including: (1) a westward Mediterranean voyage leading circuitously to a Gentile imperial capital city; (2) storm at sea; (3) jettisoning cargo (Jonah 1:5; Acts 27:18–19) (4) the ship's crew and passengers being saved due to the protagonist's singular relationship to God (27:23–25; Jonah 1:9–16).[148] It is true that stormy seas and shipwrecks are staples of Greco-Roman literature, and the story of Paul's voyage draws on certain stereotyped features of such stories.[149] Some scholars have preferred these Greco-Roman parallels as the primary background, often questioning whether the Jonah parallels offer at best anything more than a black-and-white contrast between a rebellious prophet and the obedient apostle.[150] I will return to

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146. *[G]entium praedicator, quem fluctus absorbuit et post triduum totidemque noctes emergentem e profundo unda restituit Ep.* 1.6; Fontaine (ed and trans) 1967–69, 1:318.

147. See Chapter Five pp. 234–242 for a full discussion of these sources.

148. Marguerat notes that "readers cannot fail to make the connection," and that Acts 27 intentionally inverts the Jonah storm narrative; 2015–2024, 2:351, 362; see also 2002, 72. Noted also in e.g. Pervo 2009, 652; Keener 2012–2015, 4:312–313; cf. in broader strokes Goulder 1964, 177; Radl 1975, 230; Denova 1997, 110; For an older treatment, see Rackham 1904, 477.

149. Jewish parallels include, broadly, Josephus's *Jewish War* 1.279–80; T. Naph. 6. For abundant Greco-Roman parallels, see further Talbert and Hayes 1999, 268–71.

150. *Pace* Alexander: "…in the book of Jonah, which offers the only parallel narrative in the Hebrew Bible, the hero's sea-trip is a disastrous mistake…Jonah's situation is reversed: far from being the cause of the ship's peril, Paul is the cause of its salvation"; 2005, 84. But Jonah is of course also the cause of its salvation, as many ancient readers recognized. Cf. Keener, for whom the parallels' value may lie mainly in the contrasts between Jonah and Paul; 2012–2015, 4:313.

the latter point, noting the potential importance of the contrast between Jonah's guilt and Paul's innocence. Regarding the former point, while some of the salient terms appear in other maritime contexts, their specific clustering and sequential arrangement lend greater credibility to the impression of deliberate intertextuality with Jonah.

Moreover, an interest in the narrative of Jonah's tempest is something Luke would share with Josephus, whose account of Jonah concentrates for the most part on the sea storm in Jonah 1 (around two-thirds) rather than the other portions of the book, perhaps because the tempest narrative would appeal to a Roman audience (*Ant.* 9.208–214). Luke's own interest in this section of Jonah is similarly plausible considering the likelihood of Acts' addressing a predominantly Gentile audience.[151] Furthermore, Luke has already alluded to Jonah in an earlier storm story, as I will show in a later section (Luke 8:22–25; rightly, Marguerat 2002, 72).

Furthermore, there is also a greater extent of verbal contact between Acts 27 and Jonah 1 than has previously been recognized, even if important elements have been detected in previous scholarship.[152] Someone might, for instance, suppose that "making a jettisoning of the vessels of the boat" would be a common phrase, and it is indeed true that ἐκβολή ποιέω is a standard way of referring to jettisoning cargo. Only, however, in the story of Jonah's tempest (Jonah 1:5 LXX), Paul's shipwreck (Acts 27:18–19), and later Christian texts referencing them does one

151. E.g. Keener 2012–2015, 1:423–34. One should not, however, minimize the importance of an apologetic in principle aimed at the legitimation of Christ-belief and following of "the way" before a Jewish audience, given e.g. the prominence of speeches addressed to Jews rather than Gentiles. This includes, as Alexander rightly points out, the climactic role of the speeches to Agrippa II (Acts 26:1–29) and to the Jewish leaders in Rome (28:17–28). This also has the function of reassuring an internal, Christ-believing audience; Alexander 1999, esp. 42–44. Cf. recently, Cowan 2019.

152. I do not find convincing the suggestion of Beresford (2016) that the reference to the "Fast," i.e., Yom Kippur, in Acts 27:9 is intended to evoke Jonah in light of Jonah's later liturgical connection to Yom Kippur in Judaism. As noted in Chapter Two's discussion of *De Jona,* pp. 48–63, the earliest clear evidence for this practice is b. Meg. 31a (600 CE). The function of the reference in context is to emphasize that the season for safe sailing had passed; rightly, Talbert and Hayes 1999, 271n11.

find ἐκβολήν ποιέω immediately together with σκευή (or σκεῦος) πλοίου. In fact, nowhere else in extant ancient Greek literature are these words found within ten or even twenty words of each other.[153] Furthermore, Jonah and Acts have them in the same order relative to one another.[154] Jonah 1:5 LXX has: ἐκβολὴν ἐποιήσαντο τῶν σκευῶν τῶν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ ("they made a jettisoning of the vessels which were in the boat"). Acts 27:18–19 has, meanwhile: …ἐκβολὴν ἐποιοῦντο καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ αὐτόχειρες τὴν σκευὴν τοῦ πλοίου ἔρριψαν ("…they made a jettisoning and on the third day with their own hands tossed overboard the tackle of the boat").[155]

This alone would be suggestive of contact with Septuagint Jonah, if admittedly not conclusive. However, an even more striking verbal parallel occurs in the ways both Paul and Jonah express their belonging and service to the one God before the others on the boat. In both cases that relationship is expressed with ἐγώ and εἰμι plus a genitive (κυρίου, Jonah 1:9 LXX; θεοῦ, Acts 27:23). This is followed by a verb expressing service to God (σέβομαι, Jonah 1:9 LXX; λατρεύω, Acts 27:23). Immediately afterwards, talk of "fearing" occurs (μὴ φοβοῦ, Acts 27:24; ἐφοβήθησαν οἱ ἄνδρες φόβον μέγαν, Jonah 1:10 LXX). Paul assures the crew: "…last night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship (τοῦ θεοῦ,

153. One may confirm this via a proximity search of these lemmas within the database of ancient Greek literature in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*. This remains true even if one eliminates πλοῖον and simply searches for ἐκβολή and ποιέω along with σκευή or σκεῦος. The only comparable usages which are not direct references are (1) that found in some versions of *Acts of Philip* 33: καὶ ἤρξαντο ἐκβολὴν τῶν σκευῶν ποιεῖν. But this is different grammatically and in word order, and it lacks any mention of πλοῖον; Bonnet (ed) 1903, 17; and (2) Evagrius Ponticus's usage of this biblical imagery of "throwing the tackle overboard" (ἐκβολὴν ποιούμενοι τῶν σκευῶν) amidst the storm of the passions to describe the ascetic life; *De malignis cogitationibus* 3; Géhin, Guillaumont, and Guillaumont (eds and trans) 1998, 158, 160. This too lacks reference to any πλοῖον; but more to the point, it is dependent on the biblical imagery.

154. Thoroughly satisfying Allison's second and third criteria: common words and order over against other literature; 2000, 11–12.

155. Interestingly, in the short space between these phrases in Acts 27:18–29, there is a reference to the Jonah-like timing "on the third [day]" (τῇ τρίτῃ). Cf. Börstinghaus 2010, in which ἐκβολὴν ἐποιοῦντο is an "*wichtige Parallele*" (191) and, later, an *erstaunliche* one (375). Overlooking some of the more extensive connections noted here, Börstinghaus nevertheless usefully points to κουφίζω ("lighten") in Jonah 1:5 and Acts 27:38 as well as a subsequent jettisoning in Acts 27:38. Cf. also Trompf 1979, 332; Pervo 2009, 652.

οὗ εἰμι [ἐγὼ][156] ᾧ καὶ λατρεύω), and he said, 'Do not be afraid… (μὴ φοβοῦ).'" This closely echoes Jonah: "'I am a servant of the Lord, and I serve the Lord God of Heaven (Δοῦλος κυρίου ἐγώ εἰμι καὶ τὸν κύριον θεὸν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐγὼ σέβομαι),[157] who made the sea and the dry land.' And the men feared greatly (ἐφοβήθησαν οἱ ἄνδρες φόβον μέγαν)."[158]

Paul's self-identification, like Jonah's, reveals him to be the ship's most important passenger, on whom the fate of the entire vessel rides. As with Jonah, Paul's special relationship of belonging to and service of God results in the salvation of all the others (Acts 27:23–25, 44; Jonah 1:15–16). This intertextual patterning also points to an interesting contrast between Paul and Jonah. Paul's innocence/righteousness is a key concern of the last portion of Acts,[159] from the trials through the shipwreck narrative,[160] while Jonah's guilt is the cause of the storm wracking his boat. The sailors in Jonah pray not to be guilty of "innocent/righteous blood" (αἷμα δίκαιον, Jonah 1:14 LXX),[161] while Paul's innocence is proven even to the people of Malta as well as the ship's company (28:3–6). Themes of guilt and innocence are generally characteristic of ancient Mediterranean storm and shipwreck stories, since storms were often thought to be

156. The ἐγὼ is present in e.g. 𝔓74, א, A, and C^2 although absent in B C* L Ψ.

157. Jonah 1:9–10 LXX. The LXX rendering Δοῦλος κυρίου ἐγώ εἰμι is probably a misreading of the Hebrew, where Jonah identifies himself as a "Hebrew" (עברי) rather than a "servant of YHWH" (יהוה עבד), with the divine Name abbreviated; see Tov 2019, 132. Josephus's recounting reflects the Hebrew: Ἑβραῖος εἶναι προφήτης δὲ τοῦ μεγίστου θεοῦ (*Ant.* 9.211).

158. Again, in addition to the availability of Jonah to Luke and Luke's demonstrable interest in Jonah, this striking connection satisfies Allison's second and third criteria; 2000, 11–12.

159. Acts 23:29; 25:25; 26:31–32; see further Talbert and Hayes 1999, 271–75.

160. Acts 28:3–6; See further Talbert and Hayes 1999, 271–75. Jesus's own innocence/righteousness is famously the subject of the Lukan centurion's acclamation at the cross: "truly this man was δίκαιος"; Luke 23:47; cf. Mark 15:39; Matt 27:54). The presence of the centurion aboard Paul's ship (27:1, 43 etc.) underscores this linkage; cf. Talbert 1975, 18.

161. Jonah 1:14 in 8ḤevXIIgr probably reads αἷμα ἀθῷον, giving a more explicit reading of innocence; see also Aitken 2019, 10–11. On the theme of innocent blood in Jonah, see further, e.g. Magonet 1976, 69–73.

divinely sent as punishment.[162] The pointed contrast between Jonah's guilt and Paul's innocence strongly accents that innocence, serving a key concern of the Acts narrative.[163]

Together, these allusions suggest a deliberate reference to Jonah on the part of Luke.[164] There may, furthermore, be an aspect of characteristically Lukan historical recurrence in the emergence of Jonah themes at the two most prominent moments of missionary boundary crossing to Gentiles.[165] Peter's journey from Joppa to Cornelius's household marks the official inauguration of the apostolic mission to Gentiles, while Paul's voyage to Rome marks the culminating movement of the gospel to the imperial capital in Acts. The narration of these turning points in terms of the well-known scriptural paradigm of Jonah helps to draw out their particular significance in the history of salvation.[166] It also marks these missionizing journeys as the continuation of the Sign of Jonah.[167] An appeal to Jonah themes at the two critical boundary-crossing moments in the "Gentile mission" in Acts is precisely what one would expect if the Sign of Jonah has shaped Luke's programmatic statement about the post-resurrection proclamation of repentance to Gentiles (Luke 24:44–47).

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162. Talbert and Hayes note, for instance, a very close parallel with the viper's biting of Paul in which a shipwrecked mariner dies from a viper's bite, not managing to escape fate; *The Greek Anthology* 7.290; 1999, 273.

163. On both Hays's and Allison's reckonings whether an allusion serves the purposes of the alluding text is an important criterion; Hays 1989, 30; Allison 2000, 13.

164. Cf. Keener 2012–2015, 4:312–313.

165. See footnote 114 above. On historical recurrence in Luke-Acts, see further Rackham 1904, xlvii; Radl 1975; Talbert 1975, 15–23; Trompf 1979, 116–78; Moessner 1986; Green 1996; Rothschild 2004, 99–141.

166. On this paradigmatic function of historical recurrence in Luke-Acts, see further Rothschild 2004, 97.

167. While the element of literal death and resurrection is not present in the account of Paul's shipwreck as it is in Luke's Sign of Jonah and in Peter's residence in Joppa, the theme of rescue from death is strongly emphasized (e.g. 27:20–26; see also 28:3–6). It is not necessary, however, to regard this episode as Paul's own "death and resurrection" in order to recognize broad parallels between the endings of Luke and Acts; cf. Wittkowsky 2019; Talbert and Hayes 1999, 282–83.

The Sign of Jonah and Luke-Acts' Purported Supersessionism

Recognizing the Sign of Jonah as informing the emergence of Jonah themes at these most important boundary-crossing events affords fresh evidence against Luke-Acts' purported supersessionism. Many interpreters have understood Luke's conception of the "Gentile mission" as leading to God's rejection of Israel and the movement of salvation history away from Jews and towards Gentiles (e.g. Haenchen 1971, 128–29). The debate has centered particularly on Acts 28, where Paul for the third time (see also 13:46–47; 18:6) expresses frustration with the lack of traction his gospel is gaining with Jewish audiences: "Let it be known to you, then, that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen" (Acts 28:28).

Some have argued that this third statement indicates for Luke that the Jewish people have by the end of the narrative been utterly rejected by God (e.g. Sanders 1988, 74–75). Others think Luke regards those Jews who do not accept the gospel as no longer *being* Israel, while the "true" Israel is carried on in the church.[168] It is sometimes even claimed that this is the significance of Acts 1:6–7, which (on this view) denies any restoration of the kingdom to Israel *per se* (cf. Maddox 1982, 107), rather than, as is more likely, invoking the mysterious timing of providence for that restoration at the Parousia (rightly, Oliver 2021, 71–102). For e.g. Moessner, in Luke's view the "'days of retribution' upon an unrepentant people are straining to fulfillment" (1988, 103). More moderately, Daniel Marguerat suggests the ending of Acts presents an unresolved tension between the turning of salvation history towards Gentiles and the promises to Israel (2002, 226; 2015–24, 2:390). Bart J. Koet similarly argues that the issue is purely the salvation of Gentiles and not the rejection or election of Israel (1989, 137–39). Recent treatments (e.g. Schaefer 2012, esp. 342–65; Oliver 2021) balance these discussions by pointing, for instance, to

168. Cf. Jervell 1998, 631; Wolter 2020, 323.

Luke's consistent emphasis on the promises of Israel's restoration, likely associated in Luke's view with the Parousia.[169] The ending of Acts remains, however, a puzzle from a narrative architecture point of view.

To address this perplexing ending, some have suggested Luke may think along the lines of Paul's salvation-historical argument in Romans 9–11.[170] There, the Deuteronomic "jealousy motif" positions the believing response of Gentiles as designed to provoke Israel to repentance. Since Acts 28 has Paul speaking in Rome, perhaps the believing response of Gentiles in Acts might also in God's providence provoke Jewish belief in the gospel.[171] Such scholars in my view rightly reject Hans Conzelmann's influential view that Luke could never have followed the logic of Paul in Romans 9–11 since he writes in light of the delay of the Parousia and understands e.g. Jerusalem's role to be relegated to the salvation-historical past.[172] Even if Acts cannot be charged with such a conception of salvation history,[173] an appeal to a non-Lukan, Pauline text would be strengthened if joined to an emic Lukan line of reasoning wherein the missionizing of Gentiles serves the Lukan hope of Israel's redemption. The Sign of Jonah provides such a Lukan rationale, one which regards the apostolic missionizing of Gentiles in Acts as continuing to address Israel with a call to repentance rather than as a salvation-historical turning away from the

169. E.g. Luke 2:25–38; 13:35; 19:41–44; 21:24. This need not be understood as an immanent political hope but as instead for Luke bound up with the Parousia.

170. Cf. Fitzmyer 1998b, 147, 790–92; Marguerat 1999, 301; 2013, 20; 2015–2024, 2:390; Bauckham 2001, 485–87; Schröter 2004, 208; Schaefer 2012, esp. 439–45; Oliver 2021, 135–36; Bormann 2023, 169–70.

171. Cf. Marguerat 1999, 301; Bauckham 2001, 485–87; Oliver 2021, 135–36; Bormann 2023, 169–70.

172. Conzelmann 1960, 132–35; 1987, 227; Roloff 1981, 375; cf. Ravens 1995, 220.

173. For a recent critique, see e.g. Crabbe 2019. I disagree with Marguerat's conclusion that Israel's salvation-historical priority is ended for Luke; 2015–2024, 2:379–80, 390.

Jewish people or even simply as a parallel mission to the Jewish one.[174] Insofar as the Gentile mission can be described as in part a Sign of Jonah, it is a sign addressed to Israel.

It seems likely that in the Lukan (and indeed Pauline)[175] view, had Israel as a whole and as one accepted Jesus as Messiah, the Parousia would have occurred soon, although not necessarily immediately. In his preaching in Solomon's Portico, Peter explicitly links Israel's repentance and God's sending the "Messiah Jesus appointed for [Israel] (προκεχειρισμένον ὑμῖν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν) whom heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things (ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δέξασθαι ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων)."[176] The force of Acts' ending on the Isaianic note of the people's resistance (28:25–28) is, therefore, more likely to state that the apostolic word's progress within the present age is not yet complete. This is precisely because if Israel as a whole repented then the Parousia and consummation of the age would occur.[177] Although the time will come when Jerusalem and all Israel are finally and fully redeemed by decisive divine initiative (Luke 13:35; 21:28), for now the kingdom must still be proclaimed (Acts 28:30), opening the possibility that more Gentiles will repent and recognize its Lord.

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174. An anti-supersessionist reading of Jonah's mission appears also in Ps.-Chrysostom's *Quod mari similis sit haec vita*, in which the 120,000 Ninevites correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel, and in a Pauline typo-logic anticipate the salvation of the Gentiles as leading to the salvation of Israel's twelve tribes. See further Chapter Five pp. 213–216.

175. See Rom 11:11, where Israel's stumbling creates space for Gentile repentance, while Israel's acceptance would amount to resurrection itself, presumably at the Parousia when all Israel shall be saved (11:15, 26).

176. Acts 3:19–21. See also Luke 13:35; 21:24:19–21. With e.g. Keener (2012–2015, 2:1106–8), I disagree with the view of e.g. F.F. Bruce that this eschatology is not Lukan; 1974, 67–68. See also Allison 2025, 14–15. Note the accumulation of rabbinic and early Jewish evidence for the eschatological promises interpreted as contingent upon Israel's repentance in Allison 2025, 7–25. See further Oliver 2021, 83–89. Contingency need not be total if divine redemption is both guaranteed and responsive to human action.

177. Cf. Bormann 2023, 177–81, in which Jerusalem, as the site of the Parousia, plays an inert role until the decisive action of God in the sending of Jesus at his Second Coming. That decisive action, according to Luke, will surely take place, but the interplay between divine and human agency is more subtle and mutual in e.g. Luke 13:35 than Bormann's treatment allows. On the interplay in Luke-Acts of the divine will and human freedom, which can delay but never thwart it, see Crabbe 2019, 184–204.

Throughout this time, the Lukan Sign of Jonah forms a continual address to Israel designed to provoke repentance. Even Justin Martyr understands the Sign of Jonah as holding out the offer of divine mercy to Israel rather than signaling the movement of salvation away from the Jewish people (*Dial.* 107–108).[178] How much more Luke?

The Stilling of the Storm

The analysis thus far has followed the Lukan Sign of Jonah from (1) its dominical announcement (Luke 11:29–32); through (2) its role in unveiling the witness of the Jewish Scriptures to the Messiah's death, third-day resurrection, and the apostolic proclamation of repentance (24:44–47); to (3) its continuation in the inaugural preaching of Peter to Gentiles (Acts 9:36–11:18) and in (4) Paul's carrying of that proclamation to the imperial capital of Rome (Acts 27). This positions us to perceive much more clearly the underappreciated significance of well-known Jonah allusions in an earlier episode in Luke's Gospel, the Stilling of the Storm (8:22–25). The extensive intertextuality with Septuagint Jonah in this pericope contributes not only to the miracle's Christological and epiphanic dimensions but also positions it as a foreshadowing of the Lukan Sign of Jonah.

An Epiphanic Purpose

Before coming to the pericope's Jonah themes, it is worth noting that there are of course other scriptural and ancient Jewish parallels featuring the calming of storms by Israel's God and biblical heroes,[179] as well as non-Jewish ones where divine and semi-divine figures accomplish similar feats.[180] One may easily grasp the epiphanic quality of the Storm Stilling miracle, if also

178. See Chapter Five pp. 197–216.

179. Ps 107; 2 Macc. 9:8; T. Naph. 6; b. B. Meṣ. 59b; y. Ber. 9; see further e.g. Van der Loos 1965, 641–46; Fitzmyer 1981–85, 1:728; Cotter, CSJ 1999, 138–42; Robinson 2022, 82–86.

180. See the sources cited in the previous footnote, but esp. Cotter, CSJ 1999, 131–63.

the extent to which human beings could also be granted divine power over the elements, by consulting the useful catalogue of "gods and heroes who control wind and sea" in Wendy Cotter's *Miracles in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (1999, 131–63). Gods such as Poseidon and Isis naturally exert control over the seas,[181] but so also do Pythagoras and (the not as yet divinized) Julius Caesar.[182] Similarly, the one God of Israel rules the sea and stills its waves (Ps 89:8–9) as well as commanding the winds on the seas (Ps 107:25; Jonah 1:4). However, power to part the seas and rivers is also granted to Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and Elisha.[183] Nevertheless, within a scriptural frame of reference the authoritative nature of Jesus's command of the wind and waves (Mark 4:39 parr.) more closely resembles statements about the prerogatives of the one God than the accounts of Moses and similar figures.[184] Reinforcing this point, other ancient Jewish parallels feature God's response to the prayers of the imperiled rather than the authority of any human being (T. Naph. 6; b. B. Meṣ. 59b; y. Ber. 9).

This complex epiphanic portrait is important to acknowledge in a discussion of the pericope's Jonah themes, particularly since some have minimized these almost patent allusions for their apparent dissonance with a more exalted, or even a merely positive, Christological

181. E.g. Homer's *Illiad* 13.27–29; Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* 11.5; cited in Cotter, CSJ 1999, 137, 149.

182. E.g. Iamblichus's *Life of Pythagoras* 28; Dio Cassius's *Roman History* 46.1–4; cited in Cotter, CSJ 199, 144, 147. On the episode as both rescue miracle and epiphany, see further Theissen 1983, 94–103; Schenke 1974, 59.

183. Exod 14:21; Joshua 3:15–16; 2 Kings 2:6–8; 2 Kings 3:14; cf. Josephus's *Antiquities* 2.347–48; see further Cotter, CSJ 1999, 152–55.

184. The argument of Kirk and Young based on the statement in Ps 89:25 (88:26 LXX; "I will set his hand on the sea, and his right hand on the rivers") may constitute at best a partial exception. In context this statement probably refers to the geographical extent of the king's rule, from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, rather than to nature miracles. A messianic/eschatological interpretation of this psalm does not transform the statement in the manner required; *pace* Kirk and Young 2014.

picture.[185] To be sure, the conventional wisdom regarding the meaning of these typological connections is relatively underwhelming in an epiphanic context: "a greater than Jonah is here."[186] However, a more pointedly kerygmatic intent is potentially at work in the narrative's allusions to Jonah, albeit one which is yet compatible with a purpose of divine disclosure.[187]

The Jonah Allusions

In fact, those who have argued for a close modeling of the pericope in its Markan form on the Jonah tempest narrative are correct to single Jonah out as a key intertext among others. The case for this has been most influentially advanced by Rudolf Pesch (1976–77) and Lamar Cope, the broad parallels formulated by the latter being well-known: (1) departure by boat; (2) violent storm at sea; (3) sleeping main character; (4) extremely frightened sailors; (5) miraculous stilling related to the main character; (6) marveling response by the sailors (1976, 96). A striking similarity lies in the relaxed attitude of the sleeper in contrast with the fears of the others in the boat.[188] There is, moreover, a clear connection in the waking of both Jesus and Jonah with fears of "perishing" in the first-person plural (ἀπολώμεθα, Jonah 1:6; ἀπολλύμεθα, Mark 4:28; Matt 8:25; and Luke 8:24).[189] However, Mark also creates an especially transparent link by having the

185. Rightly, Schenke 1974, 60; cf. Léon-Dufour, S.J. 1965, 174–77; Hays 2016, 384n105; Cf. on the Lukan front the brief, dismissive comments in Bovon 2002–2013, 1:319n17 and Bock 1994–96, 1:757. See also the discussion of the Matthean version (Matt 8:23–27) in the next chapter.

186. So, rightly, Vorpahl 2021, 232. Cf. e.g. Pesch 1976–77, 1:269; Gnilka 1988, 319; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:70; Twelftree 1999, 71; Luz 2001–2007, 2:17. This fact is taken almost for granted in the Solomon-Jonah double saying as a basis for the call to listen (Luke 11:32 // Matt 12:41), and therefore it seems unlikely to exhaust the meaning of the careful and extensive Jonah allusions in the Storm Stilling.

187. This kerygmatic element does not negate a discipleship-oriented purpose for the pericope. The latter was famously argued for by Bornkamm vis-à-vis Matthew's version, and there is no need for a false dichotomy between the two; Bornkamm 1963; cf. Heil 1981, 94–103; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 1:68–70.

188. Collins 2007, 260; this contrast is not absent in the Lukan version, *pace* Wolter 2016–2017, 1:346

189. So, many, e.g. Léon-Dufour, S.J. 1965, 176; Pesch 1976–77, 1:272.

disciples, like the sailors in Jonah, "fear a great fear" (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν, Mark 4:41; ἐφοβήθησαν οἱ ἄνδρες φόβον μέγαν, Jonah 1:10 LXX; cf. 1:16; 1:5).[190]

Perhaps as a result, the Markan and to a lesser extent the Matthean Storm Stilling narratives have dominated the discussions.[191] By contrast, modern Luke commentators have as a rule paid scant attention to Jonah allusions in the pericope.[192] Luke, however, retains in fact key Jonah elements from the Markan version while also bringing the pericope towards Septuagint Jonah, even as he also renders it in more elegant Greek.[193] For instance, Luke retains Mark's "we are perishing" (ἀπολλύμεθα) in the disciples' waking of Jesus, which, as mentioned above, is a key point of connection between Jonah's tempest and the Storm Stilling (see ἀπολώμεθα, Jonah 1:6; 14 LXX). He also (as does Matthew) brings this point in the episode closer to Jonah by having the disciples "approach" (προσελθόντες, Luke 8:24) Jesus to wake him, just as the captain does Jonah (προσῆλθε, Jonah 1:6 LXX).[194] Similarly, Luke's comparatively more elegant, "they were afraid and amazed" (φοβηθέντες δὲ ἐθαύμασαν, 8:25), nevertheless maintains Mark's emphatic reference to the disciples' fearing at the end of the narrative.

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190. E.g. Pesch 1976–77, 1:273; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:70. *Pace* those who have found closer connections to, e.g. Homer's *Odyssey* 9.563–64; 10.31, 47–52 (MacDonald 2000, 57–62) or Vergil's *Aeneid* 4.554–560 (e.g. Marshall 1978, 333; cf. Lagrange 1911, 120). The Homer parallels are exceedingly weak, while the Vergil parallel is slightly stronger, including the element of surprise at Aeneas's serenity. Neither compares remotely to Jonah in the extent of verbal and conceptual contact. Bultmann supposed a common older myth underlay both Jonah and the Storm Stilling, although apparently for him the former nevertheless influenced the latter; 1963, 235.

191. See recently, e.g. Cotter, CSJ 2010, 221–24; Malbon 2019, 251–95; Robinson 2022, 81–100; Breuer 2024, 231–52. For an incautious if occasionally perceptive treatment of the Markan version, cf. Aus 2000, 1–55.

192. Cf. the fleeting references in Fitzmyer 1981–85, 1:728; Nolland 1989–1993, 1:398; Bock 1994–96, 1:757; and Bovon 2002–2013, 1:319n17. One notes the absence of any comment on these Jonah connections in a number of major Luke commentaries, e.g. Johnson 1991; Green 1997; Wolter 2008; 2016–17; Carroll 2012.

193. On the Farrer Hypothesis Luke is of course still following the Markan order in this section, but elements of Matthean redaction would appear also to be reflected in Luke's version, particularly in Luke 8:24 // Matt 8:25; see further Goulder 1994, 420–21. On such so-called "minor agreements," see Goodacre 2023, 98–100.

194. Cf. Schürmann 1969–1994, 1:477n31.

Moreover, Luke's account exhibits several linkages to Jonah which are missing in the Markan and Matthean versions. For example, Luke but neither Matthew nor Mark describes the disciples and Jesus as "sailing" (πλέω, Luke 8:23, see Jonah 1:3 LXX). Luke's narration of Jesus's "stepping into the boat" (ἐνέβη εἰς πλοῖον, 8:22) is closer to Jonah 1:3 LXX (ἐνέβη εἰς αὐτὸ [sc. πλοῖον]) than is either Matthew's or Mark's.[195] Only Luke, like Jonah 1:4 LXX, describes the boat as "being in danger" (κινδυνεύω).[196] Finally, the repeated references to the "surf" or "rough water" (κλύδων) in Jonah 1:4, 11, and 12 (LXX) find no parallel in Matthew or Mark, but Luke has Jesus rebuking the κλύδων in Luke 8:24.[197] These close points of contact between Luke's Storm Stilling and Jonah 1 LXX suggest at least that Luke did not intend to minimize or ignore the Jonah allusions in the Markan (or indeed, on the FH Matthean) version despite his improving of its Greek.[198]

As intimated above, these Jonah allusions could in principle serve an epiphanic purpose in Luke (or indeed Mark or Matthew)—for Jesus not only sleeps through the storm like Jonah but also exerts an essentially divine power over the tempest, as only God does in the Jonah narrative (Jonah 1:4,15; *pace* Bovon 2002–2013, 1:319n17). The sailors do later address Israel's God with the cry "Lord, let us not perish" (κύριε, μὴ ἀπολώμεθα, Jonah 1:14 LXX; cf. esp Matt 8:25, κύριε, σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα). If the sleeping of Jesus connects to scriptural and broader

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195. Matt 8:23 has ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον. Mark 4:36 has παραλαμβάνουσιν αὐτὸν ὡς ἦν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ. Cf. the brief note in Cope 1976, 97.

196. Cf. again the brief note in Cope 1976, 97. Davies and Allison allude to the connections in the Lukan account with the terse instruction to, "Cf.…Lk 8.22–23 with LXX Jonah 1.3–4"; 1988–1997, 2:70.

197. Mark and Matthew refer to τὰ κύματα, the "waves" or "billows"; for which see Jonah 2:4 LXX. Luke thus satisfies Allison's second and third regarding rare, common word order; 2000, 11–12.

198. Cf. Schürmann 1969–1994, 1:477. From the point of view of Lukan redaction, ordering of pericopes around the Storm Stilling and Sign of Jonah support a connection between them: The former runs lamp under jar - true family – stilling of storm – Gadarene exorcism (8:16–29) and the latter runs exorcism/Beelzebul controversy – return of unclean spirit – true family – Sign of Jonah – lamp under jar (11:14–33). See further on the process of redaction here Goulder 1994, 509–11.

ANE motifs of the sleeping deity who is roused by prayer or sacrifice to act on behalf of worshippers,[199] then perhaps part of the payoff of the Jonah allusions could conceivably lie in the sharp contrast this intertextual patterning creates between Jesus and Jonah. However, despite the above-mentioned examples of humans being granted divine power over the elements, quite a lofty Christological portrait emerges thereby in the pericope, even if it does not necessarily identify Jesus with the one God of Israel directly.[200] Such a portrait would seem to put the flawed Jonah thoroughly in the shade, so that "a greater than Jonah is here," the lesson which is usually drawn from the Jonah allusions, amounts to an almost superfluous comparison.[201] One could, for instance, easily imagine a storm stilling miracle which did not include such transparent allusions to Jonah as the disciples' waking of Jesus with the cry "we are perishing! (ἀπολλύμεθα)" (Mark 4:28; Matt 8:25; and Luke 8:24; cf. Jonah 1:6). Furthermore, the Jonah connections appear primarily to activate a linkage between the actions of Jesus and Jonah rather than with the character of God in the Jonah narrative. This suggests, as intimated above, that another purpose may be at work in the Jonah allusions besides the pericope's epiphanic dimensions.

A Foreshadowing

As Chapter Five will demonstrate, patristic testimony to these Jonah allusions is widespread, ranging across Greek, Latin, and Syriac authors and even featuring in a synodical epistle.[202] These ancient readers of the Gospels do not typically regard the Jonah connections as

199. E.g. Ps 44:23–24; see further Marcus 2000–2009, 1:338; Batto 2021, 139–57. Cf. Cotter CSJ 2010, 224, in which Jonah's sleep as rebellious is contrasted with Jesus's confident trust in God.

200. Cf. Hays 2016, 384n105; Robinson 2022, 93–98.

201. See also Vorpahl 2021, 232. Cf. e.g. Pesch 1976–77, 1:269; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:70; Twelftree 1999, 71; Luz 2001–2007, 2:17; Allison 2013b, 488.

202. E.g. Hilary's *Against Valens and Ursacius* Series A IV 1, 25. See the full discussion in Chapter Five pp. 221–242.

serving merely to announce Jesus's superiority to Jonah. Instead, they view the intertextual patterning as activating a figural identification between Jesus's sleep and Jonah's, thus infusing the Storm Stilling with the themes of the Jonah storm narrative, including metaphorical death and even self-sacrifice.[203] For instance, Ambrose of Milan comments:

> Let us see whether what we read of Jonah may not also accord with the gospel. He was sleeping in the inner part of the ship and was snoring, in which a sacred figure of the passion led on beforehand (*in quo sacrae passionis figura praecessit*). Just as Jonah was sleeping in the ship and peacefully snoring as though he had no fear of being apprehended; so too our Lord Jesus Christ, who fulfilled that figure by the sacrament of his death (*qui figuram illam sacramento suae mortis impleuit*), in the time of the gospel slept in the boat.[204] (Ps 43.85)

Ambrose here takes the *sleep* of Jonah to refer figurally to the *death* (passion) of Jesus, with the middle term in that typological linkage being Jesus's own sleeping in the boat. But why should this be? Are not instead Jonah's three days and nights in the fish given the dominical warrant for such a typological role (Matt 12:40)? The explanation is that Ambrose sees a metaphorical association between Jonah's sleeping and his "death" or near-death in the fish, as well as between Jesus's sleep (καθεύδω, Mark 4:38; Matt 8:24; ἀφυπνόω, Luke 8:23) and his own death. One need of course look no further than a few verses after the Stilling of the Storm in all three Synoptics for a metaphorical usage of "sleeping" (καθεύδω) with reference to Jairus's then-dead

203. See also Stone 2013, 50–54, who attempts to justify the patristic view as a legitimate reading of Matthew in broader theological and exegetical terms. In modern literary-critical terminology, the linkage is comparable to the phenomenon of metalepsis, in which the context of the evoked text is relevant to the meaning of the allusion; see further Hays 1989, 20, *passim*; Hollander 1981, 113–32.

204. Ní Riain (trans) 2000, 252 (modified); Pizzolato (ed and trans) 1980, 2:184.

daughter (Matt 9:24 // Mark 5:39 //Luke 8:52).[205] Other patristic authors make similar assumptions about this linkage in their interpretations of Jonah and the Stilling of the Storm.[206]

Yvonne Sherwood finds these patristic associations incredible as well as indicative of Christian misappropriation of Jewish Scripture (2000, 15). For A.K.M. Adam, they are indicative of the way in which context inherently determines the "correctness" of a given reading (1990). In response to Sherwood, Timothy J. Stone makes an interesting exegetical and theological interpretation-oriented defense of the patristic view vis-à-vis Matthew's Storm Stilling (2013, 48–55). One grants that the confessional and canonical perspectives of these ancient authors cause them to extend connections that are limited in the texts from a historical point of view. The instincts of ancient readers obviously need not be followed in their particulars. Modern scholarship has, however, also widely recognized Jonah connections in the pericope, although it has struggled to explain their significance. For this reason, it may be useful to attend to these early Gospel readers more closely than has previously been done (even in e.g. Stone 2013, 48–55), despite their operation in an ancient interpretative register. I pay them particular attention here because in the present instance, they appear to exhibit a crucial insight into the intertextual patterning between Jonah and the Storm Stilling.

For, as is well known, the motivic use of the keyword "descend" (καταβαίνω / ירד) is used to build the Jonah narrative's dramatic tension, from the prophet's "descending" to Joppa (1:3), "descending" into the boat (1:3), "descending" into the hold of the ship to sleep (1:5), and, ultimately "descending" into the "land (אֶרֶץ / γῆ) whose bars closed upon [him] forever" (2:7).

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205. Indeed, Jesus's overcoming the threat of death is a common thread in the accounts of the Storm Stilling, Gadarene healing, and raising of Jairus's daughter along with the healing of the woman with a flow of blood (Luke 8:22–56 parr.). See further Gundry 1993, 237, 283; Stone 2013, 52.

206. See especially the discussion of Jacob of Serugh's *Mimro* 122, where an association between sleep and death is made in a poetic register, as well as e.g. Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures* 14.17. See Chapter Five pp. 221–242.

This final descent marks the exact turning point after which Jonah's life is raised (עלה / ἀναβαίνω) out of the pit (2:7).[207] It is often overlooked, but Jonah's "falling into a deep sleep" (וַיֵּרָדַם, 1:5) is itself a partial homophony with וַיֵּרֶד / יָרַד.[208] The imperfect third-person form of this rare verb, which makes the sound-play possible, is not used anywhere else in Hebrew scripture.[209] Its participial form is then repeated by the captain (1:6), drawing particular attention to it here. Then, similarly to the use of ירד/καταβαίνω and עלה/ἀναβαίνω in Jonah 2:7, Jonah is told to "rise" (ἀνίστημι / קום) from this deep sleep in 1:6. This creates a certain symmetry or thematic linkage between Jonah's sleep in the boat and his metaphorical descent into Sheol in the fish's belly, both of which mark successive nadirs in Jonah's descent, after both of which he rises up again.[210]

This symmetry is noticed in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, which has Jonah "submerged" (ընկղմեմ)[211] in the "belly/womb" (որովայն = κοιλία or γαστήρ)[212] of the ship (7.5), just as he will be eventually drawn into the "belly" (որովայն = κοιλία or γαστήρ) of the κῆτος to be reborn (16.4; 17:1). This appears to draw upon the homonymy between the accusative form (κοίλην) of the "hold" (κοῖλος/יְרֵכָה) of the ship where Jonah sleeps (1:5) and the "belly" (κοιλία/מֵעֶה) of the fish. Both κοῖλος and κοιλία refer to a cavity or hollow area and share stems. Furthermore, the

207. See e.g. Landes 1967, 25.

208. Rightly noted, however, in Erickson 2021, 218.

209. It is always used in the Niphal. The nominal form of the verb, תַּרְדֵּמָה, which is also rare, is used, for example, of the "deep sleep" which God lays upon Adam (Gen 2:21), Abraham (Gen 15:12), and Saul (1 Sam 26:12). It is the paralyzing stage of deep sleep; see further Magonet 1976, 67–69. The LXX loses the sound-play with the otherwise reasonable translation "he snored" (ῥέγκω).

210. On other potential parallels between chapters one and two of Jonah, see further Landes 1967, 26.

211. Equivalent of καταποντίζω, βυθίζω, καταπίνω, καταδύνω, βαπτίζω; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:781.

212. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:534.

LXX renders the "stomach" (מֵעֶה) of the fish (Jonah 2:1–2 Heb/LXX) and the "belly/womb" (בֶּטֶן) of Sheol as κοιλία, so that the term becomes a leitmotif in Septuagint Jonah, further linking Jonah's sleeping in the boat with his descent in the κῆτος in the LXX version.

The interpretative instincts of some ancient readers to identify the sleeping of Jonah with death are, therefore, tracking with something deeply interwoven into the book of Jonah's literary artistry, even if they are not fully aware of the extent of that artistry, particularly in the Hebrew.[213] Jonah's sleeping (Jonah 1:5) is indeed thematically linked with his descent to the land of death (2:7, 2). If the metaphorical usage of sleep to describe Jairus's daughter's temporary death in the nearby context of the Storm Stilling (Matt 9:24 // Mark 5:39 //Luke 8:52) is any indication, then it is possible that Jesus's sleep also has symbolic overtones. If this is the case, the allusions to Jonah's sleep in the storm, where the connection between death and deep slumber is clear, would make the metaphorical resonances of Jesus's own sleep much clearer. Part of the intent of the Jonah allusions could thus be to elucidate the pericope's purpose as a foreshadowing of Jesus's death and resurrection.[214]

There is, moreover, further exegetical support for this possibility. Mark and Matthew use ἐγείρω of the disciples' "rousing" of Jesus, and Matthew uses it again of Jesus's awaking from sleep, which lends itself to overtones of resurrection (Matt 8:25–26; Mark 4:38).[215] Luke, however, uses the more terminologically precise διεγείρω of the disciples' "rousing" of Jesus (8:24a) as well as his awaking from sleep before calming the storm (8:24b). Nevertheless, ἐγείρω

213. Jerome, who of course knows the Hebrew, does not appear to notice this sound-play in *Comm. Jon.*

214. In terms of Hays's and Allison's lists of criteria, here history of interpretation has helped illuminate congruence. See p. 9.

215. Rightly, Gundry 1994, 154; Marcus 2000–2009, 1:337; Stone 2013, 53; Rieske 2018, 360.

is still present morphologically within this compound lexeme.[216] I will return in the next chapter to further, clear indications that Matthew's version is intended as a foreshadowing of death and resurrection, but Luke also provides a further hint in this direction. Before coming to this hint, however, a brief note on ancient Jewish and Christian understandings of Jonah's self-sacrifice may be useful in the present context.

Excursus on Jonah's Self-sacrifice

For certain ancient readers of the Gospels, the fact that Jonah's storm was calmed by his self-sacrifice is telling in its typological relationship to the Storm Stilling, for Jesus will ultimately save through death rather than merely an exertion of divine power.[217] Augustine's pithy summary has it that: "…as Jonah was sacrificed for those endangered by the storm, so Christ was offered for those who are drowning in the storm of this world" (*Ep.* 102.4).[218] Interestingly, as noted in Chapter Two, ancient Jewish texts postdating the New Testament, such as the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* and Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, also understood Jonah's being tossed overboard as a self-sacrificial action. That action resulted in the salvation of the sailors and of Israel, respectively, even if Jonah was himself also the cause of the storm.[219] As noted earlier, *De Jona* says,

> "…[Jonah] threw himself into the raging sea. This suffering (ѡḫun = πάθος)[220]…was pitiful, for the man undertook to save [others]; compelled by necessity and forced by the lot, by God, and by the [other] men, he sentenced

216. Note the resurrection (ἐγείρω) of Jairus's daughter in Luke 8:54 parr.

217. E.g. Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures* 14.17; Ambrose's *Explanatio psalmorum XII* 43.85; Jacob of Serugh's *Mimro* 122 on Jonah; 122.13 387:13–21; 388:1–5, 7–9. See Chapter Five pp. 221–242.

218. *[S]icut [Ionas] pro his, qui tempestate periclitabantur, ita Christus pro his, qui in hoc saeculo fluctuant*; Daur 2004–2009, 3:30; Parsons (trans) 1951–56, 2:173.

219. See Chapter Two pp. 54–57 and 63–66.

220. Lewy also retroverts as πάθος here (15.1 / 60); 1945.

> himself to death and, in his anxiety for others' rescue, disregarded his own salvation (փրկութիւն = σωτηρία)."[221]

Comparably, R. Nathan is credited in Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1) as saying that Jonah only ever took flight in the first place to drown himself for Israel's sake (Jonah 1:12). Like Moses in Exod 32:32 and David in 2 Sam 24:17, Jonah's actions prove, "that the patriarchs and the prophets offered their lives on behalf of Israel (האבות והנביאים נתנו נפשם על ישראל)."[222] Even though both these texts postdate the New Testament, they illustrate at least the intelligibility of such a sacrificial reading of Jonah to some ancient Jewish authors.[223]

These observations cannot in themselves, of course, demonstrate that either Matthew or Luke drew an intentional connection between Jonah's self-sacrifice and Jesus's death (cf. Stone 2013, 54). However, they only further illustrate the appeal the narrative of Jonah's tempest might have had to Luke, Matthew, and other early Christians.

Foreshadowing the Lukan Sign of Jonah

Therefore, the intertextuality with Jonah in the Storm Stilling, which appears deliberate on the part of Luke and the other Synoptic writers, suggests at least the possibility that the sleeping of Jesus and his subsequent rising up to calm the storm foreshadow his death and resurrection. After all, in Gospels which are "passion narratives with an extended introduction,"[224] should one be surprised to find anticipations of Jesus's death and resurrection throughout, as indeed is explicitly the case (e.g. in the passion-resurrection predictions)?

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221. *De Jona* 14.3–15.1; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:964.

222. Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1); cf. Hengel 1986, 251–52. See further Chapter Two pp. 63–66.

223. See further the discussion in Siegert 1992, 134–35, drawing an interesting comparison between the "servant" theme and sacrifice here and in the New Testament.

224. Kähler 1964, 80n11.

Furthermore, one additional point speaks potentially in favor of this possibility for the Lukan version: the boundary-crossing geographical setting of the Stilling of the Storm pericope. This crossing of the Sea of Galilee leads conspicuously in all three Synoptics to the Gentile territory of the Gerasenes (or Gadarenes in Matthew), the strongly Gentile character of which is signaled by the impurity of the swine and tombs with people living among them, as well as the incidence of severe demonic possession.[225] Here again Luke follows Mark closely; however, crucial divergences between these on the one hand and Matthew on the other clarify that Matthew regards the Markan account of Jesus's openness to Gentiles in the pericope as potentially problematic. In brief, Luke like Mark allows the episode to foreshadow a later Gentile mission in the healing of the exorcized man and his subsequent proclaiming of Jesus despite the resistance of the others in the region.[226] Matthew, consistent with his more careful restraint of Jesus' pre-resurrection mission to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt 10:6), presents the journey as essentially negative if not outright a failure.[227]

To mention only a few key details, one notes, for instance, the marked intentionality of Jesus's travel at the beginning of the Markan and Lukan pericopes: "Let us go to the other side" (διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν) of the lake/sea (Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22). Matthew by contrast simply has the disciples follow Jesus into the boat (Matt 8:23), and however true it is that this lends the

225. See further e.g. Iverson 2007, 21–23; Stenschke 1999, 106–9. Even if Mark or Matthew regards this area as, ideally and in principle, Israel's territory, the people living there are Gentiles; see further Konradt 2014, 56. If Mark meant the episode to display Jesus's re-conquest of Israel's ideal boundaries, then Matthew does not notice this despite his interest in the restoration of the Galilean tribal region (Matt 4:12–17); cf. Vette 2025. If he did, Matthew would not have presented the account in such negative terms. In either case, a theme of the expansion of Israel's boundaries in Mark would not negate a theme of proleptic mission to Gentiles since the people living in the Gerasenes are in fact Gentiles and not Jews. The concentration in the account is on the healing of the demon-possessed man.

226. See Iverson 2007, 21–39.

227. Rightly, Konradt 2014, 56–59; cf. Luz 2001–2007, 2:53.

pericope discipleship overtones (Bornkamm 1963) and credits Jesus with the initiative, Matthew does not explicitly record Jesus *setting out* to travel to the *other side* of the Sea. He merely reports what happened "after he came to the other side" (ἐλθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πέραν, Matt 8:28; cf. Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:71). This weakens the linkage between the episodes in Matthew's version, highlighting by contrast their connectedness in Mark and Luke. Furthermore, Mark and Luke have Jesus commanding the unclean spirit to leave the man before the "legion" of demons speak (Mark 5:7–8; Luke 8:28–29), while Matthew has the demon-possessed men take the initiative instead (see Matt 8:29–32).[228] Matthew also doubles the number of demon-possessed men (8:28) while, in a drastic shortening of the account, omitting any reference to the men after their healing—the episode in fact begins and ends in hostility.[229] Following Mark, Luke by contrast recounts the healed man "proclaiming (κηρύσσω) what Jesus had done for him" (Luke 8:39; cf. Mark 5:20). In Mark, this comes after a rare command of Jesus for a healed person openly to proclaim that Jesus had healed them (Mark 5:19 // Luke 8:39). As far as the secrecy motif in Mark goes, this moment is the exception that proves the rule, and its location in Gentile territory is rendered even more conspicuous for this reason.[230]

Matthew's omission of these story elements reflects his restriction of the pre-resurrection mission of Jesus and the disciples to Israel (cf. Matt 10:6; 28:19–20), and the resulting, abortive Matthean ending throws into clear relief the proleptic Gentile missionizing in the Markan and Lukan accounts. Given, therefore, that this account is linked for Luke (following Mark) closely with the preceding journey by boat over the lake, the Jonah allusions in the Stilling of the Storm

228. Rightly, Konradt 2014, 56–57.

229. Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:85; Konradt 2014, 57–58.

230. See e.g. Marcus 2000–2009, 1:353–54; *Pace* Wrede 1971, 140–41.

likely underscore for Luke that the disciples and Jesus are traveling to Gentile territory.[231] This is comparable to the Jonah allusions in Paul's voyage to Rome in Acts 27 in that both mark moments of boundary-crossing missionizing of Gentiles which take place aboard sailing vessels.[232]

Thus, it might be coincidence, but perhaps also not, that the Lukan Storm Stilling lays out an implicit sequence of metaphorical death and resurrection followed by the sole episode in which the Lukan Jesus commissions someone who "preaches/proclaims" (κηρύσσω) in Gentile territory prior to the resurrection (Luke 8:39). Apart from the element of "three days," this is strikingly close to the programmatic scriptural pattern identified in the Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47). That pattern is, according to Luke, the essence of the scriptural witness to the "necessity" (δεῖ) of the Messiah's paradoxical vocation[233] and constitutes the "plan" or "purpose" (βουλή) which God foreordained.[234] Therefore, Luke may have been especially attentive to the pattern in his Markan source material. An allusion to Jonah to enhance the presentation of these kerygmatic themes is therefore consistent with Luke's wider purposes.[235]

It must, however, be admitted that the Markan version equally tolerates such a reading if one isolates the Lukan pericope from the whole Gospel-plus-Acts context. Furthermore, the connection to proleptic Gentile missionizing is clearer in Luke (and Mark) than is the reference

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231. The importance of the direction of travel is acknowledged in e.g. Marcus 2000–2009, 1:336; Iverson 2007, 23.

232. On the correspondences and foreshadowing between Luke's two sea storm narratives, see further Talbert and Hayes 1999, 278–83. As noted earlier, Luke appears to share an interest in the Jonah tempest narrative with Josephus (*Ant.* 9.208–214), both of whom write to appeal to a wider Greco-Roman audience, and the conclusions here strengthen this observation.

233. E.g. Luke 9:22; 13:33; 24:25–27, 44–47; Acts 1:16; 26:23; see e.g. Moessner 2016, 331–32.

234. E.g. Acts 2:23; 4:28; Moessner 2016, 331–32.

235. Satisfying Hays's criterion of thematic coherence and Allison's criterion of congruence with a book's arguments or themes; Hays 1989, 30; Allison 2000, 13.

to death and resurrection, while conversely, the Matthean version more conspicuously foreshadows events surrounding the resurrection of Jesus, as the next chapter will detail (see pp. 181–189). What seems, therefore, safe to conclude at least is that Luke here, as similarly in Peter's journey to preach to Cornelius's household from Joppa (Acts 9–10) and in Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27), places Jonah allusions at a key boundary-crossing moment in a proleptic mission to Gentiles.[236] To some extent these allusions are mutually reinforcing, and rescue from death is also thematically present in the Acts episodes, whether through the literal resurrection of Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36–42) or by deliverance from peril at sea (Acts 27). It is therefore possible, and consistent with Luke's understanding of the Sign of Jonah elsewhere, that the Stilling of the Storm foreshadows the whole sequence of the Lukan Sign of Jonah, despite being based on a Markan original. This suggestive possibility is supported by ancient readers of Luke as well as ancient Jewish interpretation of Jonah. The pericope foreshadows elements of the Lukan Jonah Sign at the least. This reinforces the interpretation of Luke's Sign of Jonah offered in the present analysis, since at least rescue from death (Luke 8:22–25) and missionizing proclamation to Gentiles (8:39) are present.

Simeon's "Sign Contradicted"

A final potential Lukan Jonah/Sign of Jonah connection requires a briefer treatment, even if its programmatic position lends it a special significance. The simple catchword association of the σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον with the σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ, as well as a context which deals with opposition to Jesus within Israel as well as anticipating the salvation of Gentiles, has led some modern commentators to draw a connection between Simeon's prophecy and the Sign of

236. Cf. Marcus 2000–2009, 1:336.

Jonah.[237] Ancient authors also drew the connection, as Chapter Five will show.[238] The language of "contradiction" (ἀντιλέγω) reappears in Acts in those places where Paul expresses frustration at the lack of traction his gospel is gaining among Jewish audiences and promises to take his message to Gentiles (Acts 13:45; 28:19, 22; cf. Luke 20:27). This potential connection with the Gentile mission in Acts is suggestive in light of the present analysis.

It is possible, particularly considering the "sign" catchword connection as well as the ancient and modern attestation to this intra-Lukan linkage, that the "sign contradicted" and the Sign of Jonah both anticipate for Luke the scandalous aspects of Jesus's apparently ignominious death as well as widespread Gentile repentance at the apostolic preaching prior to the full restoration of Israel. It seems equally possible, however, that the background may lie in the "signs" which Isaiah and his children become, which would potentially loosen the Sign of Jonah connection.[239] If Luke intends a linkage with the Sign of Jonah, this ties Simeon's prediction of the child's purpose (2:34) to the Gospel's central events, the death and resurrection of Jesus. This is a strength of this view, given that these events are the turning point at which the humiliation and exaltation ("falling and rising") ultimately take place in Luke, rather than at Jesus's birth *per se*.

It is in any case not necessary to conclude that Simeon here anticipates "contradiction" or opposition to characterize the total Jewish response to Jesus over the course of Luke-Acts, nor to conclude that the Sign of Jonah itself is intended to bring judgment upon Israel (cf. Wolter 2016–

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237. For Raymond Brown the two sayings are a "close parallel" in that the Sign of Jonah is given as a judgment sign to "an evil and unrepentant generation;" 1993, 462.

238. Origen *Comm. Rom.* 8.2.5; Amphilochius *Oratio II (in occursum Domini)* 8; Ephrem *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron* 11.2. See Chapter Five pp. 216–221.

239. Isa 7:14; 8:18 LXX. The proximity of this to the "stumbling stone" passage in Isa 8:14 LXX, which describes a "fall" (πτῶμα) the stone causes, could explain the vocabulary of "falling"; see further e.g. Brown 1993, 461. This possible intra-Lukan connection is not as such subject to an analysis by criteria for discerning allusions.

17, 1:143; Schürmann 1969–1994, 1:128). The present analysis shows that such an interpretation of the Sign of Jonah is unlikely considering both Luke's and broader ancient Jewish reception of Jonah. Furthermore, Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis* (2:29–32) speaks of a "salvation" (σωτήριόν) which is "light for revelation to the Gentiles" (φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν) *and* "glory for [God's] people Israel" (δόξαν λαοῦ σου Ἰσραήλ).[240] Therefore, whether Luke intended a connection to Jonah's Sign or not, an appeal to the Sign certainly does not support the interpretation of Simeon's prophecy as finally heralding inevitable disaster for Israel (*pace* e.g. Wolter 2016–17, 1:141).

Chapter Conclusion

The Sign of Jonah unfolds in Luke-Acts as the scripturally ordained sequence of suffering/death, resurrection on the third day, and subsequent proclamation of repentance to the nations. This Sign is intended to elicit Israel's saving repentance against the horizon of a threatened judgment. These results are grounded in Jonah's prominent and formative role within the synthetic claim in the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (Luke 24:44–47) as well as the enigmatic quality of the Lukan explanation of Jonah's Sign.

Readers are led to expect Jonah's Sign: "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be to this generation" (11:30). Jonah is, then, the only scriptural figure who can plausibly be said to have performed, in order, the three verbal actions Luke's Jesus

240. Luke 2:30, 32. The accusative δόξαν may stand in apposition to σωτήριόν in 2:30, or, alternatively it may connect back to the φῶς εἰς, so that the light shines both in Israel and among the nations; see Acts 26:23: "he would proclaim light *both* to our people and to the Gentiles"; see e.g. Isa 42:6; 49:6; 60:1, 19 LXX; cf. Wolter 2016–17, 1:141. Whether the "falling and rising of many in Israel" (πτῶσιν καὶ ἀνάστασιν πολλῶν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, 2:34) should be interpreted sequentially, such that a stumbling in Israel precedes a later "resurrection" or "rising up" or, as is more likely, it refers to a discriminating judgment within Israel, does not determine whether for Luke Israel *per se* will ultimately be redeemed. Despite some LXX evidence for πτῶσιν καὶ ἀνάστασιν as sequential (e.g. Prov 24:16; Eccl 4:10; Isa 51:17–22; Amos 5:2; 8:14; Micah 7:8), the context favors something more akin to the "bringing down of the mighty" and "lifting up of the lowly" in Mary's *Magnificat*; Luke 1:52; *pace* Koet 1992, 1559–60 and Schweizer 1981, 320–21; rightly, e.g. Green 1997, 149. Cf. the discussions in Tannehill 1986, 1:40–41; Tiede 1988; Koet 1992.

attributes to the Messiah's vocation in Jewish Scripture: suffering (παθεῖν), rising on the third day (ἀναστῆναι… τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ), and proclaiming repentance (κηρυχθῆναι… μετάνοιαν) to Gentile nations, in that order (Luke 24:46–47). Jonah allusions mark, furthermore, the two most important boundary-crossing moments of Gentile missionizing in Acts: Peter's journey from Joppa to Cornelius's household (Acts 9:36–11:18) and Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27). In this light, it becomes clear that the Lukan Jonah Sign is foreshadowed at least in part by the Stilling of the Storm (Luke 8:22–25), another notable boundary-crossing episode in the Lukan writings.

The Sign of Jonah is thus a larger and more important concept in Luke-Acts than has previously been recognized. Its influence is more extensive, and it is central to the books' core kerygmatic events. From the point of view of this larger Lukan scope, the Sign of Jonah provides an emic rationale for regarding the Gentile mission in Luke-Acts as a sign given for Israel's benefit rather than signifying a salvation-historical turning away from the Jewish people or even simply a parallel mission to the Jewish one. Insofar as the Gentile mission can be described as a Sign of Jonah, it is a sign for Israel.

Further to this point, the analysis also demonstrates commonalities between the Lukan Jonah and ancient Jewish interpretations of Jonah, some of which predate Luke's writings and others of which postdate them. Luke shares: (1) the connection of Jonah's "great fish" with exorcism in Tobit (6:3, 8; Luke 11:14–32); (2) the connections between Jonah and Moses or the Red Sea crossing with numerous ancient Jewish sources (Luke 11:14–32);[241] (3) the mutual interest in the narrative of Jonah's tempest with Josephus (*Ant.* 9.208–214; Luke 8:22–25; Acts 27); and (4) the significance of Jonah's fish for the Ninevites' repentance with the Ps.-Philonic

241. Targums Neofiti and Frg. Tg. (V) to Deut. 30:12–13; Mek. Pisḥa 1 (Exod 12:1). Note also Jonah and the Red Sea Crossing in e.g. 3 Macc. 6:8; Jonah Targum 2:6 in Jonathan to the Prophets; Huqoq Synagogue mosaics.

De Jona (20.4; 25.5; 46.4; Luke 11:30). This further demonstrates Luke-Acts' cultural affinity to early Judaism and its indebtedness to a broad tradition of ancient Jewish scriptural interpretation.

The chapter's findings also point to the formative influence of prophetic scriptural narrative on Luke's conception and articulation of a foundational early Christian kerygmatic claim (24:44–47). Previous scholarly proposals have focused upon poetic (e.g. the Isaianic Servant; the suffering righteous of the Psalms) and non-narrative prose intertexts (e.g. the Deuteronomic Prophet-like-Moses). Jonah, however, is a largely narrative text, if also one featuring a prophet as its protagonist and one included in the Book of the Twelve. As in contemporaneous prophetic-eschatological interpretation of other "Minor Prophets" in the Qumran *pesharim*,[242] Jonah appears to have been read prophetically by Luke. This chapter's analysis of the Sign of Jonah thus offers a fresh window into the function of typological interpretation of prophetic scriptural narrative in Luke-Acts.

242. E.g. 1QpHab; 4QpNah (4Q169); 4QpHos$^{a–b}$ (4Q166–67); 4QpZeph (4Q170).

Chapter Four: The Sign of Jonah in Matthew

Introduction

Matthew's Sign of Jonah is, at an initial glance, more straightforward to interpret than Luke's, given the clear connection between Jonah's three days and nights in the sea monster's belly and the Son of Man's burial in the earth's heart (Matt 12:40). It made sense, therefore, to treat Luke's Jonah before Matthew's precisely because of the inherent interest of Luke's enigmatic explanation of the Sign (Luke 11:30). Agreement, however, over the basic content of Matthew's Sign of Jonah often obscures crucial disagreements over whether it (1) affords an opportunity for repentance;[1] and (2) anticipates the response of Gentiles to Jesus's preaching.[2] Matthew also introduces a further important distinction by differentiating clearly between the crowds and the harshly criticized authorities in the immediate context of the first Sign of Jonah pericope (12:38–42; cf. 16:1–4), exhibiting a more intimately Jewish social context than Luke's.[3] This raises the crucial but often overlooked question of whether (3) the Matthean Jonah Sign is addressed only to those authorities or to the generation of Jesus as a whole.[4]

These three disputed points, while they may appear initially to be fine distinctions, turn out to have important implications for broader Matthean perspectives on Jews and Gentiles as

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1. Seeing an opportunity for repentance are, e.g. Bayer 1986, 145; Gnilka 1988, 466; Gundry 1994, 245; Fiedler 2006, 284. Seeing no such possibility are, e.g. Vögtle 1971, 134–36; Verseput 1986, 252–54; Swetnam 1987, 77–79; Luz 2001–2007, 2:218.

2. Seeing an anticipation of Gentile inclusion are, e.g. Keener 2009, 368–69; Moffitt 2011, 233–45; Runesson 2016, 381–82; see also Ziethe 2018, 348–49. Many do not discuss the possibility of an anticipation of Gentile inclusion, but it is explicitly denied in e.g. Gundry 1994, 245.

3. Rightly emphasized in e.g. Konradt 2014, 219–25.

4. Holding that only the authorities are addressed are, e.g. Konradt 2014, 219–25; Runesson 2016, 307. Others maintain that the whole generation receives the Sign of Jonah, e.g. Lövestam 1995, 32–33. Gnilka sees the generation addressed through a rebuke of the authorities; 1988, 465.

well as on judgment, mercy, and repentance, as I will argue. Furthermore, Matthew's interest in the figure of Jonah, evident at least in the doubling of the Sign of Jonah pericope (12:38–42; 16:1–4) and the Sign's reemergence after Jesus is buried (27:63–64), may intersect in previously underappreciated ways with the First Gospel's distinctive concern for the restoration of the Galilean tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (4:12–17). Matthew's reception of Jonah may thus also shed light on the Gospel's geographical and social/ecclesial context.

As the previous chapter did for Luke-Acts, this chapter analyzes the Matthean Sign of Jonah by contextualizing it within Jonah's broader influence throughout Matthew and within Jonah's wider ancient Jewish reception. As with Luke, previous treatments of the Matthean Jonah Sign tend to ignore other Jonah allusions in the Gospel, despite one crucial and underappreciated allusion being widely acknowledged (Matt 8:23–27).[5] The fuller profile of Jonah in Matthew is here for the first time brought into comparison systematically with the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah, analyzed in detail in Chapter Two.[6]

The present analysis is also the first systematically to apply insights from Jonah as Jewishly interpreted in antiquity to the three points of disagreement noted above: (1) the possibility of repentance; (2) the inclusion of Gentiles; (3) to whom the Sign is addressed. Matthew's strongly Jewish context, which is widely recognized in contemporary scholarship and left its mark also in ancient sources,[7] must be thoroughly accounted for in adjudicating these

5. Representative of conventional approaches are the widely cited treatments in Vögtle [1953] 1971, 103–36; Edwards 1971, 30–34, 95–105; and Chow 1995, 45–93. Two minor exceptions include a brief early article of David Moffitt's (2011, 233–45) and the idiosyncratic treatment of Matthew's Jonah in terms of "tribulation" in Rieske 2018, 351–72. The present analysis differs considerably from these articles' conclusions and analyzes a wider range of Matthean texts.

6. Even if widespread Jewish interest in Jonah's fish is often rightly noted in connection with Matt 12:40's explanation of the Sign; e.g. Seidelin 1951, 129; Chow 1995, 88; Huber 1998, 90; Luz 2001–2007, 217.

7. See Chapter One p. 13.

questions. Even though the Christological focus of the Sign of Jonah in Matthew is of course distinctive, the First Evangelist remains a first-century Jewish reader of Scripture and is profitably read as participating in a broader ancient Jewish Jonah discourse.[8] The argument of this chapter further demonstrates that Matthew's well-known interest in Jonah's Sign and in Jesus as one "greater than Jonah" (12:41) is firmly rooted in early Jewish interpretation of this singular prophetic figure.

The analysis begins with the two Matthean Sign of Jonah pericopes (12:38–42; 16:1–4), working outward from the distinctive Matthean explanation of the Sign (12:40). It then critically evaluates potential Jonah connections in the mention of Simon Peter's patronym Βαριωνᾶ (16:17); the Stilling of the Storm (8:23–27); the rescue of Peter from drowning (14:28–33); and Jesus's sorrow at Gethsemane (26:37–38). The resulting portrait is complex in that only the Stilling of the Storm is found to allude directly to Jonah, although each but the last offers fresh perspective on the Matthean reception of Jonah and his Sign.

The analysis concludes that Matthew's Sign of Jonah consists in the Son of Man's death, "three days and nights" in the earth's heart, and resurrection. Unlike Luke's version, Matthew's Sign of Jonah does not include the missionizing of Gentiles. Instead, Matthew's Sign of Jonah addresses all of Jesus's Jewish contemporaries with a warning of judgment affording the opportunity for repentance, but it has special reference to Jewish authorities who are present during the Sign of Jonah prediction (12:38) and remember it when Jesus's body is buried (27:63–64). The analysis also shows that the climactic offering of the Sign of Jonah in Jesus's death and resurrection is clearly foreshadowed in the Jonah intertextuality in the Matthean Stilling of the Storm (8:23–27). This foreshadowing helps to demonstrate that, as for Luke, the Matthean Sign

8. See Chapter One p. 13.

of Jonah is more central to the Gospel's core kerygmatic events than has usually been appreciated.

The First Sign of Jonah Pericope

Matthew places the second Sign of Jonah pericope (16:1–4), with its textual difficulties and briefer reference to Jonah's Sign, in the order of the Markan sign request (cf. Mark 8:11–13). The first pericope (Matt 12:38–42), however, occurs in an earlier context relative to Mark, directly after the Beelzebul controversy (Mark 3:19–30; Matt 12:22–32; cf. Luke 11:14–23). That primary Matthean Sign of Jonah passage is given in the NA28 as follows:

> **38** Τότε ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ τινες τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἀπὸ σοῦ σημεῖον ἰδεῖν. **39** ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου. **40** ὥσπερ γὰρ *ἦν Ἰωνᾶς ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας,* οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας. **41** Ἄνδρες Νινευῖται ἀναστήσονται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν, ὅτι μετενόησαν εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε. **42** βασίλισσα νότου ἐγερθήσεται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινεῖ αὐτήν, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς ἀκοῦσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε.[9]
>
> **38** Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." **39** And he replied, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the Sign of Jonah the prophet. **40** For as 'Jonah was in the belly of the sea monster three days and three nights,' so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. **41** The people of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, indeed something greater than Jonah is here! **42** The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and indeed, something greater than Solomon is here!" (NRSVue modified)

9. The most significant textual variant is perhaps the omission of καὶ Φαρισαίων from B, but this omission is singular, and the Pharisees later remember this scene in 27:63. Other variants are unlikely to have been original and do not significantly affect interpretation.

For many, Matthew derives the Sign of Jonah from Q, whose Beelzebul controversy and sign request overlap with Mark's.[10] Others have emphasized the importance of the Markan order in the immediate context as an argument against Matthean dependence on Q here.[11] Certain close correspondences between this first Matthean Sign of Jonah pericope and the Markan version of the sign request are perhaps not easily explained by Mark–Q overlap.[12] For Farrer Hypothesis interpreters, Matthew introduces, or perhaps reintroduces,[13] the exception clause "except the Sign of Jonah the prophet" into the categorical denial of the sign request in Mark 8:12 (Matt 12:39 // 16:4), bringing some Markan material forward in order to follow up the Beelzebul controversy with a sharp warning to "this generation."[14] Table 3 below presents the data synoptically.

Table 3: The Sign Request and Response Synoptically Presented

Mark 8:11–12	Matt 12:38–39	Matt 16:1, 4	Luke 11:16, 29
Καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ ἤρξαντο συζητεῖν αὐτῷ, ζητοῦντες παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ σημεῖον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, πειράζοντες	Τότε ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ τινες τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἀπὸ σοῦ σημεῖον ἰδεῖν.	Καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ Σαδδουκαῖοι πειράζοντες ἐπηρώτησαν αὐτὸν σημεῖον ἐκ τοῦ	ἕτεροι δὲ πειράζοντες σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐζήτουν παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ… ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη γενεὰ

10. Synoptically presented in Robinson, Hoffmann, and Kloppenborg (eds) 2000, 222–54.

11. Matthew follows Mark's order in the true family pericope and parables discourse; Mark 3:31ff. // Matt 12:46ff. Note the insightful observation of Watson's that this instance of Mark-Q overlap would require the unlikely convergence of two Matthean narrative sequences, derived from Mark and Q, upon the Beelzebul controversy; Watson 2013, 181–84.

12. E.g. Matt 12:39 and 16:4: γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ // Mark 8:12: τί ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ζητεῖ σημεῖον; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον. Cf. representatively, Kloppenborg 1987, 128, where the Q version is ostensibly originally independent. But note the similarity of Luke's version, showing that Matthew has not assimilated a hypothetical Q original to the Markan version: ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη γενεὰ πονηρά ἐστιν· σημεῖον ζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ… (Luke 11:29).

13. Mark's source may have included the exception clause promising τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ, which Mark could have removed; thus, e.g. Vögtle [1953] 1971, 110; Reed 1997, 133–34.

14. Cf. e.g. Goulder 1974, 98, 162.

αὐτόν. καὶ ἀναστενάξας τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ λέγει· τί ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ζητεῖ σημεῖον; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον.	ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου.	οὐρανοῦ ἐπιδεῖξαι αὐτοῖς… γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ.	πονηρά ἐστιν· σημεῖον ζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ.

Whether Matthew follows Q or other sources, the Evangelist's touch is evident in the distinctive reference to Jonah's three days and nights in Matt 12:40. The closeness in wording to Jonah 2:1 LXX remains a strong argument for the secondary quality of the Matthean explanation in relation to the historical Jesus,[15] even if prediction of one's resurrection in a first-century Jewish context is recognized in some leading recent scholarship as less implausible than conventionally assumed.[16] The phrasing is in fact identical: ἦν Ιωνας ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας (Jonah 2:1 LXX = Matt 12:40a). Whatever the tradition-historical origins of the Sign of Jonah saying, Matthew has given it to readers assimilated to the Greek Old Testament and in its own literary context within the Gospel. It has almost the quality of one of Matthew's well-known fulfillment quotations, but it is not introduced through the signature usage of πληρόω.[17]

15. For Wrede it was an "inauthentic" explanation, "taken by everyone to be secondary"; 1971, 265, 89; cf. also von Harnack 1908, 23. For Schweitzer it was a "markedly secondary" and indeed "false interpretation"; Schweitzer 1925, 197. For Bultmann, it was a "quite secondary formulation of the Church"; 1963, 118. These comments, which are characteristic of the history of critical interpretation (but cf. Seidelin 1951, 129), assess the predictive aspect of the saying rather than merely the conformity to Jonah 2:1 LXX, on which see Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:356.

16. If the historical Jesus referred to a Sign of Jonah, then given the consistent reception of Jonah in early Jewish sources as a figure of deliverance he could have intended a reference to resurrection. Even a reference to "three days" as a figure of speech for a short time is not inherently implausible as a saying of Jesus of Nazareth, here or in the passion–resurrection predictions. A literal fulfillment need not initially have been in mind; see further Allison 2021, 189–90. On this issue in relation to the Sign of Jonah promised by the historical Jesus, cf. Fuchs 1994, 154. On the related issue of the historical Jesus's plausible prediction of his second coming, see the provocative argument of Ferda 2024.

17. See further on the Matthean fulfillment formulae recently, e.g. Konradt 2023, 210–219.

Krister Stendahl, however, famously suspected the explanation of the Sign in terms of Jonah's three days and nights in the sea monster's belly (Matt 12:40) of being a post-Matthean interpolation into that literary context, partially on the basis of its purportedly breaking the flow of thought and partially due to Justin's failure to quote it (1968, 132–33). Most have not found the latter datum persuasive, not least for the lack of manuscript evidence supporting a missing 12:40.[18] I will also argue in Chapter Five that Justin's desire to focus on the preaching of repentance in the Sign of Jonah as well as death and third-day resurrection might well account for his omission of the Matthean explanation (*Dial.* 107–108).[19] Regarding the pericope's flow of thought, however, Stendahl's judgment is still representative of widespread opinion, at least in the emphasis on Matthew's thorough transformation of existing tradition and the purported tensions with the Jonah-Solomon double saying in 12:41–42.[20] As a result, many think the Sign of Jonah saying was originally independent of the double saying.[21] It is difficult to be absolutely certain about this in tradition-critical terms, but in Matthean terms the argument for a sharp division can be shown to fail. It fails, specifically, to account for the grounding of Jonah's Sign in the ancient Jewish reception of the prophet, where Jonah's deliverance is not only prominent but also typically read as integral to the whole book.

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18. See e.g. Edwards 1971, 99; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:355.

19. See Chapter Five pp. 197–216.

20. E.g. Edwards has it, "In many ways then, the use of this pericope by Luke shows his affinities with the Q community. The situation for Matthew…is quite different"; 1971, 95. Vögtle, in an ingenious but flawed reading, emphasizes Matthew's transformation of existing material but regards it as faithful to the original sense of the Parousia as the moment revealing the vindicated Son of Man; [1953] 1971, 135–36. Landes finds in Matt 12:40 an "interpretation of the sign of Jonah quite unlike that given in Matt 12:41 and its precise parallel in Luke 11:32," 1983, 665.

21. Cf. Kloppenborg: "Q 11:31–32 is almost certainly an originally independent threat of judgment"; 1987, 128. Edwards attempted to explain the creation of Q 11:30 (=Luke 11:30) as an attempt to join the denial of the sign request with the double saying. His proposal of an "eschatological correlative" sayings *Gattung* originating with Q is well-known, but little followed; 1971, 56.

Two Initial Points on the Matthean Jonah Sign's Jewish Context

Widespread ancient Jewish interest in Jonah's fish and in Jonah as a figure rescued from death provides a reasonable context for Matthew's explanation of the Sign in terms of the κῆτος, as some have recognized.[22] One may note, however, two previously underappreciated features which further cement that explanation within the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah. The first point must be measured given that the provenance of Joseph and Aseneth is debated,[23] but it involves the mythologization of Jonah's κῆτος μέγα in that text. The second involves the consistent integration of Jonah's fish into the book's larger themes in ancient Jewish readings of Jonah.

Regarding (1), I noted in Chapter Two the mythologizing of Greek Jonah's "monstrified" κῆτος μέγα in Joseph and Aseneth (Jonah 2:1 LXX).[24] It is possible, one acknowledges, that Matt 12:40 has influenced this text. On the other hand, the translation of תַּנִּין as κῆτη μέγάλα in Gen 1:21 LXX and of לִוְיָתָן as τὸ μέγα κῆτος in Job 3:8 LXX arguably sets the intertextual conditions within Jewish Scripture for the mythologization of Jonah's κῆτος μέγα. In Jos. Asen., the heroine prays that God would not allow the Devil to "cast her into the abyss of fire, and into the tempest of the sea" lest the "great sea monster swallow [her] (καὶ μή με καταπιέτω τὸ κῆτος τὸ μέγα)" (12.9–10). This lends cosmic proportions to the Lord's "appointing a great sea monster to swallow Jonah" (κήτει μεγάλῳ καταπιεῖν τὸν Ιωναν, Jonah 2:1 LXX). Matthew's Jesus similarly mythologizes Jonah's sea monster, equating the κοιλία of the κῆτος with the καρδία τῆς

22. E.g. Seidelin 1951, 130; Jeremias 1964, 406–410; Bayer 1986, 136–38; Chow 1995, 88–89; Luz 2001–2007, 2:217, 219. Cf. Vorpahl, who sees only 3 Macc. 6:8 as a legitimate early Jewish comparison, the others being chronologically late; 2021, 236. Vorpahl overlooks the example of Joseph and Aseneth discussed presently.

23. See the discussion in Chapter Two pp. 34–38.

24. Cf. Tiemeyer 2017, 54–55.

γῆς, the realm of death where the Son of Man will be for three days and nights (12:40). While this need not refer to a *descensus ad inferos* in a triumphant, proto-creedal sense, it does appear to imagine the Son of Man's dwelling in the portion of the cosmos assigned to the dead.[25] The phrase καρδία τῆς γῆς may indeed be drawn from a combination of Jonah 2:4 LXX (ἀπέρριψάς με εἰς βάθη καρδίας θαλάσσης) and 2:7 LXX (κατέβην εἰς γῆν), which describe Jonah's sojourn in the fish as a journey into Sheol/Hades (Jonah 2:3 Heb/LXX).[26] If Jos. Asen. is to be understood as not related to Matthew genealogically, then it provides a striking point of comparison in its similar reception of Jonah's κῆτος μέγα.

Regarding the integration of Jonah's fish into the whole book (2), I also noted in Chapter Two the evocative imagery of Jonah's "wasting away in the belly of a deep dwelling sea monster" (βυθοτρεφοῦς ἐν γαστρεὶ κάτους Ιωνᾶν τηκόμενον) in 3 Macc. 6:8, where τήκω more likely refers to the decaying of Jonah's flesh than to a mere psychological state.[27] This evokes the beginnings of a literal death during Jonah's three days in the sea monster's belly. Like Matthew, however, 3 Maccabees is interested in the fish episode against the horizon of Jonah's mission to Nineveh. Jonah's deliverance is listed among other hallmark examples of God's rescue of Israel without any fighting from foreign oppressors (Pharaonic Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia), implicitly equating Nineveh also with Ptolemaic Egypt (3 Macc. 6:4–8; see also Vorpahl 2021, 175–76). The Nineveh background is also crucial, as noted in Chapter Two, for Tobias's encounter with the "great fish" who attempts to devour him (Tobit 6:1–9, see also

25. This is the apparent interpretation in Irenaeus's *Haer.* 5.30.1; see further Luz 2001–2007, 217–18n41; Tödt 1965, 213; Klostermann 1927, 111. Landes's suggestion that the Matthean Sign of Jonah is the Son of Man's *preaching* in the heart of the earth is creative but unpersuasive; 1983, 676–77.

26. Seidelin 1951, 130; Landes 1983, 667.

27. Cf. 4 Macc. 15:15; See Chapter Two pp. 38–42.

1:10; 14:4).[28] Such an integrated reading of the book of Jonah's themes is also evident, for example, in the early third-century fasting liturgy in m. Ta'an. 2:1–5, in which both the rescue of Jonah and the fasting of the Ninevites are examples Israel may call upon in times of need.[29]

Matthew's invocation of Jonah in the fish's belly as the Sign of Jonah (12:40) thus forms a more natural counterpart to the Jonah–Solomon double saying (12:41–42) than is often supposed. It is quite in keeping with ancient Jewish interpretations of Jonah to perceive Jonah's three days in the κῆτος as Jonah's Sign and then to invoke the repentance of Nineveh to provoke Israel, and particularly the learned authorities who make the request for a sign, to repentance. A sharp disjunction between Matt 12:40 and 12:41 would, therefore, not likely have appeared to other ancient Jewish readers of Matthew.

The Meaning of Matthew's Sign of Jonah

The renewed Sign of Jonah thus consists for Matthew in the Son of Man's dwelling "three days and three nights" in the earth's heart. This delimitation of time, allowing Matthew poetic license within ancient Jewish time reckoning to accord with a Friday burial and Sunday resurrection,[30] implies that resurrection from the dead is part of Jonah's Sign (Luz 2001–2007, 217). As is widely recognized, this is apparently understood by Matthew's Pharisees in their request for the tomb of Jesus to be guarded "three days (τρεῖς ἡμέρας, 27:63). They are present for the Sign of Jonah (12:38), and the other passion–resurrection predictions are made in private.[31] Not only, however, do Matthew's Pharisees remember and repeat the Sign of Jonah's

28. See Chapter Two pp. 26–32.

29. See Chapter Two pp. 45–48.

30. Rightly, Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:356; the suggestion that Jesus's descent begins in Gethsemane seeks a metaphorical solution to a problem perceived only through over-literalism; cf. Andrews 2018. See Esth 4:16; 5:1 LXX; Lagrange 1923, 230; Gathercole 2022, 145.

31. Matt 16:21–23; 17:22–23; 20:17–19. Noted in e.g. Giblin 1975, 415–16; Luz 2001–2007, 217; Novakovic 2012, 180; Konradt 2020, 198. Already Chrysostom *Hom. Matt.* 27:62–64.

reference to τρεῖς ἡμέρας,[32] they also, as is rarely noted in this connection, worry that "the last deception would be worse than the first" (ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη πλάνη χείρων τῆς πρώτης, 27:64).[33] This echoes Jesus's description of the person after the return of the unclean spirit in 12:45, just after the Sign of Jonah: "The last things of that man are worse than the first" (γίνεται τὰ ἔσχατα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκείνου χείρονα τῶν πρώτων). The other "three days" saying in nearby context which could inform the Pharisees, the accusation against Jesus during the trial (26:61; 27:39–40), seems plainly to refer to the physical Temple and not for Matthew to "the temple of his body" (John 2:21).[34] The primary connection between this Temple saying and the Sign of Jonah for Matthew appears simply to be their shared idiomatic usage of "three days" and the expectation they create that Jesus will live into the future (27:39–40).

The Sign of Jonah functions in Matthew, therefore, as a passion–resurrection prediction, although unlike the others it is public-facing and thus cast in the form of a parabolic scriptural allusion (cf. Matt 16:21; 17:22–23; 20:17). It fits comfortably among these predictions, being given like them in terms of what is appointed for the "Son of Man." If those other passion predictions have been influenced by the Danielic Son of Man vision, as seems likely,[35] then the intersection of Jonah and Danielic material in the Sign of Jonah is potentially noteworthy. The Son of Man theme in the Synoptics may itself be best understood as reflecting traditions of

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32. Cf. τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ in the passion–resurrection predictions; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; noted in e.g. Giblin 1975, 415–16; Gundry 1994, 244–45; Luz 2001–2007, 217; Novakovic 2012, 180; Konradt 2020, 198.

33. Rightly, Luz 2001–2007, 586n9.

34. Matthew does not label the accusations false, or at least not as clearly as Mark does (14:57–59); see further Bockmuehl 2022, 7; Novakovic 2012, 184–95.

35. There seems to be a clear connection between the Matthean Son of Man's being "handed over into the hands of human beings; (μέλλει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοσθαι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων) and the Danielic Son of Man's being "handed over of everything into the [fourth beasts'] hands" (παραδοθήσεται πάντα εἰς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ); OG Dan 7:25; Schaberg 1985, 209–213; Ferda 2024, 455–56.

interpreting particular scriptural texts in concert with one another.[36] Jonah and Daniel traditions are also intertwined in a number of ancient Jewish sources that recall God's rescue of Jonah, Daniel, and the Three Young Men.[37] In this way, Matthew's Sign of Jonah remains on firm ground in ancient Jewish reception of the prophet, and the destined path of the Son of Man in Matthew is further enriched through the interweaving of Danielic and Jonah material.

In contrast to Luke, there is no indication that either Jesus's preaching or that of the apostles forms the Matthean Sign of Jonah, even if Jesus's preaching and wisdom should themselves be responded to, particularly after the Sign of Jonah is given. Furthermore, no role is explicitly imagined for Gentiles in the Matthean present within the explanation of the Sign (12:40),[38] despite the future hope of Gentiles in the messianic Servant being portended in the Isaianic quotation earlier in the chapter (Matt 12:17–21). For Luke, I argued that the preaching of repentance to Gentiles forms part of a Sign of Jonah for Israel.[39] Later Matthean interest in the discipling of all nations (Matt 28:19) exhibits, by contrast, no intentional connection to the Sign of Jonah.[40] This is true even if the Ninevites and Queen of the South form part of a constellation of exemplary Gentile responses in the First Gospel.[41] The function of the comparison with Nineveh and the Queen of the South is rather to provoke Israel to repentance by scriptural examples. If even Gentiles like these repented at something lesser, then Israel, and particularly

36. So, e.g. Bauckham 2023, 371–74; cf. e.g. Casey 2007.

37. E.g. 3 Macc. 6; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers* (Apos. Con. VII 37); *De Jona* 25.2–4.

38. Rightly, Gundry 1994, 245; *pace* France 2007, 492; Runesson 2016, 382.

39. See Chapter Three, esp. pp. 111–133.

40. Cf. Moffitt 2011, 233–45.

41. E.g. the Magi in 2:1–12; the centurion and those from East and West in Matt 8:5–13; the Canaanite woman in Matt 15:21–28; see e.g. Runesson 2016, 382–83; Ham 2009, 52.

Matthew's learned scribes and Pharisees, should repent at something greater. Matthew's closing of the pericope with Solomon rather than Jonah (cf. Luke 11:31–32) further highlights Jesus's Davidic Sonship (12:42) in light of the crowds' question (12:23; see also 9:27–34), rather than pointing to a Gentile mission.[42] This usage of Nineveh and the Queen of the South as positive exemplars compares closely to the invocation of Nineveh's fasting in m. Ta'an. 2:1 as well as the implicit outdoing of Nineveh's fast by Israel in Jdt 4:8–15.[43] A provocation of Israel and its prophets may also have been part of the book of Jonah's satirical, if also comic and therefore finally hopeful, original message.[44]

The Force of Matthew's Jonah Sign

The response of Matthew's Jesus to the sign request seems to assume a sign from heaven is requested, as is explicitly the case in the second Jonah Sign pericope (16:1), in that it answers ironically with a Sign occurring invisibly, beneath the earth's surface (12:40).[45] Although no such specification is explicit in Matt 12:38, it nevertheless seems plain that Matthew's scribes and Pharisees seek an authentication miracle (*Beglaubigungswunder*) which would eliminate any doubt about Jesus, perhaps in the style of Moses.[46] Nolland is probably correct that there is some irony in this since the exorcisms which prompt the controversy are, in Matthew's perspective, already unambiguously good to the discerning (12:22–37). Exorcisms, however, are not

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42. For David's son Solomon as exorcist, further establishing the link, see Josephus *Ant.* 8.45–49; see further Lövestam 1995, 33–35.

43. See Chapter Two pp. 45–48 and 32–34, respectively.

44. The potential parallel between the king of Nineveh's response and Jehoiakim's rejection and burning of Jeremiah's scroll in Jer 36:1–32 is particularly suggestive; so, Wolff 1965, 16–18; 1987, 86–87. This should not be confused with the view in which Jonah constitutes a universalist tract opposed to the particularity of Israel's election; cf. Stuart 1987, 434–35.

45. The notion of a "sign" (σημεῖον) refers to visible, non-verbal communication, rendering an invisible sign ironic; Kowalski 2015; 48; see further Rengstorf 1964.

46. On the Moses connection, see further Chapter Three pp. 84–91.

authenticating of the person in the way the requested sign would be, as Nolland claims, citing the discussion of false prophets in Deut 13:1–5 (2005, 510). Presumably, Matthew's Pharisees and scribes would have been aware of these Deuteronomic stipulations about the potential of certain signs to deceive, as indeed Jesus also later warns (Matt 24:24). Exorcisms, furthermore, could be thought of as an "art" (τέχνη), subject therefore to artifice, in a way that a cosmic, heavenly sign could not (see Josephus *Ant.* 8.45–49).

The requested sign, therefore, seeks something indisputable, most likely against a cosmic horizon (as in the "sign of the Son of Man" in Matt 24:30). I noted in the previous chapter Jeremianic scriptural precedents, including the σημεῖα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (אֹתוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם) in Jer 10:2 LXX, which refers explicitly to cosmic signs, and the idol polemic of Ep Jer 66 (they cannot give σημεῖα…ἐν οὐρανῷ). The sun, moon, and stars are σημεῖα/אֹתֹת in the heavens as early as Gen 1:14. Josephus also knows of cosmic portents, such as the sword and comet that hover over Jerusalem before the Jewish War (*J.W.* 6.285–89). These analogously significant, heavenly events represent something that would remove all doubt, should Jesus be able to command it.

Jesus's promise of a Sign "in the heart of the earth" renders his response, therefore, no more than a paradoxical acquiescence. It is important in this regard that neither the crowds nor the scribes and Pharisees actually witness the resurrection itself, with the result that for those who are promised the Sign it is in some sense invisible (cf. Konradt 2014, 223). This invisibility is also consistent with the programmatic Isaiah quotation earlier in Matt 12:17–21, which legitimates the surprisingly meek, unspectacular mission of the Messianic Servant who treads carefully, breaking not even a bruised reed (see further Beaton 2002, 141–73). Anton Vögtle's influential argument that the invisible Sign of Jonah is revealed visibly at the Parousia as the Sign of the Son of Man (Matt 24:30; 1971, 134–36) does not accord with this contextual

emphasis on messianic quietness nor with the paradoxical occurrence of a sign "in the earth's heart." In this respect, it may be useful to consider Matthew's understanding of the Son of Man's activity in terms of a nascent two Parousias scheme, at least in the sense that the future, universally visible Sign of the Son of Man (24:30) and the present, invisible Sign of Jonah (12:40) define two discrete moments of the Son of Man's activity (see further Stanton 2013, 339–49). Vögtle's view elides this distinction and undermines the possibility of repentance which, I have shown in Chapter Two, ancient Jewish readers of Jonah associate strongly with the prophet's message.[47]

Despite this emphatic feature of Jonah's ancient Jewish profile, Vögtle and other major interpreters such as Joachim Jeremias (1964, 410), both of whose treatments remain widely cited, think the Matthean Sign of Jonah is in fact designed to condemn its recipients, vindicating Jesus against his contemporaries.[48] Other prominent interpreters concede the possibility of repentance inherent in the giving of Jonah's Sign but regard that possibility as having been rejected decisively within Matthew's narrative, whether because Israel as a whole has rejected Jesus[49] or because the authorities to whom the Sign is directed have done so.[50] The former reading would

47. On Jonah's Sign as making room for repentance, see e.g. Manson 1937, 90; Bayer 1986, 145.

48. This view is also espoused in Glombitza 1962, 361–64; Wilson 2022, 1:358. Cf. the following, astonishing paragraph in one monograph-length treatment of Matt 11–12: "The miraculous deliverance of Jesus from death after three days will be a 'sign' unto Israel. But it will not be a sign which offers to the hostile nation an opportunity for faith and repentance. Instead, it will be a sign which exposes her great sin through a divine authentication of the Crucified One whom they had murderously rejected…By then, the judgment will have been sealed, and Israel's privileged position will be given to the Church…"; Verseput 1986, 264–65.

49. E.g. Zahn 1922, 470; Mora 1983, 91. Lehmann [1964] 2004, 115–16 is representative: "Die Unbeweglichkeit Israels nimmt die Errettung des Gottbesandten nicht zum Anlass der Buße, so dass die Auferstehung schon das Gericht bedeutet, nicht 'erst' die Parusie."

50. E.g. Gnilka 1988, 466; Konradt 2014, 223. For Chow the Sign opens up to other sign seekers who read Matthew but not to the authorities since they have already rejected the Sign of Jonah by the time Matthew is written; 1995, 91–91. For Runesson the authorities have rejected the Sign and will bring judgment upon this generation, but the Parousia may overcome even the authorities' resistance, as suggested in Matt 23:37–39; 2016, 245–46.

appear patently to fail as a reading of Matthew within its Jewish context, not least since Jesus and his followers are Jewish. The latter, although flawed, is more plausible since it acknowledges the tension between the continuing Matthean mission to wider Israel (Matt 10:6, 23) and Matthew's pessimistic perspective on Israel's present leadership in context (12:33–37) and elsewhere (e.g. Matt 20:43). This view will be addressed further below.

Firstly, however, a comparison with the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* can illustrate how the Sign's occurrence in the earth's heart need not mean that the invisibility *per se* of Jonah's Sign forecloses the possibility of repentance. For as noted in the previous chapter, Jonah's days in the belly of the κῆτος are something to which Ps.-Philo's Jonah becomes witness (i.e., in his book) and by which those who contemplate it may find Jonah's God trustworthy:

> Seeing (տեսանեմ = εἴδω, ὁράω) the witness (վկայ = μάρτυς) of these things, even me, the one who slept and searched out the form of birth (ծնունդ = τοκετός, γένεσις)[51] anew (վերստին = ἄνωθεν)[52], they will find me credible for their own lives and, after they have found me an embodiment of the truth, though seeing (տեսանեմ = εἴδω, ὁράω) in part (մասն = μερίς, μέρος),[53] they will believe in you in all matters. (*De Jona* 25.5)

Matthew's Sign of Jonah, occurring in the heart of the earth, apparently demands similar contemplation and the effort of faith.

Nevertheless, the warnings of future judgment in the Jonah–Solomon double saying (12:41–42) are, to be sure, as severe in Matthew as in Luke, and in context they take on a harsher aspect than the Lukan version. Matthew's Jesus warns of an unpardonable sin during the Beelzebul controversy (12:31–32), while Luke makes no mention of this. Matthew's authorities

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51. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:1022.

52. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:817. Siegert plausibly suggests ἀναγέννησις, 1992, 163. See Muradyan 2011, 54.

53. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:210.

are addressed, furthermore, as a "brood of vipers" and warned of a strict judgment of their words (12:33–37). These authorities, specifically the Matthean "scribes and Pharisees," are the ones who request a sign (12:38), which contextualizes Jesus's response within this series of heated exchanges.[54]

As noted in the discussion of Luke, the portrayal of Jesus in Moses-like terms in context strongly informs the combative response to the request, recalling tensions between Moses and the wilderness generation.[55] Matthew shows an early and sustained interest in portraying Jesus typologically as the prophet-like-Moses.[56] Although by comparison to Luke Matthew's first Sign of Jonah pericope emphasizes the Moses connection less, the second Matthean Jonah Sign pericope clearly establishes the connection. There, Jesus's interlocutors "test" (πειράζω) him as the wilderness generation "tested" God despite witnessing his "signs" (σημεῖα, Num 14:22 LXX).[57] The occurrence of this after the multiplication of bread (following Mark's order) is also suggestive of a Moses connection.[58]

It bears repeating that Jonah and Moses/the Red Sea are paired in a wide range of ancient Jewish sources.[59] The reasons are perhaps obvious, in their common deliverance through waters, as well as potentially original to Jonah 2:6 Heb, with its reference to the reeds (סוּף) wrapping around Jonah's head (see further Sasson 1990, 185). If Matthew is sensitive to this Jonah-Moses

54. Strongly emphasized in Konradt 2014, 219–225.

55. See pp. 84–91.

56. See Allison 2013a.

57. See Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:579; Lövestam 1995, 24–25.

58. If indeed also an Elisha one; cf. Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:578.

59. 3 Macc. 6:4–8; *De Jona* 25.4; Frg. Tg. and Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13; Targum Jonathan to Jonah 2:6; and the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics.

connection, it is unnecessary to assume that the Matthean Jesus's harsh words for his Jewish contemporaries, even the authorities, represent an essentially resigned perspective on the fate of the Sign of Jonah's recipients. Matthew's Jesus, like Luke's, can refer to his *own disciples* as a γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη (Matt 17:17), recalling the song of Moses's admonishment of rebellious Israel (γενεὰ σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη, Deut 32:5 LXX).[60] The distinctive Matthean reference to "a wicked *and adulterous* generation" (γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλίς) has a very similar ring to this Deuteronomic admonishment, even if it also reflects the language of marital infidelity characteristic of the canonical prophets' invective against a wayward Israel (e.g. Isa 57:3; Jer 9:2; 23:10; Hos 7:4; N.B.: Ἰωνᾶ *τοῦ προφήτου*, 12:39, emphasis mine).

On this note, there may also be echoes here of an Isaianic episode favored elsewhere by Matthew, in which Ahaz is given an opportunity to request a σημεῖον but refuses to "test" (πειράζω) the Lord.[61] The sign can be, as the Hebrew (*BHS*) has it, "as deep as Sheol or as high as heaven" (הַעְמֵק שְׁאָלָה אוֹ הַגְבֵּהַ לְמָעְלָה), or as the LXX renders, "in the depths or in the heights" (εἰς βάθος ἢ εἰς ὕψος, Isa 7:11 LXX). Although Ahaz timidly refuses, he is nevertheless promised a sign: the birth of Immanuel to the παρθένος/עַלְמָה (7:14; See Matt 1:23; 28:20). This potential connection is rarely noted in modern scholarship, but it already inspires Irenaeus's pairing of the "sign in the height above," Jesus's virgin birth as Immanuel, and the "sign in the depth below," the Sign of Jonah (*Haer.* 3.19.3–3.20.2). This potential Isaianic background further reinforces the Sign of Jonah as a gesture of God's good intentions, for despite himself Ahaz receives reassurance rather than a rebuff.

60. Cf. e.g. Ferda 2018, 238–42.

61. Cf. France 2007, 488; Evans 2012, 260.

Interpreters who pit the Sign of Jonah against Israel[62] fail, furthermore, to reckon with the Jewishly-received Jonah's image as a paradigm of God's *rescue of Israel* (3 Macc. 6:8) and as a representative of God's mercy (m. Ta'an. 2:1–5) and love for humanity (մարդասիրութիւն = φιλανθρωπία, *De Jona* 3.1; 25.1). The horizon of threatened judgment is not neglected in these Jewish sources, as I have noted, but it consistently forms the backdrop for the possibility of repentance and divine relenting from destruction (see e.g. Jdt 4:8–15; *De Jona* 48.1–7). This too strikes near the core message of Jonah the book, in which the characteristic divine "repentance" (נחם/μετανοέω), which is contingent on human response, occasions Jonah's flight in the first place (Jonah 4:2–3; see Exod 34:6–7; Joel 2:12–14.).[63] In the dialectic of judgment and compassion, Jonah foregrounds the latter for ancient Jewish interpreters, as a rule.

Even the responsible, carefully nuanced treatment of these issues by Matthias Konradt (2014) appears to misread Matthew on this point. For Konradt, the Matthean scribes and Pharisees are the sole recipients of the Sign and are then quite literally "demonized" in the following pericope (12:43–35), as if they are the unclean spirit which returns to a generation (=crowds) temporarily cleansed rather than being part of that generation.[64] It would be no wonder, if Konradt were correct, that such figures later opposed themselves implacably to the Sign of Jonah during the burial of Jesus. The authorities are, however, probably better understood as seeking to test whether Jesus really is the delivering Son of David, as the crowds believe (12:23; cf. 9:27–34),[65] and as being part of the wider "generation" of Jesus's

62. E.g. Marguerat 1981, 264–68; Reiser 1997, 306–307; Luz 2001–2007, 2:218.

63. For a creative if implausible theory on the origins of the historical Sign of Jonah saying which nevertheless recognizes this essential feature of Jonah, cf. Theissen and Merz 2003, 236–51.

64. Konradt 2014, 224; cf. e.g. Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:360–62; Luz 2001–2007, 2:220–221.

65. The Son of David reference makes perfect sense in the context of exorcism, as does a reference to Solomon (12:42), the son of David remembered in early Judaism as the consummate exorcist (Josephus *Ant.* 8.45–49; see Lövestam 1995, 33–35).

contemporaries (see further Lövestam 1995, 21–29). Matthew's Jesus, furthermore, explicitly addresses the crowds here (12:46; see also 11:16; 24:34) and not merely the scribes and Pharisees (as in 23:36). They are to be sure his direct interlocutors and most immediately call forth the sharp response, but through them the entire generation is addressed (rightly, Gnilka 1988, 465; Runesson 2016, 304–305).

Then there is the matter of the scribes and Pharisees *not being present* at the resurrection itself. Matthew does indeed seem to want readers to be thinking of the Sign of Jonah when Jesus is buried, that is, precisely when the Son of Man is in the "heart of the earth" according to Matt 12:40. As noted earlier, Matthew's Pharisees remember and repeat the Sign of Jonah's reference to τρεῖς ἡμέρας when asking for Pilate's permission to have the tomb guarded.[66] They also worry that "the last deception would be worse than the first" (ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη πλάνη χείρων τῆς πρώτης, 27:64), echoing Jesus's description of the person after the return of the unclean spirit in 12:45, just after the Sign of Joah: "The last things of that man are worse than the first;" (γίνεται τὰ ἔσχατα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκείνου χείρονα τῶν πρώτων).[67] By alluding thus to that earlier exchange, Matthew reminds readers that the authorities may yet come to the fate of which Jesus warned in the Return of the Unclean Spirit parable (12:43–45), while also pointing to the fact that the Sign of Jonah is at that very moment underway.

In this light, it is one thing for Matthew's Pharisees to have the body of Jesus guarded for three days so that the disciples are not allowed to steal it (27:63–64), but it is quite another to fabricate a story once resurrection has indeed occurred, as Matthew's chief priest and elders are

66. Cf. τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ in the passion–resurrection predictions; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; noted in e.g. Giblin 1975, 415–16; Gundry 1994, 244–45; Luz 2001–2007, 217; Novakovic 2012, 180; Konradt 2020, 198.

67. Rightly, Luz 2001–2007, 586n9, but the significance for the Sign of Jonah is rarely noted.

said to do (28:11–15). Yet, despite Matthew's hyperbolic, internecine critique of the Pharisees,[68] they are not in fact recorded as having participated in the cover-up of the resurrection (28:11–15) but only as having prevented a fake resurrection by Jesus's disciples (27:63–64). There is thus more slippage in the presentation of even the authorities' response to the Sign of Jonah than Konradt and (*qal wa-homer*) conventional scholarship has allowed.

It would therefore seem that the possibility of repentance, understood both early (12:38–42) and later in the Gospel (27:63–64) as a response to the Sign of Jonah, is still open even for the Matthean Pharisees. As Anders Runesson has recently argued, for those Matthean Pharisees who have not committed the unpardonable sin (12:31–32), they may still avert the coming wrath (3:7–8) and escape the fires of Gehenna (23:33) by repenting or by welcoming the messiah at his Parousia (23:39).[69] The present analysis clarifies that repentance at the Sign of Jonah in particular remains a live possibility, although perhaps not for the rulers (the Matthean chief priests and elders; 28:12). Even Justin Martyr, in fact, continues explicitly to hope for this possibility based on the offer of mercy in the Sign of Jonah despite, in a clear reference to the authorities' purported decisions in Matt 28:11–15, accusing Trypho's countrymen of propagating the rumor of Jesus's body being stolen by his disciples (*Dial.* 108).[70] Moreover, insofar as Matthew has aligned the Sign of Jonah closely with the events of Jesus's death and resurrection (as will be demonstrated further below), it is difficult to limit its import only to the authorities and to assign it a fundamentally negative meaning. The death of Jesus in Matthew is, after all, a renewal of the one covenant of God with Israel (Matt 26:28). Matthew is, therefore, best read as

68. E.g. Matt 5:20; 23:1–39. On which see recently, e.g. Yarbro Collins 2021, 148–69 and the other essays in Sievers and Levine (eds) 2021.

69. See further Runesson 2016, 246–47, 256; on the Parousia reversing an initial rejection of the Sign of Jonah, see also Vogel 2020, 23.

70. See Chapter Five pp. 197–216.

regarding the Sign of Jonah as opening the space for repentance, and since it is given upon Jesus's resurrection, that possibility remains for the Evangelist a live one.

Summary

Insofar as the first Matthean Sign of Jonah pericope is concerned, Jonah's Sign consists in the Son of Man's death, three days and nights in the heart of the earth, and resurrection. It apparently does not directly refer to the missionizing of Gentiles outlined later in Matt 28:19–20. The Sign addresses all Jesus's Jewish contemporaries with a warning of judgment, affording the opportunity for repentance, but has special reference to Matthew's scribes and Pharisees, who are present during the Sign of Jonah prediction (12:38) and remember it when Jesus's body is buried (27:63–64).

Matthew's Second Sign of Jonah Pericope

Matthew's second Sign of Jonah pericope is briefer, particularly if, as seems likely, the aphorism about the "signs of the times" (16:2b–3) is a later interpolation. There are a few reasons to think it is, despite the similarity to Luke 12:54–56:[71] (1) Key witnesses such as ℵ, B, and others lack it. (2) The reference to "σημεῖα of the times" (16:3) refers to a generally available presence of "signs" when Jesus is expressly limiting the signs to be given to Jonah's σημεῖον. (Luke 12:56 conspicuously lacks any reference to such σημεῖα.) (3) The presence of certain *hapax legomena* betrays, in light of (1) and (2), a later hand (εὐδία, πυρράζω, στυγνάζω).[72] The value of this aphorism for present purposes is, therefore, that it constitutes apparent early reception-historical evidence for the literalness of the reference to a σημεῖον ἐκ

71. Against, e.g. Gundry 1994, 323–34; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:581; Quarles 2020. The latter provides an up-to-date argument for the longer reading.

72. With e.g. Gnilka 1988, 39–40; Wilson 2022, 2:56.

τοῦ οὐρανοῦ—the request is for a visible, cosmic phenomenon to occur in the sky (ὁ οὐρανός). Thus, even though the Sign of Jonah is not given an explanation in 16:4, Matthew's readers remember the Sign will occur in the earth's heart rather than in the skies above.

Matthew is following Mark's order in this section and, like Mark, appears to draw on a Moses typology in setting up the testing of Jesus. As Moses presides over the provision of manna in Exod 16:1–32 and is immediately afterwards "tested" (נסה / πειράζω, Exod 17:2), so Matthew's Jesus has multiplied the loaves and fish (15:32–39) and is himself "tested" (πειράζω) by the Pharisees and Sadducees. As noted in relation to Luke's Sign of Jonah, Num 14:22 LXX also describes the wilderness generation as "testing" (πειράζω) God despite seeing his σημεῖα (rightly Wilson 2022, 2:56). In this Moses-influenced context, the Sign of Jonah is not an automatic reference or throwaway line but instead likely draws on the commonality between Jonah's and Moses's deliverance through waters.[73]

Matthew adds to the Markan picture, however, by including a geographically surprising reference to the Sadducees along with Mark's Pharisees (16:1). The "Pharisees and Sadducees" appear, curiously, four times in 16:1–12 (Gnilka 1988, 40). Could this be because Matthew thinks of the "teaching" of the Sadducees (16:12) about there being no resurrection (22:23) in connection with the Sign of Jonah?[74] It is difficult to be certain. Either way, the second Jonah Sign pericope cements the Matthean Sign of Jonah as giving a paradoxical response to the request for a cosmic, visible, and undeniable sign.

73. 3 Macc. 6:4–8; *De Jona* 25.4; Frg. Tg. and Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13; Tg. Jonathan to Jonah 2:6; and the Huqoq Synagogue mosaics.

74. Compare Wilson 2022, 2:57. Mark does not explain what the "leaven" of the Pharisees is (Mark 8:14–21); cf. Luke 12:1 on "hypocrisy."

Simon Peter and the Sign of Jonah?

Various scholars have heard in Jesus's reference to Simon Peter's patronymic, Βαριωνᾶ (16:17), an allusion to the Sign of Jonah. There is a relatively short space between it and the second mention of Jonah's Sign (16:4) as well as the first private prediction of resurrection "on the third day" (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, 16:21).[75] Some have even suspected a reference here to the mission of the ἐκκλησία among Gentiles, comparable to Jonah's mission among the Ninevites (Green 1984, 169–70; Ziethe 2018, 348–49). Alternatively, Robert Gundry argued that Bar Jonah is a midrashic invention of the Matthean Jesus aligning Peter with the prophet Jonah, à la the scriptural "sons of the prophets" (2 Kings 2:7). On this reading, Peter is thereby warned of his future martyrdom and prepared for bearing his cross as well as being promised victory over death (1994, 332; cf. Robinson 1984, 91, 96).

This theory is ingenious but superfluous, since Bar Jonah is more likely Simon Peter's real patronymic.[76] Jonah (יוֹנָה) is also the name of several rabbinic figures, including one Tannaitic figure, and is also a female name in Jub. 34:31. It appears on two approximately first-century ossuaries in and around Jerusalem, once as יונה and once as Ἰωνᾶ (Ilan 2002, 143). The name is apparently concentrated in Galilee and Syria in the rabbinic period.[77] Such a reference to a patronym is of course natural as Jesus renames Simon, and a midrashic paronomasia in

75. E.g. Green 1984, 169–70; Knowles 1993, 132; Gundry 1994, 332; Hagner 1995, 2:149–51; Ziethe 2018, 348–49.

76. The following is dependent on Bockmuehl 2010, 141–48.

77. Most famously Rabbi Jonah, leader of the Academy of Tiberias in the mid-fourth century, cited often in the Palestinian Talmud, Genesis Rabbah, and Leviticus Rabbah. A (male) Tannaitic Jonah is mentioned in Mek. Pisḥa 17 (Exod 13:5–10). See further Ilan 2002, 143–44; Bockmuehl 2010, 142; 2012, 22. See also Williams 2015, 30–45 on Simon Peter's names among Greco-Roman naming practices.

Aramaic would have been concealed from Greek speakers, against Matthew's regular practice of removing Mark's Aramaisms.[78]

The Johannine version in which Peter is "son of John" (ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου, John 1:42; 21:15–17), while difficult to reconcile with Matthew, is also obviously not a midrashic device and thus suggests that one is dealing with a real name here. The names may have been easily confusable, and John was much more common than Jonah.[79] The Aramized יוֹחָנָא, which functioned as both a male (= Ἰωάννης) and female (= Ἰωάννα) name,[80] might have been especially susceptible to confusion with יוֹנָה, particularly if pronunciation differences between Galilean and Judean speakers were a factor (cf. b. 'Erub. 53b; see further Bockmuehl 2010, 167). If, however, Matthew had wanted to write Βαριωάννης he might well have done so, just as elsewhere he transliterates Βαρθολομαῖος (Matt 10:3) and Βαραββᾶς (e.g. Matt 27:16).[81] The balance of evidence suggests, therefore, that Matthew understood "Jonah" to be the name of Simon Peter's father.

As far as I can tell, none of the ancient sources takes Βαριωνᾶ as a reference to the Sign of Jonah or an allusion to the biblical prophet, either, although at least two ancient readers of Matthew hear a Jonah connection in Peter's rescue from drowning (Matt 14:28–31).[82] The

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78. Gundry's later, idiosyncratic treatment of the Matthean Peter modifies his earlier view, apparently following Bockmuehl 2010 in arguing that the Aramaic renders the meaning obscure to Greek readers so that it is "a mere substitute for 'Peter'"; Gundry 2015, 17. Cf. Matthew's removal of Mark's Aramaisms in e.g. Mark 5:41 // Matt 9:25; Mark 14:36 // Matt 26:39. The removal of "Abba" from the latter diminishes the possibility that Matthew may have intended readers to hear a reference to God in the name "[Jesus] Barabbas" in Matt 27:16–17, 20–21. On Abba as a common Jewish name in antiquity, see Fitzmyer 1981–1985; 2:1490; Luz 2001–2007, 2:497–98.

79. See Ilan 2002, 134–44. Some LXX variants have Ἰωνᾶς or Ἰωνᾶ where Ἰωανάν would normally be expected, rendering יוֹחָנָן or יְהוֹחָנָן. E.g. 4 Kgdms 25:23 B; 1 Chr 12:13 A; 1 Chr 26:3 B; 1 Esdr 9:1 B; see also 1 Esdr 9:23 A.

80. See Ilan 1992, 37–39; 2002, 140.

81. See Ilan 2002, 18. Cf. Bauckham 2017, 104n39.

82. Failing the important history of interpretation criterion; cf. Hays 1989, 29–32; Allison 2000, 10–13.

importance of Matthew's knowledge of this patronym for the present investigation may be more tangential to the person of Simon Peter, lying instead within the potential Galilean associations of the name Jonah for Matthew rather than in Sign of Jonah symbolism *per se*.[83]

Excursus on the Galilean Jonah

The importance of Galilee for Matthew is well known, and Simon Peter's own Galilean origins of course play a crucial role in the climactic denial scene.[84] Matthew is, furthermore, the only New Testament author to single out the Galilean tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (Matt 4:12–17; cf. Rev 7:8). The biblical Jonah himself hails from Zebulunite territory, Gath-hepher near Sepphoris and Nazareth,[85] and later tradition recorded by Jerome locates a tomb of Jonah there (Jerome *Comm. Jon.* pref. [395 CE]; Jeremias 1958, 24–28). Although we do not have record of the tradition prior to Jerome, Galilee itself remained largely Jewish until the sixth century (Perrone 2006, 155–56). Christian material presence begins to increase only around 400 CE (Stemberger 2000, 70). Tombs of, for instance, Habakkuk and Micah are "discovered" between 379–395 CE, but even these may go back to earlier Jewish traditions. The heavy Jewish presence in and around Sepphoris and Tiberias during this period lends credence to the notion of the Jonah tomb as ancient Jewish tradition, even if only one based in scriptural memory and likely postdating the first century.[86] Furthermore, as I noted in Chapter Two, Josephus attends to this "northern" side of Jonah's scriptural profile in *Ant.* 9.206–207.[87] It is worth considering, even if

83. Cf. Thiede 2000, 23, in which the connection with Galilee is made alongside the suggestion that Peter is being prepared for martyrdom by the allusion to his father's name.

84. See e.g. 26:73; 28:16; see further Giesen 2001.

85. 2 Kings 14:25; Josh 19:13; see the later rabbinic discussion in Gen. Rab. 98:11; noted already in Dalman 1924, 1:118; see Reed 1997, 134–36; see also Shuchat 2009, 46.

86. See further Stemberger 2000, 105–114.

87. See Chapter Two pp. 42–45.

the evidence is not perfectly decisive, whether Matthew's interest in Jonah might derive in part from the prophet's Galilean regional and tribal affiliation.

After all, an interest in the most famous Galilean prophet in Jewish Scripture might have been natural for an author invested in the renewal of the Galilean tribes, including Zebulun:

> Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea (Καφαρναοὺμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν), in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali (ἐν ὁρίοις Ζαβουλὼν καὶ Νεφθαλίμ), so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali (γῆ Ζαβουλὼν καὶ γῆ Νεφθαλίμ), on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles (ὁδὸν θαλάσσης, πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν)— the people (ὁ λαὸς) who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." (Matt 4:12–17)

Jesus's move to Capernaum fulfills (πληρόω) this Isaianic prophecy (Isa 8:23–9:1 LXX), a text which some ancient, Galilean Jewish-Christians understood to proclaim: since the Galilean tribes were the first into exile (2 Kings 15:29) they were to be the first out and then later to become the base for Gentile missionizing.[88] For Matthew, the setting of Jesus's Capernaum home by the Sea of Galilee is a fulfillment of the prophetic oracle, even if the sea referred to in Isaiah was originally the Mediterranean (N.B.: Καφαρναοὺμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν, 4:13). The biblical promises to Zebulun and, to some extent, also Naphtali envisage such a maritime setting for its future prosperity.[89] In Gen 49:13 LXX, Jacob predicts that Zebulun will "dwell" (κατοικέω, same word as Matt 4:13) "seaside" (παράλιος, cf. Καφαρναοὺμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν), and the blessing of Moses repeats this language, adding that the "wealth of the sea" (πλοῦτος θαλάσσης)

88. Jerome *Comm. Isa.* 3.29–30. Cited in e.g. Freyne 1998, 353–54; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 1:380. See further Schröder 2021, 415–419.

89. On the difficulty of squaring this with Zebulun's landlocked territory, with a discussion of the Hebrew of some texts cited here, see Aḥituv 2000, 3–7.

will nourish Zebulun (33:19). These maritime associations are also taken up in T. Zeb. 5–6, where Zebulun catches fish for the house of Jacob, and T. Naph. 6, where Jacob and his sons encounter a storm at sea which is calmed by Levi's prayers.

I disagree, therefore, with Ulrich Luz's assessment that,

> "land of Zebulun" in no way fits the Matthean context. Jesus moves his residence from Nazareth in the region of Zebulun to Capernaum in the region of Naphtali…Matthew has taken over the quotation only because of "Galilee of the Gentiles" and not because of the geographical resonances.[90]

Luz's comments concentrate narrowly on the move to Capernaum without considering how the promises to Zebulun of maritime abundance are appropriate to the context's themes of Galilean tribal restoration. Furthermore, the call of the fishermen disciples is also contextualized by the Isaiah fulfillment quotation. Interpreters since Tertullian have suspected that the fishermen disciples are called to be "fishers of people" (ἁλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων) in an allusion to Jeremiah's prophecy of God's "sending for many fishermen…and they shall catch [the exiles]" (Jer 16:16).[91] The theme, however, of "fishing for people" as restoration of the exiles dovetails nicely with the biblical promises of maritime abundance to the Galilean tribes in the context of eschatological restoration and renewal.[92]

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90. Luz 2001–2007, 1:157; similarly, e.g. France 2007, 142–43; Keener 2009, 146–47.

91. Tertullian *Marc.* 4.9; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 1:398; Bockmuehl 2012, 71 notes the theme of Israel's restoration to the land implicit in this image, as well as the paronomasia with Bethsaida, בית צייד‌ן, "house of fishing."

92. Even Zebedee's name (Matt 4:21) may have Zebulunite connections, adding a potential further layer to this theme. The only Old Testament uses of זבד ("to endow") and its cognate noun זֵבֶד ("endowment"), from which Zebedee (Ζεβεδαῖος (זַבְדָיָה)) is derived, are in Leah's speech after giving birth to Zebulun: "Then Leah said, 'God has endowed (זבד) me with a good dowry (זֵבֶד); now my husband will honor (זבל) me, because I have borne him six sons'; so she named him Zebulun (זְבֻלוֹן)" (Gen 30:20). The name Zebulun is depicted as a play on זבל ("to raise"), which also only appears in that one verse. So זבל*,* the root of Zebulun, and זבד and its cognate noun זֵבֶד*,* the root of Zebedee, are all three *hapax legomena* found only in the speech of Leah after giving birth to Zebulun. Note that Zebulun calls himself a "good gift" (δόσις ἀγαθή) to his parents in T. Zeb. 1.3, punning on Leah's speech in Gen 30:20. On זבל*,* see further Albright 1936. Hebrew text is from BHQ Genesis, Tal (ed) 2015.

Matthew would appear, therefore, to be distinctively engaged with the biblical hopes for the Galilean tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. This could potentially reflect a social location within Jewish-Christian churches situated in the ideal territory of these tribes, territory dominated by Gentiles, particularly in the northern parts.[93] If the biblical Jonah is significant to Matthew as a particularly Galilean figure,[94] then this may go some way in explaining why Matthew is interested in Jonah in the first place. This is of course in addition to the probable dominical origin of the saying. Jonah's nautical legacy resonates in its own way with the well-known promises of maritime abundance to Zebulun.[95] This potential Galilean connection might add further context for why Matthew does not leap to an interpretation of Jonah's Sign as heralding a mission to Gentiles (cf. Moffitt 2011). In Matthean perspective, before Galilee of the Gentiles can become the base for a universal mission (28:19–20), it must be visited with light (4:12–16).[96]

The Stilling of the Storm

Remaining with Galilean events, Jonah allusions in the Matthean Stilling of the Storm (8:23–27) confirm and enrich Matthew's presentation of the Sign of Jonah as the deliverance of the Son of Man from death after three days. Matthew's distinctive redaction of this pericope creates a strong connection with the death and resurrection of Jesus. In contrast with Mark and

93. Bockmuehl 2012, 70. On Galilee of the Gentiles in this sense, compare 1 Macc. 5:15; rightly, e.g. Carter 2000, 516–17; cf. Beaton 2002, 106.

94. On local patriotism in ancient Jewish sources, see the essays in Jones and Pearce (eds) 1998.

95. It is probably a coincidence that T. Zeb. 4:4 leaves Joseph in the pit for "three days and three nights." However, the only comparable places in the LXX are Jonah 2:1; 1 Sam 30:12; and Esth 4:16.

96. This need not carry politicized overtones, as seems very unlikely indeed given the presentation of God's kingdom and Jesus's messiahship in Matthew. The phrase "fishers of people" points in a very different direction. Nor does it point to a territorially limited interest in Galilee against wider Israel, as the mission extends to "the towns of Israel" (10:6) and then, ultimately, to all the world (28:19–20); cf. Willitts 2007, 187–89.

Luke, Matthew's version of the immediately subsequent pericope, the Gadarenes exorcism, is given a strongly negative tone, permitting no sense of a proleptic Gentile mission following upon these Jonah allusions (8:28–9:1). Without unduly retreading ground already covered, I will draw out and analyze here the redactional features which lend these Jonah allusions their distinct Matthean profile. The results support the analysis of the Sign of Jonah as central to Matthew in that these Jonah allusions serve to highlight the pericope's foreshadowing of Jesus's death and resurrection, although not a Gentile mission.

Matthew's Storm Stilling and Epiphany

In the discussion of Luke's Storm Stilling, I argued that the conventional wisdom regarding the well-known Jonah allusions in the pericope renders them superfluous in an epiphanic context. "A greater than Jonah is here" seems an almost irrelevant comparison after a miracle which leads to the marvelous revelation that "even the winds and the sea obey him."[97] It is indeed clear that the pericope in all three Synoptics intends to put forward a complex epiphanic portrait of Jesus, one that associates him with the prerogatives of Israel's God if not fully equating him with God.[98] Power over the seas is also exerted by scriptural figures such as Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and Elisha,[99] as well as Greco-Roman gods like Poseidon and Isis and non-divine heroes such as Pythagoras and (pre-divinized) Julius Caesar.[100]

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97. *Pace*, e.g. Pesch 1976–77, 1:269; Gnilka 1988, 319; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:70; Twelftree 1999, 71; Luz 2001–2007, 2:17. Rightly, Vorpahl 2021, 232.

98. On God's control of the seas, see e.g. Pss 89:8–9; 107; 2 Macc. 9:8; T. Naph. 6; b. B. Meṣ. 59b; y. Ber. 9; see further e.g. Van der Loos 1965, 641–46; Fitzmyer 1981–85, 1:728; Cotter, CSJ 1999, 138–42; Robinson 2022, 82–86.

99. Exod 14:21; Joshua 3:15–16; 2 Kings 2:6–8; 2 Kings 3:14; cf. Josephus's *Ant.* 2.347–48; see further Cotter, CSJ 1999, 152–55.

100. See e.g. Homer's *Illiad* 13.27–29; Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* 11.5; Iamblichus's *Life of Pythagoras* 28; Dio Cassius's *Roman History* 46.1–4; cited in Cotter, CSJ 1999, 137, 144, 147, 149.

It proved fruitful against this backdrop to give a fresh hearing to ancient readings of the pericope which discerned a different purpose in the intertextual patterning with Jonah than modern scholarship has put forward: to foreshadow the death and resurrection of Jesus through the figural/typological identification of Jesus's sleep with Jonah's.[101] Earlier discussions, while pointing in a promising direction (e.g. Stone 2013, 48–55), fail to perform a sufficiently thorough analysis of the evidence to make the case that the Jonah allusions function as such a foreshadowing. The following analysis argues that Matthew's version is in fact best read in this way, and, furthermore, that this reading of the Jonah intertextuality better supports the pericope's epiphanic purpose than conventional readings. It is also compatible with Bornkamm's famous identification of discipleship themes in the Matthean version (1963), in that Jesus's confidence in the face of death is exemplary for the disciples here and elsewhere in Matthew (e.g. 16:24–26).

The Jonah Allusions

The basic outline of the Jonah allusions is consistent across the Synoptics: (1) departure by boat; (2) violent storm at sea; (3) sleeping main character; (4) extremely frightened sailors; (5) miraculous stilling related to the main character; (6) marveling response by the sailors (Cope 1976, 96; see also Pesch 1976–77, 1:269). The sleeper relaxes, while the other sailors fear (Collins 2007, 260). Both Jesus and Jonah are awakened by sailors with fears of "perishing" in the first-person plural (ἀπολώμεθα, Jonah 1:6; ἀπολλύμεθα, Mark 4:28; Matt 8:25; Luke 8:24).[102] The Markan clause "there came a great calm" (ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη), which Matthew retains, seems to echo the sailors' "fearing a great fear" (ἐφοβήθησαν οἱ ἄνδρες φόβον

101. E.g. Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechetical Lectures* 14; Ambrose *Explanatio psalmorum* XII 43.85; Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 1.12; Jacob of Serugh *Mimro* 122 on Jonah. See Chapter Five pp. 221–242 for a full discussion.

102. So, many, e.g. Léon-Dufour, S.J. 1965, 176; Pesch 1976–77, 1:272.

μέγαν, Jonah 1:10 LXX; cf. 1:16; 1:5; ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν, Mark 4:41).[103] Jonah remains, therefore, by far the most important intertext,[104] despite occasional proposals of Homeric or Vergilian parallels.[105]

Matthew for his part adds a few touches that show engagement with the narrative of Jonah's tempest, including having the disciples "approach" (προσελθόντες) Jesus to wake him (Matt 8:25; see also Luke 8:24), just as the captain does Jonah (προσῆλθε, Jonah 1:6 LXX).[106] Perhaps the most striking of these aligns Jesus not merely with Jonah but also with Jonah's God—Whereas the sailors with Jonah cry to Israel's God, "Lord, let us not perish (κύριε, μὴ ἀπολώμεθα) because of this man's life" (Jonah 1:14 LXX), the disciples address Jesus with essentially the same plea: "Lord, save, we are perishing!" (κύριε, σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα, Matt 8:25).[107] This suggests that the Jonah allusions do indeed serve the pericope's epiphanic purpose, although a direct identification with Israel's God is not thereby established.[108] It is also possible, if Matthew knows Hebrew Jonah, that the singular decision to describe the storm as a "great earthquake" (σεισμὸς μέγας, 8:23) reflects the סַעַר־גָּדוֹל ("great storm-wind") of Jonah 1:4, 12.[109] Whether or not this is the case, the phrase is theologically freighted in Matthew.

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103. See e.g. Pesch 1976–77, 1:273; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:74.

104. The allusions are so robust that they arguably satisfy the entire list of criteria produced by both Hays and Allison. See p. 9 for the lists.

105. Cf. the suggestion regarding Homer's *Odyssey* 9.563–64; 10.31, 47–52; MacDonald 2000, 57–62. Vergil's *Aeneid* 4.554–560 is another sometimes suggested; e.g. Marshall 1978, 333; cf. Lagrange 1911, 120.

106. Cf. Schürmann 1969–1994, 1:477n31.

107. Cf. Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:73.

108. Cf. Hays 2016, 384n105; Robinson 2022, 93–98.

109. Cf. Cope 1976, 97. סָעַר is translated by σεισμὸς in Jer 23:19 LXX. סָעַר is only used eight times in the MT. The term σεισμὸς can occasionally be used in sea-storm contexts, although Matthew clarifies by adding ἐν τῇ θαλάσσῃ in 8:24; Gundry 1994, 154.

Foreshadowing the Matthean Sign of Jonah

Matthew only uses σεισμὸς μέγας twice, including the present one and the one to describe the "great earthquake" that accompanies the angel's rolling away the stone from the tomb of Jesus (Matt 28:2). There would seem to be a deliberate linkage given the nearly verbatim repetition: "And behold there was a great earthquake" (καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμὸς ἐγένετο μέγας, 28:2; καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμὸς μέγας ἐγένετο, 8:23).[110] A σεισμός also, importantly, accompanies the resurrection of Jerusalem's saints just a few verses earlier (Matt 27:51), which is itself linked to Jesus's resurrection (27:53).[111] In the Matthean redaction, the centurion and those guarding Jesus alongside him see the σεισμός, leading them to "fear terribly" (ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα) and confess "truly this was the Son of God" (ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος, 27:54). The close echoes here of the Storm Stilling suggest that the earlier pericope is designed to foreshadow this climactic epiphany given at Jesus's death and resurrection.[112] In this light, it appears significant that the sleeping (καθεύδω; see also 9:24) Jesus is awakened with the suggestive ἐγείρω, which is then used again, only in Matthew's version, of his "rising" to rebuke the storm.[113]

110. Noted in Gundry 1994, 154; Stone 2013, 53; Rieske 2018, 360.

111. The only other Matthean σεισμός is one of the apocalyptic signs beginning the eschatological birth pangs (24:7). Luz suspects Matthew's sense of living in apocalyptic times has influenced his choice of words in the Storm Stilling; Luz 2001–2007, 1:20; cf. Batto 2021, 157. This line of thought is developed extensively in Rieske 2018. However, this is the only use of σεισμός which Matthew inherits from tradition. The others are redactional; see further Gundry 1994, 154.

112. Gundry's description of these connections is too loose and generalizing: "the great shaking in the sea previews the majesty of Jesus in his resurrection, at which a great shaking again occurs and upon which he claims 'all authority in heaven and on earth' (28:18). The similarity of Matthew's peculiar description of the storm with phraseology of Jonah 1:4…combines with his distinctive comparison between Jonah's experience and Jesus' rising from the dead (12:40) to confirm the symbolism of the great shaking as a preview of the risen Jesus' authority"; 1994, 155. Cf. similarly, Stone 2013, 53, opting for an exile-and-return reading of the Jonah typology; cf. also Rieske 2018, 360.

113. Matt 8:25–26; cf. Mark 4:38–39; see e.g. Matt 28:6–7; see also Stone 2013, 53.

Thus, ancient Gospel readers like Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, Jerome, and Jacob of Serugh,[114] who heard in the Storm Stilling's Jonah allusions a foreshadowing or mimesis of Jesus's death and resurrection,[115] appear to have detected a key feature of the Matthean version (rightly, Stone 2013, 54). As argued in the previous chapter, the figural identification of Jesus with Jonah allows this to be seen more clearly. In Jonah, strong linguistic and thematic linkages are created between the prophet's sleeping in the boat and his descent to Sheol in the belly of the fish, both of which are nadirs in Jonah's motivic "descent" (ירד/καταβαίνω), and after both of which Jonah "rises" (ἀνίστημι/קום or עלה/ἀναβαίνω, 1:6, 2:7). These linkages also appear to be detected in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, at least as it pertains to the connection between Jonah's sleeping in the lower deck and his being swallowed by the κῆτος. Ps.-Philo's Jonah is "submerged" (ընկղմեմ)[116] in the "belly/womb" (որովայն = κοιλία or γαστήρ)[117] of the ship (7.5), just as he will be eventually drawn into the "belly" (որովայն = κοιλία or γαστήρ) of the κῆτος to be reborn (16.4; 17:1). As noted in relation to Luke, this appears to reflect the homonymous relationship between the accusative form (κοίλην) of the "hold" (κοῖλος/יְרֵכָה) of the ship where Jonah sleeps (1:5) and the "belly" (κοιλία/מֵעֶה) of the fish. It also likely reflects the shared κοιλ- root.[118] The "womb" and rebirth theme is greatly expanded in *De Jona* 25.5–8, in which Jonah experiences "birth (ծնունդ = τοκετός, γένεσις)[119] anew (վերստին =

114. See the references in footnote 101 above.

115. See Chapter Five pp. 221–242.

116. Equivalent of καταποντίζω, βυθίζω, καταπίνω, καταδύνω, βαπτίζω; Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:781.

117. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:534.

118. See Chapter Three pp. 138–143.

119. See Armenian edition of *De Jona* in Lewy 1936; equivalents drawn from Greek-Armenian dictionary in Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 1:1022.

ἄνωθεν)."[120] The pregnancy and birth theme is developed to such an extent that Jonah's rebirth explains how *natural* pregnancy occurs – through the invisible care of the divine physician (*De Jona* 25.8). Like Ps.-Philo, Matthew may also have been particularly attentive to the motivic use of κοιλία in Septuagint Jonah, given his own explanation of the Sign of Jonah with reference to ἡ κοιλία τοῦ κήτους (12:40).

Simply put, therefore, Jonah's sleep in the boat foreshadows his deathly journey to Sheol, to the earth's heart (cf. βάθη καρδίας θαλάσσης…κατέβην εἰς γῆν, Jonah 2:4, 7 LXX). The intertextual patterning between Jonah and the Storm Stilling further reveals the Matthean Jesus's sleep as a foreshadowing of his own journey ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς, which Matthew will of course identify as the Sign of Jonah (12:40). A clear focus on the anticipation of Jesus's death and resurrection is consistent between the later Sign of Jonah pericope and the earlier Storm Stilling. Also consistent with the Sign of Jonah is Matthew's moving of the immediately subsequent episode, the Gadarene exorcism in land occupied by Gentiles, in a decidedly negative direction by comparison with his Markan source material (and with Luke). I briefly reiterate and expand on the observations in the previous chapter regarding the differences between Matthew and the other Synoptics on this point.

Matthew's Jonah and Gentile Mission?

Mark and Luke have Jesus *set out* to cross the Sea of Galilee (διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν, Mark 4:35; Luke 8:22) into the markedly Gentile-dominated Gerasenes,[121] but Matthew only records the disciples' following of Jesus into the boat (Καὶ ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον

120. Awetik'ean, Siwrmēlean, and Awgerean (eds) 1836, 2:817. Perhaps ἀναγέννησις. So, Siegert 1992, 163.

121. Signaled by e.g. the impure swine and tombs with people living among them, as well as the incidence of severe demonic possession; see Iverson 2007, 21–23; Stenschke 1999, 106–9.

ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, Matt 8:23). One can acknowledge with Bornkamm (1963) the theme of discipleship indicated by this "following" (ἀκολουθέω) while also recognizing the reduced intentionality of the Matthean Jesus's travel to the Gadarenes by comparison to its Markan source. This lessened intentionality continues in Matthew's alteration of who takes the initiative between Jesus and the afflicted men (Matthew doubles their number)—in Mark and Luke it is Jesus (Mark 5:7–8; Luke 8:28–29), but in Matthew it is the men (Matt 8:29–32; Konradt 2014, 56–57). Matthew also dramatically shortens the account: There is no mention of the men after they are healed; nor is there any command for them to proclaim the good which God has done for them in their city (cf. Mark 5:19–20; Luke 8:39). Matthew, moreover, changes Mark's "Gerasenes" to "Gadarenes" (Matt 8:28; Mark 5:1), which might reflect better local geography as well as avoiding the suggestion that Jesus goes too far inland (Konradt 2014, 56).

If Matthew thought of the episode in terms of the reconquest of Israel's ideal territory, as has been suggested vis-à-vis Mark's version, then this negative redaction would be surprising (cf. Vette 2025). Similarly, if Matthew thought of the Sign of Jonah as leading to a Gentile mission,[122] then this pericope would have been the perfect place to adumbrate Jonah's Sign flowing into the singular pre-Easter instance of Jesus's commanding someone to preach in Gentile-dominated lands (as Luke appears to do). Matthew does not, however, avail himself of this opportunity in his Markan source material. This supports the present analysis of Matthew's Sign of Jonah as focused on Israel and not a Gentile mission.

Storm Stilling Summary

Returning, therefore, to the purpose of the Stilling of the Storm with its Jonah allusions, the episode clearly foreshadows Jesus's death and resurrection as the Sign of Jonah. While

122. Cf. France 2007, 492; Moffitt 2011; Runesson 2016, 381–82.

Matthew gives several hints about this independent of the Jonah allusions (e.g. σεισμὸς μέγας, 8:24), the connection with Jonah renders the element of foreshadowing conspicuous by establishing a link between the sleeping of Jonah and Jesus. The linkage anchors an intertextual patterning between both men's slumber and their respective experiences of the Sign of Jonah. The Storm Stilling's purpose is, however, not only anticipatory of death and resurrection but also epiphanic, in that both it and Jesus's death and resurrection reveal him as Son of God. The latter brings about this revelation definitively in the narrative of Matthew's Gospel (27:54), but the former raises it only as a question: Who is this that even the winds and sea obey him (8:27)? The centurion and those with him provide Matthew's climactic answer, but the Gospel's initial answer comes in another epiphanic disclosure upon the Sea of Galilee, one in which some ancient readers detected a typology or mimesis of Jonah.

The Rescue of the Sinking Peter

The question, "Who is this?" (Matt 8:27), is given its first Matthean answer by the disciples after witnessing Jesus walking on water and rescuing the sinking Peter from drowning: "Truly you are the Son of God" (ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ, 14:33; Heil 1981, 102). The two seafaring pericopes are also linked by the cry, κύριε, σῶσόν, uttered by Peter when falling beneath the waves (κύριε, σῶσόν με, 14:30) and by the disciples together when waking the sleeping Jesus during the storm (κύριε, σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα, 8:25). These are the only two instances of the phrase in the New Testament, suggesting an intentional Matthean linking of the episodes.[123] It is apparently an echo of Ps 68:2 LXX ("Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my life;" Σῶσόν με, ὁ θεός, ὅτι εἰσήλθοσαν ὕδατα ἕως ψυχῆς μου), a verse which itself has certain

123. For Davies and Allison, "Clearly Matthew has assimilated the two sea rescue stories"; 1988–1997, 2:508. This assimilation reflects the character of the account as a Matthean elaboration of existing tradition; see Bockmuehl 2012, 72.

resonances with Jonah's psalm (e.g. "Water poured over me up to my life, the deepest abyss enclosed me;" περιεχύθη μοι ὕδωρ ἕως ψυχῆς, ἄβυσσος ἐκύκλωσέ με ἐσχάτη, Jonah 2:6 LXX).[124]

These resonances lend some plausibility to ancient readings that find a Jonah typology in the rescue of Peter.[125] For Zeno of Verona, the deliverance of both Peter and Paul from disaster at sea links them to Jonah (*Tractates* 1.34 / 2.17). Chromatius of Aquileia draws a similar analogy, reasoning that the Lord of Jonah and Peter delivers them both from drowning in the same manner (*Tract.* 52.4). This particular episode and the rescue of Jonah also attain a baptismal significance relatively early in the history of visual reception,[126] and Peter and Jonah feature together in early baptismal art like the Santa Maria Antiqua Sarcophagus (mid-third century) and the Jonah sarcophagus now held in the Museo Pio Cristiano in the Vatican (late third century).[127] Tertullian, too, is aware although skeptical of the potential baptismal connotations of Peter's rescue from drowning, the apostles famously not being recorded as baptized by Jesus (*De baptismo* 9, 12).

Is any Jonah connection directly intended by Matthew, however? It would appear unlikely or at least uncertain, given that there is no overt textual indication, no clear allusion to the Jonah narrative (cf. Heil 1981, 36). Matthew is well able to make such allusions, and so their absence here is probably telling.[128] Nevertheless, the First Gospel has laid down strands which

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124. See e.g. Heil 1981, 61.

125. See Chapter Five pp. 242–247.

126. See Jensen 2011, 182–84; 191–94; 198–204; Nicholls 2008, 135–44.

127. See the images and descriptions in Jensen 2011, 46–51; 2024, 101–3.

128. History of interpretation alone is an insufficient criterion, as Hays and Allison of course agree. See p. 9.

were easily threaded together in its later theological reception. For there does seem to be a thematic through line between the Jonah-influenced Stilling of the Storm, with its Christological question (8:27), to the rescue of Peter from drowning, with its initial identification of Jesus as God's Son (14:44), to Simon Βαριωνᾶ's consummate confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16–17; Heil 1981, 103–104). The Jonah themes in Acts' narration of Peter's journey from Joppa to Cornelius's household might also form a tangential connection with Peter's Matthean profile.[129] Matthew, nevertheless, makes no specific Jonah thread within this through line explicit. This, in my view, forms a good example of the interplay between *intentio operis* and *intentio auctoris*, where a faithful later reading of a canonical whole might illuminate intertextual patterns that did not form part of the author's original intent.[130] In other words, later interpreters saw a connection between the baptismal Jonah and a baptismal Peter in the material the Gospel provides, but as a historical matter this goes beyond the intentions of Matthew.

Gethsemane and Jonah's Death Wish?

A final potential Matthean Jonah connection, which is made by one patristic author[131] and multiple modern scholars[132] is also difficult to attribute to the intention of the Evangelist. It is argued by such scholars that Jesus's lament in Gethsemane, "My soul is sorrowful unto death" (περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχή μου ἕως θανάτου, Matt 26:38 // Mark 14:34), contains a Jonah echo

129. See Chapter Three pp. 119–124.

130. See Eco 1990, 58–60. Compare the history of the cock as a sign of resurrection and renewal in the visual depiction of Peter in early Christian art, which fills a lacuna in the Lukan account of Peter; see Bockmuehl 2010, 196–99.

131. Jerome *Comm. Matt.* 4.26.37; cf. *Comm. Jon.* 1.3.

132. E.g. Gundry 1967, 59; Gnilka 1978–1979, 2:259; Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 3:496; Robinson 2021.

along with a Psalmic one. Pss 41:6 and 42:5 LXX inspire Jesus's reference to his sorrow: "Why are you sorrowful, O my soul?" (ἵνα τί περίλυπος εἶ, ψυχή). The shared use of περίλυπός and ψυχή and the psalm's content of lament and hope make it a fitting reference in context. Jonah's death wish is then thought to provide the ἕως θανάτου: "I am very angry, unto death" (Σφόδρα λελύπημαι ἐγὼ ἕως θανάτου, Jonah 4:9 LXX).[133] However, in making his complaint Jonah expresses a wish that he would die despite God's will (Jonah 4:9). Jesus, however, expresses in Gethsemane precisely the opposite sentiment, wishing he could avoid his impending suffering and death but resigning himself to trust in God (Matt 26:39; rightly, Marcus 2000–2009, 2:975).

Such a diametrically opposed contrast might just conceivably be thought purposeful if Jonah's typological connection with Jesus elsewhere in Matthew did not also contain positive comparative elements. I can see no such positive purpose in this purported allusion.[134] Furthermore, ἕως θανάτου is a common phrase in the LXX, and Sir 37:2 provides a more contextually congruent intertext with its reference to "sorrow unto death" (λύπη ἔνι ἕως θανάτου) upon betrayal by a friend (Feldmeier 1987, 154). The phrase ἕως θανάτου is simply a general biblical expression (rightly, Luz 2001–2007, 3:396). Its usage here must be ruled out of the present analysis of Jonah's reception by Matthew.

Chapter Conclusion

Matthew's Sign of Jonah—the Son of Man's death, sojourn in the heart of the earth "three days and nights," and resurrection (12:40)—is, like Luke's, a paradoxical response to the request for a heavenly sign (12:38). On the one hand it is at best only a partial acquiescence, but on the other it opens crucial space for repentance, even while sounding a warning of potential

133. Cf. Gundry 1967, 59; Robinson 2021, 373.

134. I regard this as failing a major criterion, congruence, shared by Hays's and Allison's lists; Hays 1989, 30; Allison 2000, 13.

future judgment. Unlike the Lukan Jonah Sign's general address, Matthew's Sign of Jonah speaks pointedly to the Matthean scribes and Pharisees (12:38; 27:63), even though it also pertains to all Jesus's Jewish contemporaries (12:46). This reflects Matthew's intimately Jewish social context.

In its embodiment of the dialectic between judgment and mercy, the Matthean Sign of Jonah functions like Jonah's own deliverance and message to Nineveh in the Jonah narrative, particularly as Jewishly interpreted in antiquity. The analysis of this chapter brought the ancient Jewish reception to bear on this issue more thoroughly than any previous treatment. Like most other ancient Jewish interpretations of Jonah (e.g. m. Ta'an. 2:1–5; *De Jona* 3.1; 25.1), Matthew's Sign of Jonah foregrounds divine compassion against the horizon of a threatened judgment. The note of compassion is particularly salient in a sign addressed to Israel—Jonah is consistently remembered as a paradigm of God's rescue of his own people (e.g. 3 Macc. 6:8; *Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers* (Apos. Con. VII 37); Huqoq Synagogue mosaics). This was shown to have implications for Matthew's characterization of his Pharisees, including suggesting that in his view the possibility of their repentance remains despite the hyperbolic, internecine polemic against them throughout the Gospel.

Taking a cue from patristic interpreters, the analysis also demonstrated more thoroughly than previous treatments the foreshadowing of Jesus's death and resurrection in the substantial allusions to Jonah in the Stilling of the Storm (8:23–27). This, along with recognition of the multiple echoes of the Sign of Jonah in the Pharisees' request for the guarding of Jesus's tomb (Matt 27:63–64), establishes the Sign of Jonah saying as a clear passion–resurrection prediction. The fact that it is clear enough for the Matthean Pharisees to understand it as a prediction of resurrection after three days, despite the secrecy of such predictions otherwise, may be one

reason Luke alters Matthew's clear reference to Jonah's three days and nights in the κῆτος (Matt 12:40) to his more enigmatic version (Luke 11:30).

The Sign of Jonah is thus for Matthew, like for Luke-Acts, more extensive in its influence and more central to the Gospel's core kerygmatic events than has previously been recognized. Unlike Luke's version, however, Matthew's Jonah Sign does not include the post-resurrection proclamation of repentance to all nations, even if this is of course a Matthean theme (28:19–20). The role of the scriptural examples of Nineveh and the Queen of the South (12:41–42) is, for Matthew, primarily to provoke Israel by contrast (as in m. Ta'an. 2:1; implicitly, Jdt 4:8–15). On a related note, the chapter's analysis also fosters a better appreciation of Matthew's well-known concern for the restoration of the Galilean tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali (4:12–17). Matthew's evident interest in the Sign of Jonah, the most famous Galilean and Zebulunite prophet in Jewish Scripture, quite possibly reflects this Galilean focus. The analysis thus provides further crucial data to scholarly knowledge of the Gospel's geographical and social/ecclesial location.

A further contribution of the analysis derives from the detailed comparison of Matthew's reception of Jonah with wider ancient Jewish reception of the prophet. Close comparative analysis yielded fresh perspective on: (1) the mythological function of Jonah's κῆτος in Matthew (Jos. Asen. 12.9–10); (2) the role of the "belly/womb" (κοιλία) motif woven through LXX Jonah in linking together Jonah's sleeping in the tempest and his descent in the κῆτος, just as Jesus's sleeping in the boat foreshadows his own death and resurrection in Matthew (*De Jona* 7.5; 16.4; 17:1); and (3) the integrated reception of Jonah's fish and his mission in Jewish sources as revealing the coherence of Matthew's distinctive Sign of Jonah pericope (e.g. Tobit 6:1–9; 3 Macc. 6:8; m. Ta'an. 2:1–5). Jonah's connection in ancient Jewish reception with Moses/the Red

Sea and with Daniel and the Three Young Men also fostered fresh insights. The fecundity of the chapter's comparative exercise further situates Matthew as a first-century Jewish reader of Scripture and demonstrates the irreplaceability of close readings of the New Testament together with the ancient Jewish sources.

Chapter Five: Hearing the Matthean and Lukan Jonah with Ancient Readers

Introduction

The following effective history discussion demonstrates that the Lukan and Matthean Jonah allusions traced in the previous chapters were generative for ancient readers of Matthew and Luke-Acts. While ancient authors extend and develop these intertextual Jonah connections in ways that move creatively beyond the Evangelists' own usage of Jewish Scripture, they are nevertheless dependent on fundamental interpretative moves made by Matthew and Luke, as I will show. This *Wirkungsgeschichte* analysis, therefore, supports the argument for the Sign of Jonah's greater importance and influence in Luke-Acts and Matthew by demonstrating the effects of their receptions of Jonah on real-world, chronologically proximate readers and hearers.

A comprehensive survey of patristic interpretation of the enormously popular Jonah would be impossible,[1] and even to trace all ancient treatments of the *Sign* of Jonah would far exceed the available space. This chapter's analysis is therefore limited to Jonah allusions outside the Sign of Jonah pericopes. To ensure analytical rigor, the survey only includes passages where multiple patristic authors identify allusions or connections to Jonah/the Sign of Jonah.[2] The analysis attends both to the presence of potential Jonah allusions and to how ancient sources

1. The 700-plus page tome of Yves-Marie Duval (1973) attests to this in that even at its length it is not comprehensive but instead centers on Jerome's famous Jonah commentary.

2. Cf. e.g. Jerome's detection of an imitation of Jonah 4:9 in Matt 26:38 (*Comm. Matt*. 4.26.37) or John Chrysostom's recognition of the relationship of Matt 27:63 to the Sign of Jonah in Matt 12:40 (*Hom. Matt.* 27:62–64). I speak of connections in this chapter in part because although patristic authors, consistently with the aims of ancient rhetoric, themselves as a rule make scriptural allusions regularly, they do not tend explicitly to reflect on the relationships between scriptural texts in literary terms. Instead, they discern connections between scriptural texts in terms of the providential, inspired arrangement of Scripture, with texts bearing mimetic or, in specific instances, typological relationship to each other. On this, see further Young 1997, 97–116; 186–213.

perceive the intertextual patterning actualized by the reference.[3] I begin with the intertextual Jonah connection which is perhaps most crucial to the argument of this thesis, in the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47).

The Sign of Jonah Sequence in Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47)

This section traces a neglected thread of patristic interpretation which identifies the Sign of Jonah with the entire kerygmatic Lukan sequence: suffering, resurrection on the third day, and the subsequent proclamation of repentance to all nations. Patristic sources widely attest that the Sign of Jonah presages how repentance would be proclaimed to the Gentiles immediately after Christ's death and resurrection (e.g. Augustine *Epistles* 102.6, Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 3.3–4a; Chromatius *Tractates* 50A). However, the following four patristic writers directly connect this interpretation of the Sign of Jonah to Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47), supporting the argument of Chapter Three that Jonah/the Sign of Jonah forms a major intertext for this climactic Lukan claim.[4]

Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*

The earliest patristic witness to this exegetical tradition is Justin's mid-second-century *Dialogue with Trypho*, the oldest extant dialogue between a Jew and a Christian (Trypho's potential fictitiousness notwithstanding). The *Dialogue* was probably composed in Rome, and its purpose may have been multifactorial, including the instruction of an internal Christian audience, the attempted persuasion of Jews to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, and the heresiological opposition of Christian groups who rejected the Jewish Scriptures (see further e.g. den Dulk 2018).

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3. See further, e.g. Ben-Porat 1976; 1979.

4. See esp. pp. 106–119.

Although Justin depends on the memorable phrasing of Matt 12:38–39 in introducing his discussion of the Sign of Jonah in *Dial.* 107.1,[5] his treatment of the Sign (*Dial.* 107–8) is prompted as an explanation of the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (Luke 24:44–47).[6] Justin's discussion of Jonah's Sign follows immediately from the apologist's famous, extensive Christological exegesis of Psalm 22 (Ps 21 LXX) in *Dial.* 97–107. Near the end of that exegesis, just before his treatment of the Sign of Jonah, Justin evokes the scene of the risen Jesus's appearance to the Eleven through phrasing that resembles Ps 21:23 LXX, Luke 24:36, and Matt 28:10: "he stood in the midst of his brothers" (ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ ἔστη).[7] Having brought his audience to this point in the psalm's prophetic anticipation of Easter, Justin then clarifies that the apostles are indeed those the psalm refers to prophetically as Jesus's "brothers," evoking Jesus's opening of the Scriptures to the eleven apostles:

> [The apostles], after he was raised from the dead and they were convinced by him that, even before he suffered, he had been saying to them that he must suffer these things and that these things had been publicly proclaimed by the prophets, repented at their abandoning of him when he was crucified (οἵτινες, μετὰ τὸ ἀναστῆναι αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ πεισθῆναι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τοῦ παθεῖν ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς *ὅτι ταῦτα, αὐτὸν < ἔ>δει παθεῖν* καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν προφητῶν ὅτι προεκεκήρυκτο ταῦτα, μετενόησαν ἐπὶ τῷ ἀφίστασθαι αὐτοῦ ὅτε ἐσταυρώθη).[8]

This would appear to be a straightforward reference to the resurrection appearance to the Eleven in Luke 24:44–47 since it is only there in extant gospel literature that the resurrected Jesus meets

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5. As demonstrated in e.g. Massaux 1950, 75–76; Bellinzoni 1967, 121.

6. Stendahl's classic study on Matthew, in which he argued that Justin's failure to cite the explanation of Jonah's Sign in Matt 12:40 indicated that that verse was a later scribal insertion (1968, 132–33), may also have focused scholarly attention, particularly in NT studies, on the relation of *Dial.* 107–8 to Matthew. Most, however, have not been convinced of Stendahl's text-critical argument, if his suggestion of the supposed lateness of this interpretation remains influential; see e.g. Davies and Allison 1988–1997, 2:355. See Chapter Four p.159. I will return to Stendahl's suggestion and propose a new reason for this well-known omission below.

7. *Dial.* 106.1; Marcovich (ed) 2005, 252. This and subsequent citations of Justin's Greek are from Marcovich's edition.

8. *Dial.* 106.1; Marcovich (ed) 2005, 253. Justin's sentence order is preserved in my translation.

with the apostles, refers to his passion predictions (24:44), and calls attention to the prophetic scriptural witness to the passion and resurrection (24:45–47).

The extent, however, of Justin's use of Luke is of course a matter of debate.[9] Most scholars hold that Justin at least *knew* Luke and used Luke to *some* extent,[10] although many think Justin typically used a harmonistic source for his citation of the Jesus tradition.[11] As far as I am aware, no one has refuted Oskar Skarsaune's observation that Justin, regardless of his habits elsewhere, is directly engaged with the eventually canonized Gospels in *Dial.* 97–107 specifically to show the fulfillment of Ps 22 (Ps 21 LXX) in the Passion narratives more extensively than previously had been done (2007, 61–62, 66). Reliance on previous collections of proof texts is not possible for Justin as he extends the hermeneutical project of a Christological reading of this psalm further than previous efforts had gone. Such a project required direct recourse to the texts themselves, which is a plausible explanation for why Justin refers to the "Memoirs" (Ἀπομνημονεύματα) thirteen times in this section alone and nowhere else in the *Dialogue* (cf. *1 Apol.* 66–67; Skarsaune 2007, 66). This, it seems, is why this section appears to show clear engagement with the text of the gospels which came to be canonical,

9. Cf. Bovon 2005, 395n73; Massaux 1950, 559.

10. Gregory 2003, 220. Gregory's view is subtle, arguing that Justin *knew* and "presupposed" Luke but might potentially not have used it as a continuous, authoritative account *in extenso*. I.e., Justin used Luke, "either directly or indirectly," including in recording some sayings of Jesus, but also may have used a separate version of Luke's infancy narrative (detached from canonical Luke) as well as some of Luke's sources for the Passion and Resurrection narratives (2003, 295–98). For present purposes, it is only necessary to point out that Gregory's cautious argumentation recognizes Justin's familiarity with, presupposing of, and probable use of Luke at points and thus does not rule it out in this case. I argue here, following Skarsaune (2007, 61–62, 66), for Justin's direct engagement with the canonical-to-be Gospels specifically to write this section of the *Dialogue.*

11. E.g. Bellinzoni 1967. For a recent survey of the various options concluding, reasonably, with the opinion that "There is no reason to doubt Justin's knowledge of the Third Gospel," see Kok 2022, 28–32. Even in the revisionary schema presented in Vinzent 2014 regarding the priority of Marcion's Gospel, the possibility of Justin's knowledge of Luke is nevertheless left open; Vinzent 2014, 36–46

including Luke, regardless of how one settles the issue of Justin's use of gospel traditions elsewhere in his writings.

I will focus here on Justin's use of Luke *Dial.* 97–107, strengthening Skarsaune's argument with my own observations. Strikingly, *Dial.* 100.5 quotes the annunciation to Mary and her reply in Luke 1:35, 38b almost verbatim.[12] *Dial.* 103.8 quotes the Gethsemane account of Jesus's prayer with the textual variant where Jesus sweats drops of blood (ἱδρῶς ὡσεὶ θρόμβοι κατεχεῖτο, cf. Luke' ὁ ἱδρὼς αὐτοῦ ὡσεὶ θρόμβοι αἵματος καταβαίνοντες, Luke 22:42–44) and just there mentions for the first time the authorship of the "Memoirs" as including *those who followed the apostles*. He states that this occurred on the Mount of Olives, "while he was praying and saying (αὐτοῦ εὐχομένου καὶ λέγοντος), 'Father, if possible let this cup pass from me,'" which accords with Luke's account. The fact that Justin cites the "sweat as drops of blood" tradition as occurring in the same place Luke narrates it (when Jesus is praying on the Mount of Olives for the cup to pass; Luke 22:39–44) just after clarifying that the "Memoirs" were written by "the apostles *and those who followed them*" seems to point to Luke as the "Memoir" which is Justin's source here.[13] Then, in *Dial.* 105.5 Justin quotes the exclusively Lukan saying from the cross, "Father into your hands I commit my spirit" (23.46), verbatim, attributing it again to the "Memoirs" and keeping Luke's present tense παρατίθεμαι instead of the future παραθήσομαι of Ps 30:6 LXX. It has been argued that this consistency in verbal tense might not reflect Lukan

12. Justin has Gabriel say to Mary that: *πνεῦμα κυρίου ἐπ' αὐτὴν ἐπελεύσεται, καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει αὐτήν· διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἐξ αὐτῆς ἅγιον ἔσται, υἱος θεοῦ*, ἀπεκρίνατο· *Γένοιτό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου* (*Dial* 103.5). Cf. Luke 1:35, 38b: πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι·διὸ καὶ τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον κληθήσεται υἱὸς θεοῦ… γένοιτό μοι κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου. Gregory acknowledges the strong case for Justin's knowledge of the Lukan birth narrative; 2003, 292. However, Skarsaune's hypothesis better explains the verbatim engagement with Luke's birth narrative by Justin in this specific section of the *Dialogue* (cf. e.g. *Dial.* 78.4; 84.4).

13. Cf. Gregory, who, following Brown (1994, 1:180), objects that Justin does not tell readers exactly where he found the tradition; 2003, 280–81. This is of course true, but these are strong hints.

redaction because Luke himself might have drawn this tradition from his sources, and Justin might have had access to this same source (Gregory 2003, 229). In that case, however, both Justin and Luke would have had to preserve the source's wording exactly, down to the tense of the verb, and *then* Justin would have had to identify this source as one of the "Memoirs" written by the apostles and their followers. It seems more probable, therefore, that Skarsaune is correct regarding Justin's use of Luke's Gospel in this section.

Justin would only have needed to glance a few lines down in Luke's text from that saying from the cross to come to the Lukan resurrection appearance to the Eleven which we are considering (*Dial.* 106.1). The Lukan character of our text is evident from, as Skarsaune notes, the "cross- referenc[ing] between postresurrectional instruction and passion prediction." Such cross-referencing is only otherwise known to us from the resurrection appearance in Luke 24:44–47 (cf. 18:31–33; Skarsaune 1987, 256). Furthermore, although the apostles' repentance is of course not mentioned by Luke, Justin needs to narrate it to explain how Ps 21:23 LXX's reference to "his brothers" can refer to the apostles who had abandoned Jesus.[14] But even in describing that repentance Justin continues to draw upon the vocabulary and themes of Luke 24:47, and in a similar order: The prophets are said to "*preach* publicly" (προκηρύσσω) and the apostles to "*repent* (μετανοέω) of their *abandoning* him (ἐπὶ τῷ ἀφίστασθαι αὐτοῦ)," while similarly in Luke 24:47 the Scriptures are reported to say that "*repentance* will be *preached* in his name for the *forgiveness* of sins" (κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν; compare ἄφεσις (ἀφίημι) in Luke with Justin's ἀφίστημι).[15] Thus, one can safely

14. *Pace* Gregory (2003, 285–86), who does not discuss this motivation, which arises from Justin's proof-from-prophecy endeavor.

15. This emphasis on the post-resurrection call to repentance, here logically if also creatively applied first to the apostles themselves before they are tasked with its proclamation, is consistent with Justin's Lukan conception of the apostolic preaching of repentance as *itself* scripturally foreordained. For example, Justin's summary of the Scriptures' prophetic "public preaching" (προκηρύσσω) about Jesus in *1 Apol.* 31 ends not with Jesus's resurrection

understand *Dial.* 106.1 as a clear allusion to Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47). Even in the less plausible scenario in which all the Lukan quotations in *Dial.* 97–107 are mediated through a harmonistic source, they are mediated with enough direct accuracy that Luke's precise wording comes through in quotations and allusions ranging across chapters 1, 22, 23, and 24 of Luke's Gospel.[16]

Having come, then, via Ps 21 LXX to the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47), Justin segues quickly to his discussion of the Sign of Jonah via catchword linkages between Ps 21:24 LXX ("Jacob" and "Israel") and the prophecy in Num 24:17 that, as Justin records it, "a star shall arise out of Jacob and a leader from Israel" (*Dial.* 106.4). This "rising" (ἀνατέλλω) star (along with that of the Matthean nativity) is then chain-linked to the "rising" (ἀνίστημι) of Jesus on the third day according to the Sign of Jonah:

> And that he was about to rise from the dead on the third day after being crucified (καὶ ὅτι τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἔμελλεν ἀναστήσεσθαι μετὰ τὸ σταυρωθῆναι), it is written (γέγραπται) in the Memoirs that some from your generation came questioning him, saying, "Show us a sign." And he answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the Sign of Jonah." Since he spoke these things obscurely, his listeners were to understand that he would rise from the dead on the third day after he was crucified.[17]

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but with his sending out men to preach (κηρύσσω) among the nations (31.7). A similar summary of the OT witness to Christ in *Dial.* 53.5 also terminates not on the resurrection but on the apostolic preaching; cf. Skarsaune 1987, 362; see further pp. 256–59. Justin's similarity to Luke regarding scriptural interpretation has given rise to several studies treating them together, e.g. Kurz 1976; Wendel 2011.

16. *Pace* Gregory (2003, 286–87), Justin's mention in this context (106.2) of Jesus's singing hymns with the apostles is not problematic for his dependence upon Luke's resurrection narrative. Justin needs to complete his Christological proof-texting of Ps 21:23 LXX by showing the relevance of its second half ("in the midst of the assembly I will sing a hymn of praise to you"). Justin's assertion that "it happened while he was with them that he led them in a hymn to God, as is shown in the Memoirs of the apostles" cites an event earlier in the Passion as part of the proof-from-prophecy (Matt 26:30 // Mark 14:26). The psalm's order need not precisely follow the sequence of events in the Passion in order for Justin to regard the psalm as a valid prefiguring of it.

17. *Dial.* 106.4–107.1; cf. Bobichon (ed and trans) 2003, 1:842.

These opening lines connect Justin's discussion of the Sign of Jonah directly back to the claim Justin has just recalled from Luke 24:44–47, namely that Jesus convinced the apostles after his resurrection, "that even before he suffered had been saying to them that he must suffer these things and that these things had been publicly proclaimed by the prophets" (ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τοῦ παθεῖν ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι ταῦτα, αὐτὸν < ἔ>δει παθεῖν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν προφητῶν ὅτι προεκεκήρυκτο ταῦτα, 106.1). It is grammatically possible that here Justin's Jesus reminds the apostles not only of his own passion-resurrection predictions, but also of his pre-passion appeal to the prophets' witness to his suffering and resurrection. (Luke 24:44 clearly refers to Jesus's pre-passion reference to the scriptural necessity of his death and resurrection.) The coincidence of passion predictions and the prophetic scriptural witness makes the Sign of Jonah a natural place for Justin to refer to elucidate this claim of the risen Jesus about Scripture.

For the Sign of Jonah is one of only two places in the Jesus tradition where Jesus explicitly predicts his death and resurrection by way of a direct appeal to the prophetic scriptural witness. The other is a Lukan passion prediction which makes only a general appeal to Scripture (Luke 18:31–33). The Sign of Jonah, however, (as Justin reads it) contains (1) a dominical prediction of death and resurrection that (2) appeals to a particular text in prophetic Scripture that speaks both to (3) the necessity of Jesus's death and (4) resurrection on the third day. This makes Justin's choice of the Sign of Jonah a perfect reference point for the claim made by Luke's risen Jesus to the Eleven, namely that both he and the prophets had already told them in advance that these things were to take place. In the Sign of Jonah saying, dominical and scriptural predictions coincide.

Discussing the meaning of Jonah's Sign, Justin concentrates forcefully on the way in which the Sign calls for its recipients (i.e., Israel) to "repent at least after [Jesus's] resurrection

from the dead" (ἵνα κἄν μετὰ τὸ ἀναστῆναι αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν μετανοήσητε, *Dial.* 108.1). This emphasis on sequence ("after") reflects the continued influence of Luke 24:46–47 in that Justin has "repentance" consequent upon Christ's "rising from the dead" (note the aorist infinitive ἀναστῆναι in both). This, for Justin, is emphatically the order of the Sign of Jonah:

> And [Jesus] showed that your generation was more wicked and adulterous than the city of the Ninevites, who, *after* Jonah preached (κηρύξαντος) to them *after* being cast up on the third day (μετὰ τὸ ἐκβρασθῆναι αὐτὸν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ) from the belly of the huge fish…proclaimed a fast…with true repentance (μετάνοια) of the heart. (Dial. 107.2–3, emphasis mine)

Putting aside for a moment Justin's supersessionist conflation of Trypho's generation with Jesus's, notice that there is for Justin a clear sequence in the Sign of Jonah. It is crucial that Jonah's preaching to the Ninevites happens *after* he has been cast upon the shore "on the third day" (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ). The typological analogy naturally draws the apostolic preaching into the orbit of the Sign of Jonah since that preaching occurs, analogously to Jonah's own, after Jesus's resurrection on the third day, as programmatically delineated in Luke 24:47.

The first lines of *Dial.* 109 make this clear and provide further proof that the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures remains in the background throughout Justin's treatment of the Sign: "But to prove that the Gentiles would repent of the evil in which they, being deceived, were leading their lives, when they heard what was preached by his apostles from Jerusalem (Ἀλλ' ὅτι τὰ ἔθνη < ἔμελλον> μετανοεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς κακίας, ἐν ᾗ πλανώμενοι ἐπολιτεύοντο, ἀκούσαντα τὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ κηρυχθέντα), suffer me to show you…from the prophet Micah… (*Dial.* 109.1; Falls [trans] 2003, 163, modified). Here in Justin's transition from the Sign of Jonah to a further scriptural proof that the Gentiles would repent, the apostolic preaching "from Jerusalem" is foregrounded, and the vocabulary of Luke's opening of the scriptures remains strikingly prominent. This includes τὰ ἔθνη, μετανοέω, κηρυχθέντα (note the

aorist passive in Justin and in Luke), and, crucially, ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ. The latter phrase anticipates the Micah/Isaiah prophecy about the word of the Lord going forth "*out of* Jerusalem" (ἐξ Ἰερουσαλὴμ; Mic 4:1/Isa 2:3 LXX) but carries forward the "*from* Jerusalem" (ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ) of Luke 24:47, referring to the beginning of the apostolic preaching in Jesus's name.

Thus, the Sign of Jonah captures the movement from Jesus's death and resurrection into the preaching of repentance to Israel and the nations, as delineated in the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures. Although the Sign of Jonah is given as a sign to Israel, the repentance of Nineveh anticipates the repentance of Gentiles at the apostolic preaching, as Micah/Isaiah confirms. Justin strongly emphasizes a role for Nineveh as a counterfoil to an Israel that is slow to hear (embodied in the reluctant prophet), which as noted in previous chapters may already have been part of the original message of the book of Jonah.[18] However, the use of this by a figure such as Justin in a largely Gentile church, which is beginning to define itself in distinction to Judaism rather than as a sectarian movement within it, takes on a somewhat different character. Indeed, Justin has sometimes been thought to be deliberately engaged in the *Dialogue with Trypho* in creating that distinction from Judaism, although others have taken a more favorable view of the apologist's efforts to persuade Trypho and his fellow Jews.[19] Therefore, despite the clear presence of supersessionist elements in Justin's discussion of the Sign of Jonah, it is significant that Justin continues to understand this Sign of Jonah as holding out an (admittedly conditional)

18. See Chapter Four footnote 44.

19. For Justin as instrumental to the so-called "parting of the ways," cf. Boyarin 2010, 37–44, 67–73; cf. more recently Edsall 2021. Den Dulk argues that Justin may indeed hope to persuade Jews but is also concerned to delegitimize those whom den Dulk describes as "Christian demiurgists," i.e., those who reject the God of Israel; 2018, 4.

offer of mercy towards Israel in particular (108.4; Roldanus 1989, 167).[20] If Justin understood the Sign as continuing to hold out mercy for Israel, how much more Luke and Matthew, much contemporary scholarly opinion notwithstanding?

Jonah/the Sign of Jonah is, therefore, a unique scriptural hinge that allows Justin to follow the outline of Luke's Opening of the Scriptures from the vantage point of the Old Testament witness. This is to say considerably more than that, as some have put it, Justin reads the Sign of Jonah as exhibiting merely two aspects, as if two sides of a coin, corresponding roughly to the first and second halves of the book (e.g. Duval 1973, 124; Skarsaune 1987, 120). Not only does such a description fail to recognize how integral the "great fish/sea monster" episode is to the entire Jonah narrative, it also fails to capture what is crucial for Justin, namely that the Sign of Jonah consists integrally of the *entire* kerygmatic sequence of death, third-day resurrection, and the subsequent preaching of repentance to Israel and to all nations, which is said by Luke's risen Lord to be the essence of the scriptural witness to himself (Luke 24:44–47). Justin does not, however, engage in a detailed allegorical reading of the book. Instead, he seems to have been guided into the text's typological potential by the dominical saying concerning Jonah's Sign and by his Lukan sense of the shape of the scriptural witness to the gospel events.

Perhaps, therefore, Justin does not cite Matthew's explanation of the Sign of Jonah (12:40) because he wants to emphasize the role of the apostolic preaching in the Sign, rather than

20. This focus on the "preaching" and "repentance" aspect of the Sign of Jonah may explain Justin's perhaps otherwise puzzlingly extended focus on God's rebuke of Jonah's selfish displeasure over the springing-up and shriveling of the gourd (*Dial.* 107.3–4), in which some commentators have sought an allegory for Christ's death and resurrection. Despite the potential leitmotivic connection of the gourd's "springing-up" (ἀνατέλλω) with Justin's prior discussion of the "rising" (ἀνατέλλω) star of Num 24:17 (e.g. Bobichon (ed and trans) 2003, 1:842), the "rising" in this purported allegory precedes the shriveling – the wrong order. Other patristic commentators will notoriously discover much more vehemently anti-Jewish allegorical interpretations of the gourd's significance (e.g. Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 4.10–11). However, Justin certainly does not make any such allegory explicit in this instance.

because it was missing in the text of Matthew he had (*pace* Stendahl 1968, 132–33).[21] Justin clearly agrees with Matthew that the Sign of Jonah is about death and third-day resurrection (see *Dial*. 107.1). However, he also clearly wants to secure the relevance of Jonah's Sign to the apostolic proclamation of repentance that follows Jesus's death and resurrection. This is because, for Justin, the Sign of Jonah is precisely the sequence of events said to be scripturally prefigured in Luke 24:44–47: death, third-day resurrection, *and* proclamation of repentance to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Hilary of Poitiers's *Commentary on Matthew*

A very similar conception of the Sign of Jonah, one also connected to the Opening of the Scriptures in Luke 24:44–47, is evident in Hilary of Poitiers's discussion of Jonah's Sign in his fourth-century *Commentary on Matthew*. The oldest surviving Matthew commentary composed in Latin, it was written perhaps prior to 353 CE, seeming to lack the polemical agenda which the Arian controversy provoked in Hilary's later work. The work may reflect a homiletical context, although Hilary's elegant prose rendered it suitable for an educated, wider audience.[22] As might be expected in a Matthew commentary, Jonah is interpreted as a type of Jesus's death and resurrection. In Hilary's narration of Jonah's spectacular deliverance, Jonah "contrary to the nature of the human body, escaped, intact and uninjured, back into the open air by means of the power of the prefiguration of the Lord" (*contra humani corporis naturam integer et illaesus in*

21. Some have argued that Justin omits Matt 12:40 due to apologetic concerns arising from the fact that Jesus did not spend "three nights" in the grave, but rather only two; e.g. Giblin 1975, 416; Gundry 1994, 245. While this may be part of Justin's reasoning, it is worth noting that Justin also has *Jonah* being cast up "on the third day" (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ) in his discussion of the Sign of Jonah despite the phrasing in Jonah 2:1 LXX. There is no reason he could not have altered the Matthean quotation similarly if these apologetic concerns were front and center. Furthermore, Matt 12:40 is widely quoted in patristic writings, even by those for whom the three nights are an apologetic issue, e.g. Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 2.1b (cf. Duval 1973, 244). Moreover, Matthew himself changes Mark's "after three days" in Jesus's passion predictions to the more precise "on the third day" (Matt 16:21; 17:23; and 20:19) but finds no difficulty in retaining the scriptural expression in 12:40 (drawn directly from Jonah 2:1 LXX).

22. See further Williams 2012, 3, 10–12, 21–23.

auras superas uirtute dominicae praefigurationis euadit).[23] For Hilary, the power of Jesus's resurrection is active already in Jonah's dramatic re-emergence from the realm of the dead, aligning the Sign of Jonah, in good Matthean fashion, with Jesus's death and resurrection.

However, in introducing the Sign of Jonah (of Matt 16:4) just one sentence earlier, Hilary had written, "Here the Lord compares himself to the one whom he sent in advance to preach repentance to the Ninevites, in anticipation of the future passion, as an exact image [of it]" (*Huic se Dominus comparat quem ad futurae passionis effectum in praedicationem paenitentiae ad Niniuitas pari specie praemiserat* 16.2).[24] Here, Jonah's *preaching* is itself included in the "exact image" (*pari specie*) of the passion. This reveals how closely Hilary holds the post-resurrection preaching of repentance together with Jesus's death and third-day resurrection. He understands all these as part of the Sign of Jonah.[25] For this sense of the Sign of Jonah as a sequence of events, Hilary depends here not on Matthew but instead on the dominical opening of the Scriptures in Luke. This is confirmed by an allusion to Luke 24:47 that immediately follows the two quotations above: Jesus's fulfillment of his own saying of the Sign of Jonah proves that "the sign (*signum*) of his power has plainly been established while preaching in himself the

23. My translation; Hilary *Comm. Matt.* 16.2; Doignon 1979, 2:48. Subsequent citations of Hilary's Latin are from Doignon 1979. Hilary likely depends here on Tertullian *Res.* 32.3; 42:10; see Doignon 1979, 2:49.

24. Doignon has it: "Le Seigneur se compare à celui qu'il avait envoyé prêcher la pénitence aux Ninivites, comme son image exacte visant la réalité de sa passion future" (1979, 2.49), which doesn't fully capture that Jonah's mission to the Ninevites is an "advance sending" (*praemitto*) such that it is analogous to the future preaching of repentance post-resurrection. Nor does Williams's English translation quite capture this sense of a pre-sending (*praemitto*) analogous to a future preaching: "The Lord compares himself to this Sign of Jonah, who, in the preaching of repentance to Nineveh, had anticipated an image identical to the realization of the Lord's future passion;" Williams 2012, 177.

25. Doignon suggests Hilary may be drawing here again on Tertullian, but in this case from *Pudic.* 10.4, where Tertullian has *Exemplum passus est (Ionas) dominicae passionis ethnicos quoque paenitentes redemptura* (1979, 2:49) – "Jonah suffered as an example of the passion of the Lord which would redeem also Gentiles who repented;" (my translation). There may be some connection, but the clear allusion to Luke 24:47 which shortly follows, which is Hilary's own, reveals him to be engaged independently with the text of Luke's Opening of the Scriptures.

forgiveness of sins through repentance (*in se remissionem peccatorum per paenitentiam praedicans*)" (16.2). Luke 24:47 in the Vulgate is very similar: *et praedicari in nomine eius paenitentiam et remissionem peccatorum*… ("and to preach in his name repentance and the forgiveness of sins"). Furthermore, variants in the VL are minimal (*praedicare* for *praedicari* and *remissa* for *remissionem*; Jülicher 1975, 280).[26] For present purposes, it is immaterial whether this connection reflects Hilary's dependence on an ancient Latin translation of Luke or is simply Hilary's own allusive reference drawn from his knowledge of Luke's Greek.[27] Either way, the striking coincidence of vocabulary and phrasing between Hilary's text and the other ancient Latin renderings of the verse makes an allusion to Luke 24:47 overwhelmingly likely.

Since this preaching takes place after the establishment of the sign of Jesus's power (by resurrection), it most likely refers to post-resurrectional preaching. Jesus is himself said to be the one who preaches, but this is described in terms of the preaching with which Jesus commissions the disciples in Luke 24:47. It seems, therefore, that because the preaching is authorized by Jesus it is to be understood as a continuation of his own. For Hilary, then, the Sign of Jonah points to the scriptural and kerygmatic *sequence* of death, third-day resurrection, and proclamation of repentance, the sequence which in Luke 24:44–47 the risen Jesus identifies as the essence of the scriptural witness to the Messiah's divinely determined path.

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26. Duval notices the extension of the analogy between Jonah and Jesus to the preaching of repentance, but he makes no comment on the Lukan quality of this nor notices the allusion to Luke 24:47 (1973, 216–17).

27. Hilary alludes to Luke 24:44–47 as a whole in at least one other place, *Tr. Ps.* 125.2, and to 24:44 separately in two places: *Instr.* 6.34–36 and *Tr. Ps.* 138.1. The suggestion has been made tentatively that Hilary encountered this form of the Latin of Luke 24:44–47 in Cyprian *Ad Quirinum* 1.4, where a similar rendering can be found; Gómez 2019, #18–20 (page numbers not available in online html format).

Ephrem's *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron*

A third witness to this patristic exegetical tradition in which the Sign of Jonah is understood to refer to the scriptural and kerygmatic sequence laid out by Luke's risen Jesus comes in Ephrem's *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron*.[28] Ephrem wrote extensively on Jonah, including a sermon on "Jonah and the Repentance of Nineveh" and nine hymns on Jonah in the *Hymns on Virginity*, but his closest interaction with the New Testament's Jonah is found in the *Commentary.*[29] However, as the title indicates, this is not a commentary on the New Testament Gospels in Greek, but instead on Tatian's *Diatessaron*. Tatian's Syriac text is not extant, though, and in fact Ephrem's Syriac language commentary is one of the principal witnesses to it, despite a relative sparsity of exact quotations from it in the *Commentary*.[30]

Ephrem does not explicitly quote the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47). Several factors make it likely, nevertheless, that Ephrem knew these verses in Tatian's *Diatessaron*. The Arabic Diatessaron and Latin Codex Fuldensis both contain this passage. Additionally, Ephrem explicitly interacts with surrounding verses (Luke 24:30, 41–43, and 49).[31]

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28. The heterogeneity of the text in terms of authorial and editorial input is widely recognized, but most scholars maintain that the commentary contains a great deal and perhaps a majority of authentic Ephrem material (e.g. Lange 2005, 167; Hartung 2017, 27). Whoever finished the text is usually understood to be a disciple or disciples of the great poet, hymnist, and exegete. One eminent scholar has suggested that the commentary might have been left unfinished at Ephrem's death; Brock 2020, 131. I do not refer here to the author as "Pseudo-Ephrem" because that designation implies a false attribution rather than the more complex authorial situation of this work.

29. Brock 2020, 131. For English translations of these texts see, respectively, Burgess (ed and trans) 2012; McVey (ed and trans) 1989.

30. For a thorough recent discussion of the manuscript witnesses to Tatian's *Diatessaron,* including key Eastern witnesses such as Ephrem's commentary and the Arabic *Diatessaron* as well as Western witnesses such as the Latin Codex Fuldensis, see Barker 2022, 7–28.

31. For these verses in Codex Fuldensis, see Ranke (ed) 1868, 161–62. For the same in the Arabic *Diatessaron*, see Ciasca (ed) 1888, 96–97. In the textual criticism of Tatian's *Diatessaron*, the absence of a direct citation in Ephrem's commentary does not suggest its absence from Tatian's text. However, coincidences between the Arabic (and Latin) versions with Ephrem are of course "highly significant"; Barker 2022, 9. Ephrem's *Commentary* quotes Luke 24:49 in 22.1: "But you then, remain in Jerusalem, until you receive the promise of my Father"; McCarthy (ed and trans) 1993, 334. Ephrem explicitly references Luke 24:30, 41–43 in 21.7: "He had

More to the point, the Old Syriac Gospels, with which Ephrem would also have been familiar,[32] allow a comparison between Ephrem's *Commentary* and these other pre-Peshitta Syriac translations of Gospel texts. The Old Syriac Gospels could have influenced Ephrem's prose even in commenting on other passages in Tatian's *Diatessaron*. Sufficiently clear lexical contact between Ephrem's *Commentary* and the Old Syriac of Luke 24:44–47 would confirm an allusion to that text, even if it is not directly quoted in Ephrem's *Commentary*.

The four-paragraph treatment of the Sign of Jonah in Ephrem's *Commentary* (11.1–4) evidences just such an extensive and clear amount of verbal contact with the Old Syriac of Luke 24:44–47. The most substantial, but not the only, interaction occurs near the end of 11.3:

> Just as [Jonah] went up from the sea and proclaimed to the Ninevites, who repented and lived, so too our Lord, after having raised his body from Sheol, sent his disciples into the midst of the Gentiles, who were completely converted and received life in its fullness. Three days therefore are reckoned in relation to the descent and the rising from the dead of both of them. (McCarthy [ed and trans] 1993, 176)

ܗܟܢܐ ܕܢܦܩ ܡܢ ܝܡܐ ܘܟܪܙ ܠܢܝܢܘܝܐ ܕܬܒܘ ܘܚܝܘ ܗܟܢ ܡܪܢ ܒܬܪ ܕܩܝܡ ܦܓܪܗ ܡܫܐܘܠ ܫܕܪ ܬܠܡܝܕܘܗܝ ܒܓܘ ܥܡܡܐ ܕܐܬܦܪܫܘ ܘܩܒܠܘ ܚܝܐ ܒܫܠܡܘܬܗ. ܘܥܠ ܗܕܐ ܡܬܚܫܒܢ ܬܠܬ ܝܘܡܝܢ ܒܢܚܬܬܗ ܘܩܝܡܬܗ ܡܢ ܡܝܬܐ ܕܬܪܝܗܘܢ.[33]

Here, as in Justin and Hilary, the Sign of Jonah is the narrative sequence of Jonah's "death and resurrection" followed by his preaching in Nineveh, explicitly paralleling the sequence of Jesus's death and resurrection followed by the apostolic preaching. Not unlike Hilary, Ephrem holds the preaching of the Sign of Jonah so tightly together with the "death and resurrection" (of Jonah and

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blessed [the bread] for Cleophas' household, had eaten with his disciples before he ascended…"; McCarthy (ed and trans) 1993, 331.

32. See Brock 2020, 130.

33. Leloir O.S.B. (ed and trans) 1963, 52, 54 (Ephrem's Syriac is on every other page, opposite Leloir's Latin translation); subsequent citations of Ephrem's Syriac are from this edition.

of Jesus) that he can articulate the Sign of Jonah in 11.2 as "a proclamation coming up from the depths,"[34] in contrast to the heavenly sign that is requested. However, not only is the conceptual connection with Luke's Opening of the Scriptures clear, the verbal contact between them is also telling.[35]

For example, after Jonah ascends from the sea, he "preaches" (ܟܪܙ) and the Ninevites "repent" (ܬܒܥ), and the apostles are sent to do the same among the "Gentiles" (ܥܡܡܐ), just as in OS Luke 24:47 "repentance" (ܪܚܡܬܐ) is to be "preached" (ܟܪܙ) among the "Gentiles" (ܥܡܡܐ) after the resurrection. There is also the obvious connection between Ephrem's reference to the "three days" (ܬܠܬ ܝܘܡܝܢ) reckoned for both Jesus and Jonah in the grave and the resurrection "on the third day" (ܝܘܡܐ ܬܠܬܝ) in OS Luke 24:46. The description of the Ninevites' repentance in 11.2 is also very close to OS Luke 24:46–47: The Ninevites "repented and were made alive from the dead" (ܪܚܡܘ ܘܐܫܬܘ ܡܝܬ). Compare "from the dead" (ܡܢ ܡܝܬ) or "from the house of the dead" (ܡܢ ܒܝܬ ܡܝܬ) in the OS witnesses to Luke 24:46. A final literary connection seems to be reflected in Ephrem's statement later in 11:2 that Jonah "proclaimed (ܟܪܙ) the destruction of their city (ܚܪܒܬ). So too were the disciples after the resurrection (ܩܝܡܬ)." This compares closely with the statement in OS Luke 24:46–47 that the Messiah should "rise" (ܩܡ) and that the disciples must "preach" (ܟܪܙ) as a result, and it may even recall Jesus's commandment that the

34. McCarthy (ed and trans) 1993, 176. "Proclamation" (ܟܪܘܙܬܐ) language appears again here. I have not felt it necessary to point out each individual use of terminology present in OS Luke 24:46–47 to establish Ephrem's allusion to that text in 11.1–4, but there are others, such as the Ninevites' showing the fruit of "repentance" (ܪܚܡܬܐ) in 11.1.

35. The two primary witnesses to the Old Syriac of Luke 24:46–47, the precise verses to which Ephrem alludes, are almost exactly identical in wording and in word order in the relevant places, as for that matter is the Peshitta rendering of these verses; see Kiraz 2004, 512. Subsequent citations of the Old Syriac are from Kiraz 2004.

apostles should wait in "the city" (ܩܪܝܬܐ; OS Luke 24:49) if Ephrem is thinking of Jerusalem in particular as parallel to Nineveh in the Sign of Jonah.[36]

This amount of verbal contact with OS Luke 24:46–47, ranging across Ephrem's treatment of the Sign of Jonah, would alone be suggestive of a literary allusion. But when this is considered together with Ephrem's interpretation of the Sign of Jonah as involving the sequence of death, third-day resurrection, and the consequent apostolic proclamation of repentance to the nations, an allusion to Luke 24:44–47 can be accepted with confidence. Therefore, Ephrem's *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron* forms a third witness to the patristic exegetical tradition I have been tracing.

The Ps.-Chrysostomic *Quod mari similis sit haec vita*

A fourth and final direct witness to this patristic reading comes in a somewhat out-of-the-way-text which has been very little studied, the Ps.-Chrysostomic *Quod mari similis sit haec vita* ("That this life is like the sea"). Duval, in his massive study of Jonah in the patristic period, thought this late-antique homily (its precise date is uncertain) to be both confused and confusing (1973, 463–64). However, in that assessment he almost certainly misunderstood its most unique feature. I will come to that shortly but will first establish that Ps.-Chrysostom connects Jonah to Luke's Opening of the Scriptures.

The homily launches out from the Stilling of the Storm and appears to be dependent primarily on the Lukan and Matthean versions. When the homilist turns the audience's attention to "what is said in the Gospel," he writes Ἀνέβη ὁ Ἰησοῦς μετα τῶν μαθητῶν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον

36. Ephrem does not use the word "city" in his own reference to that verse in 22.1, but he may remember it from OS Luke 24:49. Lange thinks the disciples are like Jonah here in that they proclaim the eschatological judgment of the world; 2008, 345n672. The world's end may indeed be in view, but it is also possible to understand the apostles' proclamation here as addressed first to Jerusalem and Israel before extending to the Gentile nations.

("Jesus boarded the boat with his disciples"; PG 64, 21; my translation). This quotation is not verbatim from any Synoptic account, but it appears to be closest to Luke 8:22: αὐτὸς ἐνέβη εἰς πλοῖον καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. Matthew is in this place slightly more distant: ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ (8:23). The title of the homily, if original, pulls this quotation and includes the note that Jesus fell asleep (καὶ ἀφύπνωσεν), which only Luke's version has (8:23). The homilist uses καθεύδω more often throughout the text, however, and this verb is used in the Matthean (8:24) and Markan versions (4:38). The second direct quotation of the Gospel text seems likely to be a conflation of the Lukan and Matthean versions: τί λέγοντες; Ἐπιστάτα, σῶσον ἡμᾶς, ἀπολλύμεθα ("Master, save us, we are perishing!" PG 64, 21). The ἐπιστάτα is from Luke's version (8:24), while the imperative σῶσον is from Matthew's (8:25).

Thus, the homily appears to be working from the text of Luke (as well as Matthew), at least by memory, in its direct quotations of Scripture. This makes a later reference to Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:47) in the sermon more likely. The place where this appears to occur reads like this:

> Jonah was vomited out of the sea monster towards Nineveh, and Christ was raised from the dead (καὶ Χριστὸς ἀνίσταται ἐκ νεκρῶν) and came into this world. [Jonah] preached repentance (κηρύσσει μετάνοιαν). The Ninevites repent (μετανοοῦσι), as also do the citizens of this world. They fast a trinity of days (τριάδα ἡμερῶν), and the numerous multitude is saved, as also in Nineveh twelve myriads of people and many beasts [are saved]. For as the Lord preaches repentance (κηρύσσοντος…τὴν μετάνοιαν) and faith to this world, the twelve tribes of Israel are saved. For when "the fullness of the Gentiles come in, then all Israel shall be saved." (PG 64, 22; my translation)

The homily has "and Christ was raised from the dead" (καὶ Χριστὸς ἀνίσταται ἐκ νεκρῶν) while Luke has "the Christ must suffer and rise from the dead" (παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν; 24:46). Then, the sermon's "[Jonah] preached repentance" (κηρύσσει μετάνοιαν) compares closely with Luke's "repentance must be preached in his name" (κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ

ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν; 24:47). A few lines later, Ps.-Chrysostom has the Lord himself "preaching repentance" (κηρύσσοντος…τὴν μετάνοιαν). This is a relatively large amount of verbal overlap over a short space.[37]

Moreover, the conceptual connections between this homily and the Opening of the Scriptures in Luke are striking, particularly in the movement from "death and resurrection" to "preaching of repentance" shared between Jonah and Jesus.[38] It is interesting, then, and as far as I know unique among patristic interpretation of Jonah, that this sermon develops a typological interpretation of the "twelve myriads" of the Ninevites in which they prefigure the salvation of the "fullness of the Gentiles" as the means by which God will save the *twelve tribes* of Israel: "For as the Lord preaches repentance and faith to this world, the twelve tribes of Israel are saved. For when 'the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, then all Israel shall be saved'" (quoting Rom 11:26). This is the point which Duval misunderstood—he mistakenly thought the homilist was conflating Nineveh with both "the citizens of this world" and the twelve tribes of Israel (1973, 463–64). On the contrary, the homilist is not confused but is instead channeling his typological interpretation of Jonah through Paul's theology of the conversion of the Gentiles as well as through the Lukan Jesus's kerygmatic interpretation of the Scriptures. The result is a powerfully anti-supersessionist construal of the Gentile Ninevites' repentance as designed to lead up to

37. A textual oddity appears in the single extant manuscript of this homily (Cambridge Digital Library, Trinity College, MS B.8.8, 257r–258v.) between the two phrases: "came into this world (ἔρχεται εἰς τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον)" and "[Jonah] preached repentance (κηρύσσει μετάνοιαν)." Where one would expect a period/stop (τελεία) between τοῦτον and κηρύσσει, the punctuation seems to have been accidentally placed one word too early, separating the noun κόσμον ("world") and its demonstrative adjective modifier τοῦτον ("this"). This is of course nonsensical, but its effect on the translation in PG 64 led Duval mistakenly to think there was a lacuna in the manuscript; 1973, 463.

38. Ps.-Chrysostom, like other patristic authors, extends the analogy backwards to the incarnation of Christ "into the womb (κοιλία) of the ship of the virgin Mary" (playing on the thematic usage of κοιλία in Greek Jonah).

Israel's restoration. I have argued that the Sign of Jonah functions for Luke-Acts also in a such a manner.[39]

Summary Analysis

Justin, Hilary, Ephrem, and Ps.-Chrysostom attest to a tradition of patristic interpretation that understands the Sign of Jonah to refer to the sequence of Jesus's death, third-day resurrection, and the subsequent preaching of repentance to all nations outlined in Luke 24:44–47. As noted above, other patristic authors perceive the Sign of Jonah as speaking about this kerygmatic sequence in a general way, even if they do not explicitly tie it to the text of Luke (e.g. Augustine *Epistles* 102.6, Jerome *Comm. Jon.* 3.3–4a; Chromatius *Tractates* 50A). The linguistic and geographical diversity of the patristic testimony to this interpretation (Greek, Latin, and Syriac), tells against the potential objection that such a reading of Luke is simply the result of the "viral" or "memetic" (i.e., culturally transferred) influence of a particular patristic author's reading. Moreover, lines of direct dependence do not obviously run through the four authors just traced. Common dependence on Luke is the best explanation. As I argued in Chapter Three, comparable although less extensive exegetical support exists for a Sign of Jonah connection in Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34).[40]

A Sign Contradicted

A strain of patristic interpretation relying on intra-Lukan exegesis via the catchwords "sign" (σημεῖον) and "rising" (ἀνάστασις) associates Simeon's "sign contradicted" with the Sign of Jonah and thereby with the death and resurrection of Jesus. The following traces this reception of Luke in Origen, Amphilochius of Iconium, and Ephrem the Syrian.

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39. See Chapter Three pp. 111–133.

40. See Chapter Three pp. 148–150.

Origen's *Commentary on Romans*

Origen's *Commentary on Romans*, which was written perhaps around 246 CE, is the earliest extant Romans commentary and the only "complete" commentary of Origen's to survive. It is preserved mainly in Rufinus's abbreviated Latin translation.[41] Commenting on circumcision in Rom 4:9–12, Origen links Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34) to the Sign of Jonah in commenting on the significance of the "sign" of circumcision. To illustrate the nature of a sign, Origen quotes Matt 12:39–40 and then says,

> This, then, is the sign [signum]: where Jonah was seen [*uidebatur*], Christ was recognized [*intellegebatur*]. Similarly it is said about the Lord himself in the Gospel, "Behold, he is destined for the falling [*ruinam*] and the rising [*resurrectionem*] of many, and to be a sign that will be spoken against [*signum quod contradicetur*]." For the sign under which Christ had come [*in quo Christus uenerat*] was spoken against because one thing was seen in him, and something else was recognized. Flesh was perceived [*cernebatur*], and God was believed [*credebatur*]. (4.2.5; Scheck [ed and trans] 2010, 249; Bammel et al. [eds] 1990–1998, 2:286)

This brief reference illustrates the ease with which Origen can associate the Sign of Jonah with the "sign contradicted" of Luke 2:34, and there may be a hint of a connection deeper than merely catchword association. From elsewhere in the commentary, readers learn that Origen thought of Jonah's sea monster as an image of the tyrant, death, whom Christ despoiled by living among that tyrant's slaves before binding and despoiling him at the opportune moment (5.10.10; Scheck [ed and trans] 2010, 372–73). This "double movement of descent," first into the incarnation and then into the grave, might be hinted at by the connection of the "sign" Jesus is by his birth with the "sign" he will become through his death and resurrection, which Jonah anticipates.[42] A similar association of "signs" occurs in Irenaeus, where the combination of the "sign in the

41. Scheck (ed and trans) 2010, 1–2.

42. Duval 1973, 202: "*double mouvement de descente*."

height above," Jesus's virgin birth, and the "sign in the depth below," the Sign of Jonah, forms a central aspect of Irenaeus's conception of redemption.[43] Therefore, for Origen, although the "signs" of Luke 2:34 and 11:29–32 are apparently in principle distinguishable, there is a continuity of movement between them that associates them closely with each other.

Amphilochius of Iconium's *Oratio II (in occursum Domini)*

For Amphilochius of Iconium, the Sign of Jonah is not a separate sign from that of Simeon's oracle (Luke 2:34) but is rather the Lord's own interpretation of Simeon's pronouncement that he is appointed for a σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον. In the (probably) fourth-century *Oratio II (in occursum Domini)* ("Oration on the meeting of the Lord"), eventually included in the liturgy of the feast of Hypapante (Eastern Candlemas), Amphilochius takes Luke 2:21–38 as his subject and devotes a lengthy eighth paragraph to the meeting of the child Christ with Simeon.[44] The homily imagines what might have been Mary's indignant response to Simeon's pronouncement: "There is no fall in him! Rather a great exaltation and a condescension to those who receive his benefaction. Why, therefore, do you not utter a blessing by affirming: 'Behold, this one is appointed not for a fall but for a rising of many in Israel?'"[45] But Amphilochius's Simeon insists that the σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον is nothing less than the cross itself, which is clearly ἀντιλεγόμενον in the sense that "many unbelievers brought opposing words (ἀντιλογίας ῥήματα) to the Lord, ridiculing him with words and actions" (Datema [ed]

43. *Haer.* 3.19.3; *ANF* 1:459; Duval 1973, 134. See also Chapter Four p. 170.

44. While the authenticity of the sermon is sometimes disputed, Datema thinks it is probably the bishop of Iconium's composition. In any case, an uncial manuscript from Constantinople (codex *Scorialensis* φ-III-20) probably reflects the homily's inclusion in a panegyricon for the liturgical year dating as early as the fifth century; Datema (ed) 1978, xiii–xiv, 19.

45. *Oratio II (in occursum Domini)* 8; my translation; cf. Datema (ed) 1978, 63.

1978, 65). This sign will pierce Mary's soul like a sword, especially because she does not yet understand the resurrection (ἀνάστασις).

Amphilochius knows this because of the dominical teaching regarding the Sign of Jonah. He quotes the Matthean Sign of Jonah (Matt 12:39–40) and says, "You see how the suffering of the cross was called a sign, not only in the new covenant, but also in the old" (Datema [ed] 1978, 71). The "sign contradicted" of Luke 2:34 is thus to be read through a Sign of Jonah lens. It may, then, be under the influence of the Sign of Jonah passage, which contrasts the Gentile Ninevites and Queen of the South with "this generation," that Amphilochius interprets Simeon as saying the child is appointed for "the fall of those among the Jews who do not believe but the rise of those among the nations who believe" (εἰς πτῶσιν τῶν ἀπίστων Ἰουδαίων, εἰς ἀνάστασιν δὲ τῶν πιστευόντων ἐθνῶν, Datema [ed] 1978, 65). This obviously tilts Simeon's saying and the Sign of Jonah in a supersessionist direction, but it does not necessarily assume that the saying anticipates a wholesale Jewish rejection of Jesus. For present purposes, it may further illustrate the extent to which Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34) is read in this homily through a Sign of Jonah lens.

Ephrem's *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron*

Returning to Ephrem's fourth-century *Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron*, one finds in 11.2 a similarly complementary relationship between Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34) and the Sign of Jonah:

> *Therefore, a sign will not be given it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah*. The sign of Jonah served the Ninevites in two ways. If they had spurned it, they would have gone down to Sheol alive like [Jonah]. But they were raised from the dead like him because they repented. Just as in the case of our Lord, who was set *for the fall and the rising [of many]*, [people] either lived through his being killed, or died through his death. (McCarthy [ed and trans] 1993, 175)

One can be confident that Ephrem is indeed quoting Luke 2:34 (as found in Tatian's *Diatessaron*) in the second italicized section, despite the fact that only the Armenian translation (and not Ephrem's Syriac) is extant in the place where he comments on that verse directly, on two grounds: (1) the Syriac rendered in Ephrem's *Commentary* 11.2 (quoted earlier) as "for the fall and the rising of many," ܠܡܦܠ ܘܠܩܝܡ, is identical to the phrasing of Luke 2:34 in the Old Syriac witnesses; and (2) the Armenian translation of 11.2 renders the phrase ի գլորումն և ի կանգնումն ("for the downfall and the rising"), which is identical to the Armenian rendering of Ephrem's repeated use of the phrase in his treatment of the Simeon episode in 2.16 (ի գլորումն և ի կանկնումն) apart from a single-letter variation in spelling.

For Ephrem, therefore, Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34) elucidates the Sign of Jonah. He has argued in the first paragraph that the point of Jonah's Sign is not merely the superficial "three days" connection but rather "the healing of their ills" (McCarthy [ed and trans] 1993, 175). For the Ninevites, that healing takes the form of a resurrection from the dead like Jonah's through repentance. Alternatively, a rejection of Jonah's message would have resulted in a descent like his into Sheol while still alive. Via the implicit "sign" (ܐܬܐ) catchword link with Simeon's pronouncement, Ephrem links this challenge of Jonah to the Ninevites to the challenge presented by Jesus's death and resurrection. Jesus, like Jonah, is appointed for the "falling and rising [of many]." One's response to Jesus's death determines one's own fate, whether to die by rejecting his death or to share in his life through resurrection from the dead (Lange [ed and trans] 2008, 344), as Simeon's oracle and the Sign of Jonah reveal in tandem.

Summary Analysis

Origen, Amphilochius, and Ephrem attest to a tradition of patristic interpretation that connects the "sign contradicted" of Simeon's oracle (Luke 2:34) to the Sign of Jonah, associating

both with Jesus's death and resurrection, albeit in slightly different ways. The different angles taken on this Jonah connection by these patristic sources suggest they likely arrived at the observation independently of each other, probably based on the "sign" catchword link. Thus, this patristic reading, like the previous one identifying the Sign of Jonah with Luke's Opening of the Scriptures, resists characterization as merely the "viral" result of a particular patristic author's influence. Luke's text is the common denominator. This is equally true of the next text, which may form the clearest allusive reference to Jonah in the Gospels and Acts.

Stilling the Tempests: The Stilling of the Storm and Jonah 1

I have already had occasion to note the contribution which ancient readers of the Storm Stilling can, if critically appropriated, make to our understanding of the Jonah allusions in the pericope's Lukan and Matthean versions.[46] As anticipated in those earlier chapters, this section traces these patristic readings in their own proper historical and textual context, demonstrating both their dependence on Matthew and Luke as well as their creative elaborations of the fundamental interpretative moves made by the Evangelists.

Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures* 14

Delivered to Jerusalem's catechumens during the pre-baptismal season of Lent around the middle of the fourth century (Doval 1997), Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures* instruct by conjuring the scriptural events vividly to life before the catechumen's eyes, often taking advantage of the immediate Jerusalem environs as an aid to imagination (e.g. 14.16; Jackson 1991, 443; Kalleres 2005, 433–34). Catechesis 14 addresses the resurrection, ascension, and session of Christ, focusing on scriptural proofs. To show the scriptural plausibility of resurrecting a body that has been buried three days, Cyril cites the Matthean Sign of Jonah

46. See Chapter Three pp. 133–148 and Chapter Four pp. 181–189.

saying, evoking Jonah's typological imitation of Christ as evidence (Matt 12:40). Then, expanding on this dominical comparison, he finds that "when we study the story of Jonah the force of the resemblance becomes striking" (14.17).[47]

This resemblance is evident in that both are sent to preach repentance, but unlike Jonah Jesus comes willingly. "Jonah slumbered in the ship and was fast asleep amid the stormy sea; while Jesus according to the divine economy (κατ' οἰκονομίαν)[48] was sleeping, the sea was stirred up, for the purpose of manifesting thereafter the power of the one sleeping" (14.17). In contrast to the sailors' request for Jonah to call upon God, Jesus is addressed directly: "Lord, save us" (κύριε σῶσον ἡμᾶς, 14.17; cf. κύριε, σῶσον, Matt 8:25). Whereas Jonah had to be tossed into the waves to calm the storm, Christ "rebuked the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm" (ἐπετίμησε τοῖς ἀνέμοις καὶ τῇ θαλάσσῃ καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη, 14.17; Matt 8:26 is identical apart from the movable *nu* in ἐπετίμησεν). Like Jonah, Christ descends into the fish but in contrast goes willingly into the "intelligible fish of death (τὸ νοητὸν τοῦ θανάτου κῆτος)…to make death disgorge those it had swallowed up" (14.17).

Cyril goes on to reason that if Jonah could have been thus raised then it is credible that Christ also was (14.18). He further asserts that Jonah's prayers are prophecy ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ Χριστοῦ ("in the person of Christ") in that they speak as if Jonah was in the earth's depths instead of merely in the fish's belly (14.20). It is the meaning he attaches to the storm episodes that concerns us now, however. While Cyril notes the contrast between Jonah's being the cause of the storm and Christ's innocence as well as between the different ways the two storms are calmed, Jonah's sinking beneath the waves and being swallowed by the fish nevertheless has its

47. McCauley, S.J. and Stephenson (trans) 1969–1970, 2:43. This and subsequent English translations of Cyril's *Catechetical Lectures*, sometimes modified, are from this edition.

48. Reischl and Rupp (eds) 1848–1860, 1:130. Subsequent citations of Cyril's Greek are from this edition.

typological analogue in Jesus's descent into "the intelligible fish of death." This complicates any simple relationship of contrast between the calming of the two storms[49]—Cyril envisages Jesus's death metaphorically as a descent like Jonah's beneath the waves to the watery abode of death.[50]

Elsewhere, in his heresiological sixth Lenten lecture, Cyril identifies the motivations of Jonah and Jesus even more closely with each other. In context, Cyril is blaming Mani for, as Cyril narrates it, promising to heal a Persian king's child without making good on that promise. After the child died, having not received proper medical care, the king had Mani imprisoned. Mani fled from this imprisonment, leading to the execution of the negligent prison guards. According to Cyril, this makes Mani an accessory to murder. "Should [Mani] not have imitated Jesus in Gethsemane and said: '[I]f, therefore, you seek me, let these go their way'? Should he not have said, like Jonah: 'Pick me up and throw me into the sea,' for 'it is because of me that this violent storm has come upon you'?"[51] Here the distinction between Jonah's guilt and Jesus's innocence is preserved, but both figures are presented as choosing to sacrifice their lives so that those around them who are in peril might be saved (cf. Duval 1973, 245n29).[52]

For Cyril, there is thus a strong connection between the Stilling of the Storm and Jonah's storm, forming part of the more extensive typological correspondence between Jonah and Jesus. Jonah's decision to be tossed overboard on the one hand contrasts with Jesus's powerful calming

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49. The force of the contrast relies on the similarities; so, rightly, Maestri (ed and trans) and Saxer (ed) 1994, 71–72.

50. The association of Christ with water here and in e.g. 3.11 and 12.15 likely has particular resonance in the pre-baptismal context of the lectures; Doval 2001, 105.

51. *Catechetical Lectures* 6.26; cf. John 18:8; Jonah 1:12.

52. A similar emphasis on Jonah's self-sacrifice is strikingly present in the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona*, as I will note in the following chapter; see further Tiemeyer 2022, 71.

of the storm with a word, but on the other hand it stands as an act of self-sacrifice in typological anticipation of Jesus's own willing, sacrificial death.

Hilary's *Against Valens and Ursacius*

Hilary of Poitiers transmits an encyclical letter sent to Africa from the Eastern bishops of the Council of Serdica (342–43 CE) in a fragmentarily preserved anti-"Arian" work Hilary composed around 356 CE, *Against Valens and Ursacius* (Smulders 1995, 17–23). In that letter, one finds a strikingly similar usage of Jonah and the Stilling of the Storm as just witnessed in Cyril of Jerusalem's sixth Lenten lecture. The Eastern bishops suggest that their opponents, particularly Athanasius and Marcellus of Ancyra, have stirred up a violent tempest raging from East to West and that:

> If they had [any seeds of religion], they would have imitated the prophet when he says, "Take me up and throw me into the sea, and the sea will be calmed by you, because this tempest has been created on my account" (*quae si habuissent, imitarentur prophetam dicentem: tollite et mittite me in mare et tranquillabit mare a uobis, quoniam haec tempestas propter me facta est*). (Series A IV 1, 25; Wickham [ed and trans] 1997, 34–35, modified; Feder [ed] 1916, 64–65)

This is very similar to Cyril's advice to Mani, noted above (*Catechetical Lectures* 6.26; rightly, Duval 1973, 245). There is, however, a slight difference from Cyril's approach in the way the conciliar letter draws the comparison between Jonah's tempest and Jesus's stilling of the storm. For the council goes on to say that the African churches should:

> Censure those who communicate with scoundrels, cut evil people off from the churches by the roots, so that the Lord Christ may float upon the hastening tempest they caused (*ut tempestate ruente ipsorum causa innatans Christus dominus)* and may bid all the winds and storms of the sea depart and bestow on holy Church peace everlasting and calm (*omnibus imperet uentis procellisque maritimis discedere et tribuat ecclesiae sanctae pacem perpetuam et quietam*). (Series A IV 1, 26; Wickham [ed and trans] 1997, 35, modified; Feder [ed] 1916, 65)

The general reference to the Stilling of the Storm is obvious (cf. e.g. Wickham [ed and trans] 1997, 35), but there is less obviously here than in Cyril of Jerusalem a connection between the self-sacrificial actions of Jonah and Jesus. The letter instead reflects a reading of the Storm Stilling pericope that focuses on Christ's power over the elements of nature rather than any potential anticipation of his self-sacrificial death. Nevertheless, the points of commonality with Cyril are striking, particularly given the document's (in principle) joint, conciliar authorship. That plural authorship suggests a potentially widespread reading of the Jonah narrative highlighting the exemplary nature of the reluctant prophet's (ethically obligatory) self-sacrifice, and it points to a widely accepted literary and typological *mimēsis* between Jonah's tempest and the Stilling of the Storm.

Ambrose's *Explanatio psalmorum XII*

In 397 CE, during his final days of life, Ambrose of Milan evoked the connection between Jonah's tempest and the Storm Stilling pericope in comments on Ps 43 LXX. These comments came to be included in a collection typically designated *Explanatio psalmorum XII* (Pizzolato 1965, 8). For Ambrose, the psalmist's plaintive request for God to rouse himself from slumber (43:24) prompts a comparison with the disciples' rousing of Jesus from sleep during the storm at sea (Ps 43.84).[53] Then, he makes the link between the gospel pericope and Jonah:

> Let us see whether what we read of Jonah may not also accord with the gospel. He was sleeping in the inner part of the ship and was snoring, in which a sacred figure of the passion led on beforehand (*in quo sacrae passionis figura praecessit*). Just as Jonah was sleeping in the ship and peacefully snoring as though he had no fear of being apprehended; so too our Lord Jesus Christ, who

53. Ambrose is possibly inspired for this particular move, but perhaps not the subsequent connection with Jonah, by Origen's now fragmentarily preserved commentary on the same psalm, if Origen is indeed the author (PG 12, 1428 A); Pizzolato 1965, 41; cf. Auf der Maur 1977, 142–43.

> fulfilled that figure by the sacrament of his death (*qui figuram illam sacramento suae mortis impleuit*), in the time of the gospel slept in the boat.[54] (Ps 43.85)

As noted in earlier chapters,[55] the logic of this passage is that the sleeping of Jonah and Jesus peacefully in the boats establishes their typological or figural relationship, such that the sleep of Jonah in the boat (not yet his three days and nights in the fish) becomes a "figure of the sacred passion." Such an interpretation presumes that the sleep of Jesus in the boat is itself an anticipation of Jesus's death within the gospel narratives, otherwise the prefiguration of the passion would not occur during Jonah's sleeping in the boat but only during his three days and nights in the belly of the fish. Thus, it is only after the excerpted passage that Ambrose draws the traditional connection based on the dominical Sign of Jonah saying in its Matthean version (Ps 43.85; Matt 12:40).

One also finds in Ambrose's comments the now-familiar emphasis on Jonah's being thrown overboard as savingly self-sacrificial:

> He is the true Jonah who offered (*obtulit*) his life for our redemption. Jonah was lifted up and thrown into the sea to be met and swallowed by the whale. He went down into the whale's belly and later was thrown up. Regarding this whale, listen to what Job has to say: "*He who holds captive a sea-monster, ready to give him up."* Who this might be, of whom you read, you know very well. It is our Lord Jesus Christ who led captivity captive.[56] (Ps 43.85)

Here, even more than in Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechetical Lectures*, Jonah's willingness to be tossed overboard corresponds to Christ's saving, self-sacrificial death. A few lines later, after

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54. Ní Riain (trans) 2000, 252 (modified). Pizzolato (ed and trans) 1980, 2:184. Subsequent English translations of this work, sometimes heavily modified, are based on Ní Riain's translation. Ambrose's Latin is taken from the critical edition of Pizzolato.

55. See Chapter Three p. 139.

56. The connection of Jonah's monster to the Leviathan via this Joban text probably derives from Origen, e.g. *De oratione* 13.4; Duval 1973, 193, 201, 235.

emphasizing like Cyril the Christological reference of Jonah's prayers, Ambrose drives home this sacrificial connection even further:

> Who is this, except the chief of all priests, who with a voice of praise and confession and vows on behalf of all, sacrificed to the Lord, vowed, and repaid? For only his performance [of sacrifice and vows] had power. Just as, therefore, Jonah was thrown into the sea and the sea ceased from raging, so also our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to make a world of gain and by his blood to calm all things (*sanguine suo omnia pacificaret*), whether terrestrial or heavenly (*siue terrena siue caelestia*). (Ps 43.87)

Ambrose reads here the sacrifices and vows of the sailors (Jonah 1:16) as providing a kind of context for or commentary on the nature of Jonah's being tossed overboard. That is, it is a sacrificial act (Ambrose does not foreground Jonah's guilt), particularly in its typological correspondence with Jesus's act of sacrifice that "by his blood calms all things, whether on earth or in heaven." The calming of both terrestrial and celestial realities may, of course, have a spiritual point of reference, but it also ties Jesus's death back to the Stilling of the Storm pericope and to Jonah's storm, with the literal calming witnessed in those places.

One finds, therefore, in Ambrose as well as in Cyril of Jerusalem and Hilary an interpretation of Jonah's storm as typologically prefiguring the Stilling of the Storm. Ambrose also shares with these authors an understanding of Jonah's being tossed overboard to calm the storm as an act of exemplary self-sacrifice. Furthermore, like Cyril, Ambrose connects this self-sacrifice with Jesus's sacrificial death, but Ambrose develops this point more extensively, and he explicitly relates both Jonah's and Jesus's self-sacrifice in terms of their calming of tempests, literal and metaphorical. In this way, Ambrose's reading thoroughly integrates Jonah's tempest and the Storm Stilling pericope, finding in their typological combination an articulation of the meaning of Christ's passion.

Jerome's *Commentary on Jonah*

Around the same time as Ambrose dictated his comments on Ps 43 LXX, Jerome published his influential *Commentary on Jonah*, probably in 396–97 CE while living in Bethlehem (Duval [ed and trans] 1985, 12). His brief comments pertaining to our topic shed light disproportionate to their length:

> Moreover, we are not unaware (*non ignoramus*) of the blowing winds which in the Gospel the Lord commanded to be still, and the boat in peril in which Jonah was sleeping, and the swelling sea which is rebuked: "Peace" and "be silent." These refer to the Lord and Savior and the church in peril or even the raising up of the apostles (*Apostolos suscitantes*), who by deserting him in the Passion in a certain way threw him headlong into the waves (*qui eum deserentes in passione quodammodo in fluctus praecipitant*). (*Comm. Jon.* 1.12; my translation; Duval [ed and trans] 1985, 208)

Perhaps the most pertinent among these comments is Jerome's hand-waving gesture: *non ignoramus*. This likely alludes to the widespread familiarity of the typological connection between the episode in the Gospels and Jonah's tempest.[57] The blending of the two incidents is so thorough that it results in a blurred presentation of the typology, such that Jerome might appear tautologously to claim that the Gospel episode "refer[s] to the Lord and Savior." The reference to the boat in the Stilling of the Storm as representing the church in peril extends as far back as Tertullian and commands a lasting legacy (*De baptismo* 12.7; Duval [ed and trans] 1985, 358). But Jerome's comment about the disciples' deserting of Jesus during his Passion relates more closely to patristic interpretations of the Jonah-Jesus typology, such as the connection Cyril of Jerusalem draws between Jonah's sparing of the sailors and Jesus's sparing of the disciples at his arrest (*Catechetical Lectures* 6.26; cf. John 18:8; Jonah 1:12). Jerome, however, places the

57. Cf. Duval (ed and trans) 1985, 358. Elsewhere, Duval suggests Jerome makes this comment because he is slightly uncomfortable pointing out these obvious connections, but the simple clarity and force of Jerome's appeal to this connection in his Matthew commentary, treated in the following paragraph, suggests that any embarrassment on the part of Jerome did not result from his doubting the typology's validity; cf. Duval 1973, 350–51.

emphasis on the action of the disciples in abandoning Jesus, metaphorically tossing him into the waves.

Thus, like other ancient readers, Jerome interprets the scene of Jonah's tempest, the Storm Stilling episode, and the death of Jesus in an interlocking relationship. Jerome's remarks on the Calming of the Storm in his later Matthew commentary express that relationship even more lucidly. On the disciples' waking of Jesus in the boat, he writes: "We read of a type of this sign in Jonah, when while the others are in danger, he himself is safe and sleeping. He is awakened, and he delivers those who wake him by a command and by the sacrament of his Passion" (*Huius signi typum in Iona legimus, quando ceteris periclitantibus ipse securus est et dormit et suscitatur et imperio ac sacramento passionis sua liberat suscitantes*).[58] As in the previous excerpt from Jerome's Jonah commentary, it is difficult to tell when he ceases in these lines to speak of Jonah and begins to speak of Jesus. Certainly, by the time he refers to an *imperium* he has the gospel pericope in mind, but the fact that the preceding description (*quando ceteris periclitantibus ipse securus est et dormit et suscitatur*) could refer equally to Jonah or Jesus proves the point of the two scenes' connectedness. As noted elsewhere, the place of the Storm Stilling as a foreshadowing of Jesus's death and resurrection is clarified for Jerome by the typological relationship the pericope possesses with Jonah's tempest. The providential relationship between the sufferings of Jonah and Jesus connects the gospel scene of the calming of the storm more clearly to Jesus's saving death. In Jonah the tempest is quieted, in a prefiguration of the Passion, by Jonah's being tossed into the sea and swallowed by the fish.

58. *Comm. Matt.* 1.8.24; Scheck 2008, 103 (modified); Bonnard 1977–1979, 1:162; cited in Duval (ed and trans) 1985, 358).

Cyril of Alexandria's *Commentary on Jonah*

Cyril of Alexandria's *Commentary on Jonah* forms part of his *Commentary on the Twelve*, which was probably written prior to 428 CE.[59] The Jonah commentary exemplifies his typical aim of identifying the "spiritual" sense of Scripture.[60] His comments on the typological connection I am tracing are marked more thoroughly than some others by an exploration of the symbolic significance of the tempest, which represents for him "the waves of sin," "dire and insufferable pleasures," "corruption," and indeed "the devil and the wicked powers" themselves (*Comm. Jon.* 2.1 (1.17)). The remainder of Cyril's treatment of the connection may, on the other hand, strike one by now as familiar:[61]

> Now, when we take the blessed prophet as a type (εἰς τύπον) of the ministry understood in Christ, there is need to add that…the human race was affected by tempest…[The Son]…arrived on earth…and willingly went to his death to make the storm abate…; by the death of Christ we were saved (σεσώσμεθα γὰρ ἐν θανάτῳ Χριστοῦ)…You have something like this in the Gospel accounts (ἔχεις τι τούτων τὸ παραπλήσιον ἐν εὐαγγελικοῖς συγγράμμασι). At one time, the apostles' boat was plying the sea of Tiberias…and they were lashed intolerably with a tempest. In danger of perishing, they awoke Christ, who was with them asleep, crying out loudly, "Lord, save us, we perish." Waking up, the text says, he rebuked the sea, saying with authority, "Peace, be still," and saved the disciples. Now, the incident was a type (τύπος) of what happened to the human race: through him, as I said, we were freed from death, corruption, sin, and passions, and with the departure of the former tempest, our situation was transformed into peace. (Hill 2007–2012, 2:161–62 [slightly modified]; Pusey [ed] 1868, 579–80)

59. This is likely since it does not seem to reflect the theological conflict with Nestorius that began after Nestorius's election in that year; see further Hill 2007–2012, 1:4.

60. Precisely what counts as "spiritual" for Cyril has been a point of debate, but it involves at least the perception of the mystery of Christ (*Glaphyra*; PG 69, 308c; cited in Wilken 2003, 16; so, Kerrigan 1952, 131), and perhaps also the perception of the Word (cf. Kerrigan 1957, 374) and/or is marked rather by the Spirit's illuminating aid (Kerrigan 1952, 190; cf. Crawford 2014, 217–19).

61. The extent to which his treatment of the storm episodes may depend on Jerome is debated, as is the relationship of the commentaries as a whole, whether it is one of dependence (Cyril upon Jerome) or mutual inspiration (from Origen and others); cf. e.g. Duval 1973, 398–403; 406; Kerrigan 1952, 369.

This treatment is very close to the one traced above in Jerome, although the identification of the boat with humanity and the description of not only the Old Testament scene but also the episode in the Gospels as a τύπος reflects Cyril's more spiritualizing or universalizing interpretation (cf. Duval 1973, 405–6). There is nevertheless still the interlocking, triangular relationship between the storm scenes in Jonah and the Gospels and the death of Christ as the means of stilling the tempest of sin and death that is seen in other patristic authors.

Jacob of Serugh's *Mimro* 122 on Jonah

A final witness to this intertextual, typological connection is the Syriac author Jacob of Serugh's *Mimro* 122 on Jonah, a massive metrical homily composed in the late fifth or early sixth century (Kitchen 2008, 368). I include this text, which is of slightly later origin than others in this chapter, due to its value in attesting this connection from the vantage point of the Syriac tradition. The poeticizing approach of this metrical homily complements the Latin and Greek texts already analyzed (see further Brock 2020, 5) and confirms that the connection between Jonah's tempest and the Storm Stilling was wide-ranging.

Although Jacob's homily takes the form of a narrative, his treatment falls along lines already familiar by this point:

> [Jonah] slept from depression, indeed in this way heavily / or perchance the mystery bound him spiritually in sleep. / Maybe because he was bearing the likeness of the Son, / Jonah typified that sleep which our Lord had slept on the sea (ܒܝܡ ܕܥܡܩ ܐܬܪ ܕܢܚܬ ܒܗ ܡܪܢ ܒܝܡܐ). / He typified the burial of the Son in the depths when he was brought down. / Sleep cast him down into the ship, and he slept for a long time / If indeed death did come, it was to prefigure in his prophecy (ܒܡܫܟܒܐ ܕܢܒܝܐ ܐܡܪ ܕܐܬܐ ܗܘ ܠܡܩܕܡ) / by means of sleep in a sign the manner in which he [Christ] might be rejected (ܒܫܟܒܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܒܗ ܢܬܪܓܡ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܡܪ). / For it is written (ܟܬܝܒ) that our Lord had slept on [or "in"] the sea. Perhaps the prophet Jonah slept in an anticipation. Our Lord slept and the sea was disturbed against the disciples, / and this type was demonstrated in the sleep of Jonah. His sleep typified the sleep of our Lord in a mystery, / so that in all things he prefigures the way of the fullness of the Passion (ܕܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܢܩܕܡ ܒܗ ܫܠܡܘܬ ܕܚܫܐ

> ܣܥܟ) /…But it was not written (ܟܬܝ) that he slept except for the sake of the mystery. / That is, he was asleep, and they woke him as in the typology / that was performed by the disciples to our Savior.[62]

The close thematic relationship between Jonah's sleeping in the boat and his descent into the depths, which Jacob exploits here, is as I have pointed out already suggested in Hebrew and Greek Jonah by the motif of Jonah's "going down" (ירד / καταβαίνω) to Joppa (1:3), to the ship's hold (1:5), and beneath the earth (2:7). Jacob moves seamlessly in poetic mode between Jonah's sleep in the boat and his time in the belly of the fish, and Jonah's sleep not only functions to anticipate his descent into the depths but also to establish the typological link between Jonah and Jesus: "His sleep typified the sleep of our Lord in a mystery, / so that in all things he prefigures the way of the fullness of the Passion" (*Mimro* 122.13 388:4–5).

By thus including the sleep of Jesus in the events of the Passion (ܣܥܟ, lit. "silence"), Jacob clearly interprets Jesus's sleep in the Storm-stilling episode as a foreshadowing of his metaphorical "sleep" in death. The typological prefiguration of Jesus's sleep by Jonah's supports this insight since the sleep of Jonah and his being swallowed by the fish are clearly associated in Old Testament Jonah. Therefore, Jacob of Serugh exhibits an interpretation of the interlocking relationship between Jonah's tempest, the Stilling of the Storm, and Jesus's death that is close to that already noted in several Greek and Latin speaking patristic authors.

Summary Analysis

Cyril of Jerusalem, the Eastern bishops of the Council of Serdica (preserved in Hilary's writings), Ambrose, Jerome, Cyril of Alexandria, and Jacob of Serugh attest to a widespread

62. *Mimro* 122.13 387:13–21; 388:1–5,7–9; Bedjan (ed) 2006, 387–88. Lines 387:13–18; 388:2–3, 7–9 are translated into English in Kitchen 2011, 33–34, and these are incorporated in a modified form into this excerpt. The remaining lines (387:19–21; 388:1, 4–5) are my own translation.

patristic interpretation which views the tempest of Jonah 1 and the Stilling of the Storm episode as existing in a close typological relationship. At least four and perhaps five of these authors understand both the Storm Stilling and Jonah's tempest as having to do with or prefiguring Jesus's sacrificial death, although they approach this triangulation from different angles (Jacob of Serugh's poetic theologizing is particularly distinctive). Jonah's self-sacrifice is consistently highlighted, while the contrast between his guilt and Jesus's innocence is nevertheless typically acknowledged. Then, the motivic connection of Jonah's sleep in the boat with his descent into the depths illuminates the way in which Jesus's own sleeping in the boat foreshadows his metaphorical "sleep" in death. The latter of which is itself understood, as a matter of course, to be prefigured by Jonah's three days and nights in the belly of the fish. This interpretation is pithily summed up in Augustine's brief comment in the famous *Ep.* 102: "…as Jonah was sacrificed for those endangered by the storm, so Christ was offered for those who are drowning in the storm of this world" (*sicut [Ionas] pro his, qui tempestate periclitabantur, ita Christus pro his, qui in hoc saeculo fluctuant*; 102.4).[63]

These readings, which admittedly reflect allegorical expansions of the text that work with the *intentio operis* of the canonical New and Old Testaments, nevertheless appear to depend on the *intentio auctoris* of their Gospel sources at key points. The evidence is widespread, as well as linguistically and interpretatively varied, suggesting no clear "viral" relationship of influence originating with any one patristic author. While there are clear developments and expansions of the Matthean and Lukan Jonah intertextuality, the patristic readings build on a Matthean and Lukan foundation.

63. Parsons (trans) 1951–56, 2:173; Daur 2004–2009, 3:30.

The following two episodes, which involve the only other sea storms in Matthew and in Luke-Acts, could hardly be expected to attract as much patristic comment as this Jonah-Jesus tempest typology. It is significant, nevertheless, that both Luke and Matthew also uniquely present other sea storm episodes in which their ancient readers discerned allusions to Jonah. We turn to the Acts text first before finishing on a Matthean note.

Preachers to the Nations: Jonah and the Paul of Acts

In Chapter Three's analysis of allusions to Jonah at the crucial boundary-crossing moment of the captive Paul's missionary voyage to Rome, I had occasion to mention ancient readers' imaginative engagement with those allusions.[64] The following section traces such engagement in four patristic authors, revealing a trajectory of interpretation which, although creatively expansive, nevertheless takes its leave from Luke's own intertextual moves.

Tertullian's *De Corona*

Already in Tertullian's *De Corona* 8.2, an early third-century work responding to the refusal by a Christian soldier, perhaps in Carthage, to accept a crown for his head (Ruggiero [ed and trans] 1992, ix), a connection is drawn between the navigation of Jonah and the apostles. "But let Minerva be the first to have built a ship. I will see Jonah and the apostles sailing" (*Sed et Minerua prima molita sit nauem: uidebo nauigantem Ionam et Apostolos*; Kroymann 1954, 2:1051). In context, Tertullian is justifying the discerning Christian usage of some of the goods of this world which had been thought to be invented by pagan gods. Although Paul's sailing in Acts 27 is not singled out above the other nautical episodes involving the apostles, he is mentioned in the immediately previous example (supporting the use of medicine) and the immediately following one (supporting the wearing of garments), so his voyage to Rome might

64. See Chapter Three p. 124.

well be in view. Still, it is difficult to say that the line does much more than note the fact of the common experience of Paul and Jonah sailing. Nor does it distinguish explicitly between Paul's voyage and other nautical episodes which exist in doubtful literary relationship to Jonah. I nevertheless include this line of Tertullian's for two reasons: (1) it shows the early association of Jonah with the sailing episodes in the New Testament, including Paul's; and (2) it might have influenced later authors who do clearly associate Jonah with Paul's shipwreck (cf. Duval 1973, 495).

Hilary of Poitiers's *In Constantium*

Hilary of Poitiers returns here as a second, more direct witness to the Jonah-Paul connection. Hilary's second letter to the emperor Constantius (son of Constantine I) is, unlike his earlier more conciliatory attempt, characterized by remarkably direct invective and is likely intended not only as a rebuke of Constantius but also to discredit Constantius's policies in the eyes of the letter's wider audience, particularly Hilary's fellow western bishops (Humphries 1998, 217–19). For present purposes, the letter, written in 360 or perhaps 361 (Humphries 1998, 205–7; Wickman 2017, 300–303), is important in its drawing of a clear if brief connection between Jonah and Paul's shipwreck. Hilary is wishing to God he could have lived in the time of the great Neronian or Decian persecutions, implicitly comparing his present act of courage in writing the letter to the endurance of physical suffering in those earlier days. He boasts: "I would not have trembled before the abysses of the sea and the swirls of the devouring (*absorbentum*) waters of the Black Sea, since through Jonah and Paul you taught the faithful that life is in the sea" (*cum per Ionam et Paulum docuisses fidelibus esse in mari vita*; *In Constantium* 4; Rocher [ed and trans] 1987, 174–75).

It is probable that Acts 27 is in Hilary's mind here alongside Paul's reference to his three shipwrecks and "night and day adrift at sea" in 2 Cor 11:25, and the connections with Jonah in Acts 27 are more apparent on the surface. Both texts likely inform Hilary's understanding of what it means for Paul to have found life "in the sea." Nevertheless, it is unfortunately not possible to draw from this brief reference to Jonah's and Paul's deliverances in the sea much more than that Hilary saw a connection between Jonah's tempest and Paul's shipwreck(s) (cf. Duval 1973, 495). The next witness, himself directly influenced by Hilary, provides a more extensive account of this connection.

Zeno of Verona's *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah*

Zeno of Verona leaves us some of the oldest homilies in Latin, with their dates falling most likely in the 360s CE, during his bishopric (Jeanes 1995, 10). Although many in the collection are incomplete, his *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah* appears to be fully intact. There has, however, been some question of the relationship between the opening four paragraphs and the direct treatment of the Jonah narrative in the final five paragraphs (5–9).[65] The apparent disjunction emerges from the fact that Zeno begins the homily with a meditation on Ps 129:1: "Out of the depths I cried to you, O Lord" (*De profundis clamaui ad te, Domine*).[66] Following Hilary's comments on the same verse (*Tract. Ps.* 129.1), Zeno connects these "depths" to the "depths" of the knowledge of God in Rom 11:33.[67] Proper religious devotion to God does not presume to the heights of knowledge but instead follows the example of the psalmist: "He cries

65. Truzzi claims without extensive argumentation that the two halves of the sermon are completely unrelated; 1985, 57.

66. *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah* (*Tractates* 1.34.2 / 2.17.2); Löfstedt (ed) 1971, 86. The homily is numbered 1.34 in Löfstedt and 2.17 in older versions. I list both Löfstedt's and the older numberings throughout for clarity. Subsequent citations of Zeno's Latin are from Löfstedt's edition.

67. Cf. Jeanes 1995, 138; Duval 1973, 219–20; *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah* 2.

indeed from the depths, that is, from the deepest heart. He cries from the depths, but with what sad and sorrowful human calamities he was surrounded!" 1.34.1 / 2.17.1). This sets the stage for the rest of the sermon, which moves from Peter to Paul and then to Jonah on the basis of their common experience of "crying from the depths," that is, by their each having been saved through prayer to God in peril in the sea.[68] Only after treating Peter's rescue from drowning as well as Paul's shipwrecks and other sufferings does Zeno move to his discussion of the Jonah narrative *per se*.

It is not, however, simply a matter of loose associations or even of the appropriateness of imagining each figure uttering the psalmist's cry, *de profundis*. Zeno sees the three narratives themselves, that is, Peter's walking on water and rescue from drowning, Paul's shipwreck, and Jonah's tempest and being swallowed by the fish, as interconnected. I will come to Zeno's reading of Peter and Jonah together (a link made by him also in *On Fear* 5–6 (2.2 / 1.8)) in the next section. I observe here the connection he draws between Paul and Jonah.

Zeno says:

> Paul also cries out from the depths (*Clamat de profundis et Paulus*) when surrounded by blessed calamities, when for the name of the Lord he suffers robbers in the way, robbers in the city, when by the Jews thrice beaten with a rod, thrice the shipwreck dissolves (*naufragio trino diluitur*), when he is hailed upon unharmed by a mad people's raging storm with showers of stones (*cum insani populi furibunda tempestate lapideis imbribus feliciter grandinatur*), when detained in the depths of the sea a day and a night, crying out to God he is spat out from there unscathed (*cum in profundo maris die demoratus ac nocte ad deum clamans incolumis inde respuitur*). (*Tract.* 1.34.1 / 2.17.1)

68. Jeanes recognizes that the material on Jonah is nicely set up by the meditations on *de profundis*, but he finds the mention of Peter and Paul to be "curious" digressions. This fails to recognize that the figures are united by their common experience of surviving the threat of drowning by faith in prayer to God. Jeanes does, however, argue for the integrity of the sermon; cf. Jeanes 1995, 138.

Here Paul's list of calamities in 2 Cor 11:25 is given a nautical spin, such that the stoning becomes "a furious tempest" and a "shower." The explicit connection to Jonah then comes in the immediately following sentence and confirms that, even though the quoted text is 2 Cor 11:25, Paul's shipwreck narrated in Acts 27 is in view. Zeno's discussion of Jonah begins, "Jonah the prophet likewise is sent by God to Nineveh… (*Ionas adaeque propheta ad Nineuitas missus a deo*)," before going on to narrate the episode of the tempest in Jonah 1 in vivid detail (1.34.2 / 2.17.2). The key word is the *adaeque* ("likewise"). The immediate linkage of Jonah with the previous example of Paul is made through Jonah's being sent to preach to Nineveh. On the one hand, it is of course possible to dismiss this as a throwaway line.[69] If, however, one takes Zeno's syntax seriously, it would appear that he draws the connection between Paul and Jonah not only on the basis of their common experience *de profundis* but also because that experience occurs for both Jonah and Paul as a result of their being sent to preach to the great pagan cities of their day.[70] Jonah's being sent to Nineveh is analogous to Paul's being sent to Rome. The identification of the Tarshish of Jonah with *Tarsus*, Paul's hometown, which as I have noted is ubiquitous in antiquity and which Zeno also makes, strengthens the association between Paul's and Jonah's voyages.[71]

Paul may, furthermore, be drawn into the typological *mimēsis* between Jonah and Jesus, which Zeno narrates along lines now familiar from the previous section of this chapter. In

69. Cf. Truzzi 1985, 57.

70. On this point in Acts 27, see e.g. Pervo 2009, 659.

71. "But he turned aside to take a different route, and went on to board the ship to seek Tarsus" (*At ille alio deflexus itinere nauem Tarsos petiturus ascendit*…); *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah* 5. Paulinus of Nola punningly exploits this point of commonality between Paul and Jonah in his 49th epistle: "We have a ship bound for Tharsis and the ship of Tharsis" (*Habemus et navem Tharsis navemque Tharsensis*); *Ep.* 49.9; Skeb 1998, 3:1025. Cf. e.g. Josephus *Ant.* 9.209; 1.127.

addition to the dominically sanctioned parallel between Jonah's "three days and three nights" and the death and resurrection of Jesus, Zeno also observes:

> Jonah, sleeping in the boat, preferred the image of the sacrament of the Lord (*Ionas in naui dormiens sacramenti dominici imaginem praeferebat*); since the boat signified the material of the cross, sleep, in truth, the Passion…The Lot proclaimed that Jonah would be cast down, the prophecy predicted the Lord would suffer, in both cases willingly, he [Jonah] as a condition, the Lord from piety (*utrosque uolentes, illum condicione, dominum pietate*). (*Tract.* 1.34.3 / 2.17.3)

Zeno thus joins those numerous patristic writers who understand the typological connection between the sleeping of Jonah and Jesus in the boat as prefiguring the self-sacrifice of the Passion.[72] It may be significant, therefore, that Paul is himself described as having been "spat out from [the depths] unscathed" (*incolumis inde respuitur*) after crying out *in profundo maris* (1.34.3 / 2.17.3). Drawing from the words of Paul in 2 Cor 11:25, which speak of spending a day and night *in profundo maris* (Greek: ἐν τῷ βυθῷ), Paul's shipwreck is interpreted in terms of the typologically significant experience of Jonah: the apostle is "spat out" from the depths unharmed.

Sulpicius Severus's *Epistles* 1

An identification perhaps even closer than Zeno's between the Paul of Acts 27 and Jonah may be found in the first epistle of Sulpicius Severus. The letter is a response to a certain critic of Sulpicius's famous *Vita* of Martin of Tours, published in 396, asking why if Martin was capable of the miraculous he should have been singed in a recent fire (*Epistles* 1.2). The recency of the incident suggests that Martin was still alive or had only just died at the time of the epistle, placing it around 396–97 CE or shortly afterwards (see Goodrich [ed and trans] 2015, 12).

72. On the more extensive allegorizing of the Jonah narrative in this sermon, see further Duval 1966; Boccardi 1983, 475–76.

Sulpicius's response is to shame the critic for failing to perceive the role of danger and trials in the life of any saint. Paul, for example, had been bitten by a snake and shaken it off into the flames unharmed (Acts 28:3–6). Is the example of Martin, Sulpicius asks, not the same as this (*Epistles* 1.5)? Furthermore, he argues, Peter faced the danger of the elements, treading on the open waves, but it is just as remarkable if not more that "the preacher to the Gentiles, whom the waves swallowed, after three days and the same number of nights, emerged restored from the deep waves (*gentium praedicator, quem fluctus absorbuit et post triduum totidemque noctes emergentum e profundo unda restituit*)."[73] The conflation of Paul with Jonah is so extensive here that one could almost mistake *gentium praedicator* as a reference to Jonah instead of Paul. The following paragraph, however, clarifies that the reference is indeed to Paul and specifically the Paul of Acts: "For it was with divine counsel that the blessed evangelist inserted an example of this kind in the holy books. This was not simply so that the human mind could learn about the dangers of shipwrecks and serpents from these stories, but rather, as the Apostle…relates, because all of these troubles must commonly be endured by holy men" (*Ep.* 1.7; Goodrich [ed and trans] 2015, 56). The "preacher to the Gentiles" is thus clearly meant to indicate Paul. Furthermore, the reference to the "blessed evangelist" as the author of the story, as well as the repeated reference to the serpent bite, clearly grounds these reflections in the shipwreck of Acts 27 and the Malta episode in Acts 28, on the assumption of Lukan authorship.

Strikingly, the reference to Paul's being "swallowed" by the waves for "three days and the same number of nights" conflates Paul's shipwreck with Jonah's journey in the belly of the fish. For even if the detail of Paul's being in the deep can claim a textual source in 2 Cor 11:25

73. *Ep.* 1.6; Fontaine (ed and trans) 1967, 318. Subsequent citations of Sulpicius's Latin are from Fontaine's edition. Duval thought the use of *absorbeo* by Sulpicius here to describe the "swallowing" action of the sea indicates that Sulpicius is following Hilary's connection of Paul and Jonah, since Hilary uses the same word in the quotation from *In Constantium* 4 cited earlier in this section; Duval 1973, 495.

(ἐν τῷ βυθῷ), there is of course no indication that Paul was in the depths for the exact same length of time as Jonah (in 2 Cor 11:25 it is a day and a night). In this way, as noted previously in Zeno, Paul's shipwreck episode is drawn by Sulpicius into the typology between Jonah and Jesus (cf. Fontaine [ed and trans] 1969, 1138–39). There is, however, a connection distinctive to Paul and Jonah (and not to Jesus) which may explain why Sulpicius refers in this place to Paul as *gentium praedicator*. Both Paul and Jonah face their tempests as those commissioned with a message to Gentiles, and both voyages lead (circuitously) to the great Gentile imperial cities of their day.

Summary Analysis

Beginning potentially with Tertullian, who sees "Jonah and the apostles sailing," (*De Corona* 8.2), but more certainly with Hilary, who recognizes that "through Jonah and Paul [God] taught the faithful that life is in the sea" (*In Constantium* 4), a stream of patristic interpretation identifies a mimetic connection between the shipwreck of Paul in Acts 27 and Jonah's tempest. Zeno of Verona draws a connection between Jonah's and Paul's common experiences of "crying out" in prayer *de profundis* and being "spat out" from those depths, as well as the fact that this shared experience occurs because of their commission to preach to the leading Gentile cities of their day. Finally, Sulpicius Severus highlights this latter point of contact between Paul and Jonah by identifying the apostle as *gentium praedicator* and describes Paul's peril at sea as if Paul himself had been submerged beneath the waves for "three days and nights," as Jonah was.

Even though this interpretation, only found in Latin sources, may be more vulnerable than others to the objection that it derives from the "viral" influence of earlier patristic authors (in this case, potentially Tertullian), the exegetical evidence traced in Chapter Three suggests

these Latin authors may in fact have heard resonances present in the Acts of the Apostles itself.[74] This is true even though their interpretations, as expected, are developed creatively according to their own theological and rhetorical commitments.

Out of the Depths: Jonah and the Sinking Peter

We turn now to a final potential Jonah connection, one which forms an example of responsible theological and canonical reception of Matthew rather than part of the Evangelist's clear intentions. I observed briefly in the previous section, as well as in Chapter Four,[75] that Peter's sinking beneath the waves in Matt 14:28–33 is interpreted by some patristic writers as mimetically related to Jonah. This section first notes the association of Peter with Jonah in baptismal contexts in ancient Christian visual art before tracing the connection of Jonah with Jesus's rescue of Peter from drowning (Matt 14:28–33) in two patristic writers.

The Baptismal Jonah and Peter in Early Christian Art

Although the following evidence from ancient visual art is merely suggestive rather than conclusive, I include it here because of its value in attesting to potentially widespread perspectives on the significance of Jonah and Peter among ancient Christians. For his part, Jonah is consistently associated with baptism in early Christian visual art, as for instance in two of the "sacraments chambers" of the Catacombs of Callixtus, which are some of the very earliest extant Christian art. There, in chambers 21 and 22, the Jonah cycle is found alongside other scriptural texts, such as Moses's striking of the rock, as a symbol of baptism (Jensen 2011, 12–16). Peter himself is later often depicted as a baptizing figure in the same mold as this Moses, striking the rock and causing baptismal water to flow, although Peter of course also merits a wider range of

74. See Chapter Three pp. 124–129.

75. See Chapter Four pp. 189–191.

depictions.[76] The scene of Peter's walking on water and rescue from drowning in particular appears, like Jonah, to have acquired a baptismal significance early on, featuring already in the baptistery of the Christian building in Dura Europos (third century), as well as the baptistries of San Giovanni in Fonte in Naples' Basilica of Santa Restituta (late fourth century) and the Orthodox San Giovanni in Fonte in Ravenna (early fifth century).[77] The latter bears an inscription which specifically mentions Jesus's rescuing of Peter from drowning (Jensen 2011, 202). Tertullian, too, is aware if also suspicious of the potential baptismal connotations of this text (*De baptismo* 9, 12).

Furthermore, Peter is probably depicted on two major sarcophagi where the baptismal significance of Jonah is foregrounded. The oldest of these is the Santa Maria Antiqua Sarcophagus (usually dated mid-third century), which depicts among other things the Jonah cycle, John baptizing a diminutive Jesus with a dove flying overhead, and two fishermen emptying or perhaps mending their nets, probably a reference to the calling of the disciples (including, obviously, Peter) in the Gospels (e.g. Matt 4:18–22; Luke 5:1–11). The images are all united by water, which is poured by a river god at the far left of the carvings and flows all the way to the far right, so that the same body of water serves the Jonah cycle, Jesus's baptism, and

76. On the range of these Petrine depictions see e.g. Dresken-Weiland 2020. The baptismal scene in the Mamertine prison recounted in the later *Martyrdom of the Blessed Apostle Peter* of Ps.-Linus and the *Passion of Processus and Martinianus*, both of which build upon the *Acts of Peter*, may draw upon this already existing artistic tradition. It is, however, not often pointed out that those narratives do not record Peter striking the rock but instead as praying and making the sign of the cross and thus causing the water to flow. Cf. Dresken-Weiland 2020, 115–19; Thacker 2020, 253; Jensen 2024, 105–10. Relevant portion of Latin text of Ps.-Linus is in Lipsius et al. (eds) 1891, 6–7; that of *Processus and Martinianus* is in Franchi de' Cavalieri 1902, 48. In this sense, the association of Peter with baptism is not derived from merely from these later legends but also from his New Testament profile.

77. "Orthodox," i.e., non-Arian. The treatment in Jensen includes the author's own color photographs of the latter two baptistries alongside photos from the Dura-Europos collection at the Yale University Art Gallery; Jensen 2011, 182–84; 191–94; 198–204. On the walking on water scene at Dura-Europos see further Nicholls 2008, 135–44.

the fishing disciples.[78] The second of these is the Jonah sarcophagus now held in the Museo Pio Cristiano in the Vatican, typically dated late-third century.[79] The elegant carvings depict the Jonah cycle most prominently, while Noah in the ark with his dove floats amidst the same waters. Fishermen flank the scene, as do Lazarus and a shepherd at the top left and right, respectively. Directly above the Jonah cycle, Peter is depicted as striking the rock so that other figures may drink, and adjacent to this is carved the arrest of Peter.[80]

Although this is all, again, merely suggestive, particularly given the medium, it is interesting that Peter and Jonah do in fact emerge relatively early as prominent symbols of baptism. To be sure, other developments, such as the association of Peter with Moses, have influenced the artistic representation of Peter in baptismal contexts, particularly in the scene of his striking of the rock. Nevertheless, Peter's association with baptism also indicates something of the way his profile in the Gospels was understood by those who might view and appreciate visual depictions of the apostle. If the presence of the walking on water scene at the Dura Europos baptistery and other ancient baptisteries is any indication, the Matthean account of Peter's walking on water and rescue from beneath the waves might have played a role in the formation of these baptismal associations with Peter. In this sense, Peter's profile in the Gospels, including his rescue from beneath the waves, is understood in ancient (third-century) Christian visual art as commensurable with the baptismal significance of Jonah/the Sign of Jonah.

78. See the image and description in Jensen 2011, 46–51.

79. See the image and description in Jensen 2024, 101–3.

80. On the identification of these two scenes as Peter (and not Moses) striking the rock and as Peter's arrest (the two scenes are commonly paired), see further Dijkstra 2016, 351–56; *pace* Jensen 2024, 102.

Zeno of Verona's *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah*

Moving on from the less exact science of interpreting visual representations of texts and figures, we return to Zeno of Verona's *Sermon on the Prophet Jonah* (360s CE). This text, as anticipated earlier, directly associates Peter's rescue from drowning with Jonah. Readers may recall that Zeno binds Peter, Paul, and Jonah together as those who uttered the psalmist's cry, *De profundis clamaui ad te, Domine* (Ps 129:1). Peter is in fact the first of the three mentioned by Zeno:

> This, therefore, crying out from the deep, Peter in like manner obtained from the Lord, that through the slippery gulfs of the deep sea and the surface of the smooth liquid untrod by human steps, in which the frightened traveler was swallowed, he might pass through and at the same time escape (*Hoc igitur e profundo clamans similiter Petrus impetrauit a domino, ut profundi maris lubricos sinus insubditaque humanis gressibus liquidi aequoris terga, quibus uiator trepidus absorbebatur, et perambularet partier et euaderet*). (*Tract.* 1.34.1 / 2.17.1)

By noting that Peter not only "passes through" or "traverses" (*perambulo*) the water but also "escapes" (*euado*) it, Zeno highlights Peter's experience of sinking beneath the waves. This aligns Peter closely with the experiences of Jonah and Paul. The fear of both Peter and the sailors with Jonah is described using the verb "to tremble" (*trepido*), which draws Peter's emotional reaction and that of the sailors together, more closely identifying the two stories (1.34.1–2 / 2.17.1–2). This "trembling" or fearful reaction is a point of commonality between the walking on water story and Jonah that is absent from Zeno's recounting of Paul's shipwreck.

Thus, a close connection is drawn by Zeno not only between Paul's shipwreck and Jonah, but also between Jonah and Peter's rescue from drowning after sinking beneath the waves (cf. Duval 1973, 495). Zeno also pairs Jonah and Peter in *On Fear* 5–6 (2.2 / 1.8), where the connection is Jonah's fearlessness to be thrown into the sea and Peter's courage to walk upon the waves, which is not completely lost even when he begins to sink. Although the association is less

explicit in this latter instance, it reflects Zeno's close association of Jonah with Peter's rescue from the depths.

Chromatius of Aquileia's *Tractates* 52

Chromatius of Aquileia probably wrote his *Tractates on Matthew* within a decade on either side of the turn of the fifth century during his time in the office of bishop of Aquileia, most likely after the publication of Jerome's commentary on Matthew in 398 CE (Williams 2011, 194–97). Chromatius treats the subject of the Sign of Jonah in several places, taking up the two Sign of Jonah pericopes in Matthew (12:38–42 and 16:1–4) in *Tract.* 50A and 54, respectively (see further Beatrice 2011). I alluded earlier in this chapter to his agreement with the view that the Sign of Jonah involves the movement from death and third-day resurrection to the preaching to the Gentiles (*Tractates* 50A). However, the text that concerns us presently is Chromatius's treatment of the walking on water pericope in *Tract.* 52. Reflecting on the salvation of Peter from sinking, Chromatius writes:

> Nor is it surprising that the Lord delivered his disciple faithfully crying out to him from the waves of the sea, being the same who long ago recalled Jonah not only from the waves, but from the depths of the sea and from the belly of the whale after three days unscathed (*Nec mirum si Dominus discipulum suum ad se fideliter clamantem de maris fluctibus liberauit, qui iamdudum Ionam non solum de fluctibus, sed de profundo maris ac de uentre coeti post triduum incolumen reuocauit*). (*Tract.* 52.4; my translation; Étaix and Lemarié [eds] 1974, 457)

The relationship of *mimēsis* between Jonah and Peter is explicitly based on the analogy between their experiences of being rescued from beneath the sea. For Chromatius, the divine identity of Jesus is obviously also crucial in that the same Lord who saved Jonah is the one who saved Peter.

Summary Analysis

Zeno of Verona and Chromatius of Aquileia directly connect the salvation of Peter from drowning in Matt 14:28–33 to Jonah. Ancient Christian visual art attests to the baptismal significance of both Peter's walking on water and Jonah/the Sign of Jonah for the ancient church while occasionally grouping Peter and Jonah together in baptismal contexts. The association of Peter with Jonah occurs in a broader milieu in which the maritime affairs of Peter, Paul, and Jonah are seen as belonging together in a kind of typological or imitative relationship.[81] The patristic evidence for this Peter-Jonah connection is, if not less extensive, admittedly in the case of visual art less direct than the patristic testimony to some other readings in this chapter. On the other hand, the witness of visual art arguably speaks to the widespread intelligibility of the Peter-Jonah baptismal pairing in a way that textual sources could not. Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter Four, the exegetical evidence for this connection is also somewhat more indirect in the sense that it involves reading the episode in light of apparent connections to other Matthean texts. For this reason, I concluded there that this forms an instance of intelligent canonical and theological reception of Matthew, if not finally capturing the Evangelist's clear, original intent.[82]

Chapter Conclusion

Patristic authors discern connections of a typological or mimetic (i.e., imitative) nature to Jonah/the Sign of Jonah across a range of places in Luke-Acts and Matthew, including the Stilling of the Storm (Matt 8:23–27; Luke 8:22–25; parr. Mark 4:35–41); Peter's rescue from

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81. As in Tertullian's *De Corona* 8.2, Hilary's *In Constantium* 4, Paulinus of Nola's *Epistles* 49.9–11, and Sulpicius Severus's *Epistles* 1.6, which contrasts Peter's walking atop the waves with Paul's Jonah-like rescue from the depths. The phenomenon is not purely Western, however, as the Ps.-Chrysostomic *Quod mari* (treated in the first section of this chapter) associates the shipwrecks of Paul detailed in 2 Cor 11:25, interpreted mystically, with the typological potential of Jonah (PG 64, 22); so, rightly, Duval 1973, 495.

82. See Chapter Four pp. 189–191.

drowning (Matt 14:28–33); Simeon's "sign contradicted" (Luke 2:34); the Lukan Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47); and Paul's Voyage to Rome (Acts 27). The most thoroughly attested of these are the Storm Stilling and Lukan Opening of the Scriptures, but all of them are supported by more than two patristic sources. While these ancient authors creatively extend these intertextual Jonah connections beyond the Evangelists' own usage of Jewish Scripture, they nevertheless depend on Lukan and Matthean interpretative moves. This analysis supports the arguments of the previous chapters by demonstrating the effects of those interpretative moves on real-world readers and hearers of Matthew and Luke-Acts.

Conclusion

The Sign of Jonah proves to be more important for both Luke-Acts and Matthew than previously recognized. This importance is evident both in the extent of its influence throughout these texts and its centrality to the core kerygmatic events of both Matthew and Luke-Acts, distinctive as their formulations of those key events are. The enormous popularity of Jonah in ancient Christian textual and material culture thus stands in greater continuity with the New Testament Jonah than scholarship has typically perceived.

The Matthean and Lukan Jonah are also more thoroughly grounded in the ancient Jewish reception of the prophet than has previously been appreciated. Despite much existing opinion, for both Matthew and Luke the Sign of Jonah intends to provoke its Jewish addressees to repentance. This is consistent not only with the typical reception of Jonah in the ancient Jewish sources but also with key themes of Jonah the book. It is ironic that much New Testament scholarship has understood the Sign of Jonah as a sign against Israel, marking inevitable condemnation or even the turning of salvation history away from Israel and towards Gentiles. For precisely what Jonah himself knew is that Israel's God relents from punishing (Jonah 4:2). As the Ps.-Philonic homilist has Jonah put it: "I knew that God makes his peace with those who pray: He does not tolerate tears and does not stand the mourning of sufferers. He changes the gloomy expression of his face and grants to the words of prayer deliverance from death" (*De Jona* 42.3–4).[1] If this is true for the Ninevites, how much more for Israel itself, considering the consistent remembrance of Jonah as a paradigmatic figure among the catalogue of God's rescued? When for instance Eleazar remembers God's salvation of Israel from peril, Jonah's

1. On this theme in *De Jona*, see further Chapter Two pp. 57–60.

deliverance features among illustrious examples: the Red Sea crossing, defeat of Sennacherib's armies, Daniel in the den of lions, and the Three Young Men in the furnace (3 Macc. 6:4–8).[2] Eleazar's prayer is representative of the wider ancient Jewish reception of Jonah, which does not sacrifice the particularity of Israel's election in its appreciation of Jonah's portrayal of the universal love of Israel's God for humankind.

To summarize these tendencies in Jonah's ancient Jewish reception, traced in Chapter Two as guided by three comparators: (1) Ancient Jewish reception of Jonah typically foregrounds the responsiveness of divine mercy to repentance against the horizon of judgment as a real possibility. (2) Ancient Jewish authors usually understand the salvation of Nineveh as affirming rather than subverting the election of Israel. That is, Jonah is consistently remembered as a paradigm of God's rescue of his own people. The Ninevites' repentance is understood as exemplary rather than competitive with Israel's salvation. Finally, (3) ancient Jewish readers of Jonah regularly integrate Jonah's deliverance by the great fish/sea monster into the whole Jonah story, viewing the book's themes and plot as deeply interwoven. The consistent reception of Jonah as a paradigm of God's deliverance of Israel suggests that the Sign of Jonah likely also recalls this miraculous deliverance in the context of the fuller Jonah narrative. This Jewish reception places a much greater burden of proof on those who take the Sign of Jonah as a fundamentally negative sign against Israel than is usually acknowledged.

The irony of this scholarly tendency is deepened when one recognizes the centrality of the Sign of Jonah to the central events of Luke-Acts and Matthew. Luke's distinctive turning of that message is nowhere clearer than in the climactic Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47). Jonah is the only scriptural figure who can plausibly be said to have performed the three verbal

2. See Chapter Two pp. 38–42.

actions said there to encapsulate the Messiah's paradoxical vocation: suffering (παθεῖν), rising on the third day (ἀναστῆναι… τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ), and proclaiming repentance (κηρυχθῆναι…μετάνοιαν) to Gentile nations, *in that order*. He is certainly the single scriptural figure credited in the Gospels with "preaching" (κήρυγμα) that leads Gentiles (or indeed Jews) to "repent" (μετανοέω) (Luke 11:32 // Matt 12:41). Luke had earlier rendered the Sign of Jonah enigmatically, leading readers to expect a future unfolding of a sign given to the entire generation of Jesus's Jewish contemporaries: "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be to this generation" (11:30). Luke's risen Jesus reveals the Sign of Jonah as the core kerygmatic sequence of death, resurrection on the third day, and subsequent proclamation of repentance to all nations.[3]

That Jonah/the Sign of Jonah forms a major intertext for this central Lukan claim about the prophetic witness of Jewish Scripture has not been recognized in scholarship until this point. At most, Jonah was thought to be part of a wide-ranging "third day motif." Patristic sources noticed a deeper connection between this Lukan text and the Sign of Jonah, however, and the argument of my thesis has confirmed and strengthened these ancient authors' insights.[4] Allusions to Jonah at the two most crucial boundary-crossing episodes in Acts, Peter's journey from Joppa to Cornelius's Gentile household (Acts 9:36–11:18) and Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27), further confirm the function of the apostolic preaching as part of the Sign of Jonah. Recalling that Jonah's Sign is addressed to Israel allows readers of Luke to recognize the Gentile mission

3. See Chapter Three pp. 106–119.

4. See Chapter Five pp. 197–234.

in Acts as a positive sign given for Israel's salvation rather than for their rejection or as a resignation of hope.[5]

The fuller picture of the Sign of Jonah clarifies that the better-known but not well-understood Jonah allusions earlier in Luke's Gospel, during the Stilling of the Storm (8:22–25), foreshadow the Lukan Sign of Jonah. This epiphanic text has the sleeping Jesus awakened by troubled sailors and taking action that silences a tempest en route to distinctively Gentile lands. Then comes the sole episode in which the Lukan Jesus commissions someone who "preaches/proclaims" (κηρύσσω) in Gentile territory prior to the resurrection (Luke 8:39). The events arguably anticipate the threefold sequence of the Lukan Sign of Jonah, further attesting to the kerygmatic centrality of Jonah's Sign for Luke.[6]

The Matthean Storm Stilling, with its clear Jonah allusions, emphasizes its own distinctive foreshadowing of Jesus's death and resurrection even more so through its description of the sea-storm as a "great earthquake" (σεισμὸς μέγας, Matt 8:23). This anticipates the σεισμὸς μέγας that accompanies the rolling away of the stone at Jesus's tomb (28:2).[7] The Matthean Pharisees also remember the Sign of Jonah precisely when, according to the Matthean version, it is underway. When Jesus is buried, they request for the tomb of Jesus to be guarded "three days" (τρεῖς ἡμέρας, 27:63), worrying that if the body is stolen, "the last deception would be worse than the first" (ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη πλάνη χείρων τῆς πρώτης, 27:64). These phrases deliberately recall the Sign of Jonah and return of the unclean spirit in Matt 12:38–45, reminding readers that just then the Son of Man is going to be "three days (τρεῖς ἡμέρας) and three nights in the heart of

5. See Chapter Three pp. 130–133.
6. See Chapter Three pp. 133–148.

7. See Chapter Four pp. 181–189.

the earth" (12:40).[8] From a Farrer Hypothesis perspective, I have argued Luke would have seen Matthew's Sign of Jonah as prematurely "going public" with passion-resurrection predictions before it is epistemologically possible to understand the scriptural witness to the Messiah's resurrection, i.e., after Easter. Hence comes Luke's alteration of Matthew's clear explanation of the Sign in terms of Jonah's three days and nights in the fish's belly (Matt 12:40) to his more enigmatic reference to Jonah's "becoming" a Sign to the Ninevites (Luke 11:30).[9]

In further contrast to Luke, Matthew gives no indication, either in the Sign pericopes themselves (12:38–42; 16:1–4) or in the allusive references to Jonah in the Storm Stilling (8:23–27), that Jonah's Sign involves missionizing Gentiles. The Matthean Storm Stilling, for instance, leads into an abbreviated and largely unsuccessful excursion into the Gentile Gadarenes, contrasting sharply with the Markan and Lukan versions of that episode (Matt 8:28–34 parr.).[10] The Matthean Jonah Sign also addresses the authorities, particularly the Matthean "scribes and Pharisees," more pointedly than Luke's version, although through them it addresses the wider generation of Jesus's contemporaries (Matt 12:46).[11]

Both Matthew's and Luke's Sign of Jonah pericopes adopt a strongly Moses-influenced discourse about "this generation" (Luke 11:29 // Matt 12:39), drawing upon this severe Moses tradition to characterize Jesus's exasperation with his interlocutors in terms of Moses's troubles with the people of Israel in the wilderness. Crucially, Jesus's own disciples are addressed as a "faithless and perverse generation" (γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, Matt 17:17 // Luke 9:41), recalling the Song of Moses's rebuke of Israel as a "crooked and perverse generation" (γενεὰ

8. See Chapter Four p. 162.
9. See Chapter Three pp. 102–105.
10. See Chapter Four pp. 187–189.
11. See Chapter Four pp. 165–174.

σκολιὰ καὶ διεστραμμένη, Deut 32:5 LXX). The disciples of Jesus are of course not irrevocably condemned by this. Matthew's distinctive reference to "a wicked *and adulterous* generation" (γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλίς) in the Sign of Jonah has a very similar ring to this Deuteronomic admonishment, reflecting also the language of marital infidelity characteristic of the canonical prophets' invective against a wayward Israel (Ἰωνᾶ *τοῦ προφήτου*, 12:39, emphasis mine).

Matthew's Sign of Jonah pericope also likely echoes the Isaianic episode in which Ahaz is offered a sign "as deep as Sheol or as high as heaven" (הַעְמֵק שְׁאָלָה אוֹ הַגְבֵּהַ לְמָעְלָה), or as the LXX renders, "in the depths or in the heights" (εἰς βάθος ἢ εἰς ὕψος, Isa 7:11 LXX). Although Ahaz timidly refuses to "test" (πειράζω) the Lord, he is nevertheless promised a σημεῖον of God's good will: the birth of Immanuel to the παρθένος/עַלְמָה (Isa 7:14; See Matt 1:23; 28:20). This echo, along with the Moses connection, further cements Matthew's Sign of Jonah as given with a purpose of provoking repentance, even for the Matthean Pharisees, who are the subject of a sustained and hyperbolic polemic in the Gospel.[12]

The Moses theming of the Lukan Sign of Jonah pericope is even more pronounced, such as in Jesus's reference to casting out demons "by the finger of God" (ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ, 11:20; see Exod 31:18; Deut 9:10 LXX). This suggests that the request for a sign may itself draw on expectations of the Deuteronomic Prophet-like-Moses (Deut 18:15, 18). Moses is the sign worker par excellence (Exod 7:3, 9; 11:9–10 LXX; Deut 4:34 LXX; cf. Acts 3:22). It is, therefore, crucial that the Peter of Acts offers the gathered people of Israel repentance precisely on the basis of Jesus's being raised as that Prophet-like-Moses (Acts 3:12–26).

The sign requested of Jesus is specified as cosmic and undeniable. The Sign of Jonah, invisible insofar as it pertains to the resurrection of Jesus, is at best a paradoxical acquiescence to

12. See Chapter Four p. 170

this request. Just as Jonah's deliverance from the fish/sea monster was invisible, so is the renewed Sign of Jonah invisible to its addressees, except insofar as the apostolic preaching is visible for Luke. The pairing of Moses or the Red Sea crossing with Jonah in many ancient Jewish sources proved illuminating on this front, emphasizing the salience of Jonah's rescue beneath the waters.[13] The Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* offered a particularly fruitful point of comparison in which Jonah becomes a "witness" to the invisible sufferings he bore under the sea, leading to his rebirth. This makes Jonah an example by which one comes to trust in the resurrection of one's own body from the earth (*De Jona* 20.4; 25.5).[14] For both Matthew and Luke, the Sign of Jonah captures the paradoxical nature of the death and resurrection of Jesus as a response to the sign request, one that does not yield to the demand for irrefutable proof but does issue a fresh challenge and opportunity for repentance once it is given.

The differing roles of Gentiles within the narrative present in the Matthean and Lukan versions of the Sign of Jonah are consistent with broader emphases in Matthew and Luke-Acts. It is natural for Matthew, given its emphasis on Israel's salvation, that the Queen of the South and the Ninevites would function largely to shame and provoke Israel by contrast (Matt 12:41–42). While their status as Gentiles is important for both Luke and Matthew, the mention of Solomon's wisdom is also coherent with the exorcisms that lead to the Beelzebul controversy as well as the acclamation of Jesus as Son of David in nearby Matthean context (Matt 12:23). Jonah's own Galilean and Zebulunite associations might even have partially inspired Matthew's interest in the prophet given his concern for the restoration of the Galilean tribes (4:12–17).[15] This is not of

13. E.g. 3 Macc. 6:8; Fragment Targum and Neofiti to Deut 30:12–13; Targum Jonathan to Jonah 2:6; *De Jona* 25; Huqoq Synagogue mosaics.

14. See Chapter Three p. 94 and Chapter Four p. 168.

15. See Chapter Four pp. 178–181.

course to say Matthew is uninterested in the mission to the nations (cf. 28:19–20), but only that the Sign of Jonah is for Matthew identical with the death and resurrection of Jesus after three days in the earth's heart. Luke's distinctive emphasis on the Gentile mission, encompassing most of the Acts of the Apostles, renders natural his version of Jonah's Sign as the full kerygmatic sequence of death, resurrection on the third day, *and* proclamation of repentance to all nations.

Both are, nevertheless, fully immersed in ancient Jewish modes of interpreting Jonah, as noted earlier. The thesis has established the following specific points of contact between the New Testament and ancient Jewish Jonah, although none are genetically related outside their common dependence on the book of Jonah itself. Both Matthew and Luke-Acts share (1) with Tobit the connection of Jonah's "great fish" with exorcism;[16] (2) the connections between Jonah and Moses or the Red Sea crossing with numerous ancient Jewish sources;[17] (3) with Josephus the mutual interest in the narrative of Jonah's tempest;[18] and (4) with the Ps.-Philonic *De Jona* the significance of Jonah's fish for the Ninevites' repentance.[19] Matthew, furthermore, explicitly shares: (5) the mythological function of Jonah's κῆτος with Jos. Asen. (12.9–10); and (6) uptake of the "belly/womb" (κοιλία) motif woven through Jonah LXX with *De Jona.*[20]

This grounds both Luke and Matthew as interpreters of Jonah thoroughly within Jewish traditions. Later supersessionist and anti-Jewish interpretations of Jonah among ancient Christian authors, as well as modern ones, cannot rightly be laid at the feet of Matthew and Luke-Acts if properly situated in their historical contexts. These tragic developments belong to the regrettable

16. Tobit 6:3, 8; Matt 12:22–45; Luke 11:14–32.

17. See footnote 13 above.

18. *Ant.* 9.208–214; Matt 8:23–27; Luke 8:22–25; Acts 27.

19. *De Jona* 20.4; 25.5; 46.4; Luke 11:29–32; Matt 12:38–42.

20. *De Jona* 7.5; 16.4; 17:1; Matt 12:40; but see Luke 11:27.

accidents and actions of later history and later historical actors. I hope this thesis, which has addressed a New Testament *crux* still too often subjected to readings on a continuum with such unfortunate interpretations, can go some small way in redressing them. From a theological perspective, the issue of how one handles the crucial dialectics of justice and mercy, election and universality, has important ramifications for both Jews and Gentiles, stake-holding communities and the world alike.

On a further methodological note, the thesis has also demonstrated the value of attending to ancient reception history in the detection of scriptural allusions. The fact that the Matthean and Lukan receptions of Jonah proved generative for many of their ancient readers, as traced in Chapter Five, offers robust support for the exegesis of Luke-Acts and Matthew in Chapters Three and Four. One grants of course the effect of the *intentio operis* of the canonical Old and New Testaments on these patristic readers, as well as their own theological and rhetorical interests and commitments. Their exegesis works creatively with a two-testament canon. But the *intentio auctoris* of Matthew and Luke appears to have been determinative for key elements of the ancient reception of New Testament Jonah allusions. Chapter Five's *Wirkungsgeschichte* analysis, therefore, supports the argument for the Sign of Jonah's greater importance and influence in Luke-Acts and Matthew by demonstrating the effects of their receptions of Jonah on real-world, chronologically proximate readers and hearers.

As a window onto broader early Christian scriptural reception, potentially significant is the similarity of Luke's Opening of the Scriptures (24:44–47) to the very early Pauline *traditum* in 1 Cor 15:3–4 regarding the death and resurrection of Christ according to the Scriptures. As noted elsewhere in the thesis, ancient Christian interpretation also recognized the influence of

Jonah in the 1 Corinthians passage.[21] However, it is not possible to say how early, prior to Luke, Jonah became associated with formulations of the basic Christian proclamation about Jesus's resurrection on the third day. As a prophetically or typologically interpreted narrative, Jonah may have been important from early days in holding together the Christian proclamation in its sequential logic. In addition to poetic texts like Isaiah and the Psalms, prophetic scriptural narrative may therefore soon have been understood as integral. One cannot conclude this with certainty, but it is plausible in light of the results of this investigation. It was true at least by the time Matthew and Luke wrote.

On a related note, the thesis has not directly addressed the much-debated question of what a Sign of Jonah might have meant to the historical Jesus, insofar as such knowledge is available to us by the historical method. If the saying is basically authentic, as many think, then the ancient Jewish reception of Jonah as well as its Matthean and Lukan reception traced here will have to be considered afresh in determining its dominical meaning. Rootedness in an authentic saying of Jesus would provide as good a launching point as any for the Sign of Jonah's eventual kerygmatic centrality and influence.

Furthermore, if recent contributions are correct that Jesus of Nazareth plausibly envisioned, subsequent to his impending death, a second coming attendant on the general resurrection of the dead,[22] then an authentic Sign of Jonah saying predicting resurrection is also not unthinkable. But the ancient Jewish emphasis on Jonah's mission as opening space for repentance cuts against an identification of the Sign of Jonah with the Parousia at the end of the age. Such a Jonah parallel suggests, instead, the kind of individualized conception of resurrection

21. E.g. 3 Cor. 5.28–31; Tertullian's *De anima* 55.1–2; Cyril of Jerusalem *Catechetical Lectures* 14.20; Chrysostom's *Hom. 1 Cor.* 48.4. See p. 118.

22. Allison 2021; esp. 189–90; 2025, 77–79; Ferda 2024.

within history that is deemed unlikely by many historical Jesus scholars. Nevertheless, patterns of individual resurrection are pervasive in Jewish Scripture, and Jonah can easily be read as one such instance.[23]

If Jesus of Nazareth envisioned an individual path of suffering and rescue leading to Israel's salvation, such as that traveled by Joseph for instance,[24] then Jonah provides as apt a comparison as any, and of a Galilean prophet, moreover. This may be particularly true given Jonah's role as a proclaimer of divine justice and mercy. If after initial disappointment Jesus envisioned a delay in which space was made for Israel's repentance *before* the culmination of the eschatological scenario but *after* his individual rescue from death,[25] Jonah's story could have held even greater appeal. I leave it to others to take up this question in light of the new evidence provided by this thesis.

23. On Jonah among patterns of resurrection, see further Levenson 2006, 41–42, 95–97.

24. On Joseph, see Levenson 1993, 143–69.

25. Cf. Allison 2025, 61–68, in which the parables of growth and the importance of Israel's repentance in ushering in the end are highlighted as evidence for Jesus's envisioning of an interim period after his death and before the end. Cf. also the argument of Ferda 2024 that Jesus of Nazareth envisioned a pattern of death >> Parousia rather than death >> individual resurrection >> Parousia. But can the Son of Man, who in the interim plays the role of the delaying Master (Luke 12:41–48; Matt 24:45–51) and the journeying Man (Matt 25:14–30 // Luke 19:11–27), really do so while dead for an apocalyptically minded first-century Jew such as Jesus of Nazareth? Cf. also the development of the Sign of Jonah within the delay motif, although differently, in Theissen and Merz 2003, 237–51.

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