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Three Days and One-half

Jesus said to the Jews, *I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life* (Jn 8:12). This is the generation to see and experience the promised Messiah and first one to receive light which would give them eternal life. However, only a remnant of the Jews accepted Jesus as the Messiah (Rom 11:5).

The Jews, by the leaders or their directives, hounded and questioned Jesus through out his ministry, until finally they felt confident enough to put him to death. On one occasion, the Scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus, *Master, we would see a sign from you. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth* (Mt 12:38-40).

The three days and three nights never made sense to me as being connected to the cross. Every time Jesus mention his death and resurrection, he always made it clear that on the “third day” he would be raised again. Nights were never mention in the same context. I felt like the three days and nights must refer somehow to the entire ministry of Christ, but I still had a feeling of there being more to it. There was, and it became more apparent when connected with a prophecy in Revelation, chapter 11.

Revelation 11:9, 11: 9 *And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves (or, tombs)..... 11 And after [the] three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

As we understand today, Revelation 11 deals with the message going back to the Jews, after a remnant of Gentiles have come to the fullness of God (Eph 3). Jesus told the people that the Jewish leaders, *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness* (Mt 23:27). While the language is different in Revelation 11, it lends to the same idea. At first the Jews do not receive the message - i.e. they do not suffer the truth to be planted in their graves. Later, a remnant see and accept the message.

Romans 6:4-5: 4 *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

Galatians 2:20: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me...*

When the sign of three days and nights, plus the three and one-half days are connected to the parable in Genesis one, then they make perfect sense. Jesus was the light of the world by his presence (Jn 9:5). The three days and

nights represent the Jews experience in that generation. They could not get beyond day three of creation week. That is, the light Jesus gave them remained earthly in their understanding. The three days and nights were not about Jesus and the cross, but had to do with what the Jews would do with the teachings of Jesus during his entire ministry.

However, in the last generation, a significant remnant will get past day three of creation week, and into the light of day four, when the Sun of righteousness (Mal 4:2) arises in their hearts, with healing in his wings; moreover the light of the moon (law - Jer 31:35) is also put in its proper places in their understanding. *But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter* (Rom 7:6).

Whatever interpretation of scripture, the church will be the test as to its accuracy. God uses all our gifts together to move us forward in the truth. So, be open always for things to change or be adjusted, as we move closer to the end. God bless you all.