



# SUNDAY CLASS

3/15/09

## Key Verses: Matthew 16: 1-4



*None of Christ's miracles are recorded in this chapter, but four of his discourses.*

*Here is, I. A conference with the Pharisees, who challenged him to show them a sign from heaven (v. 1-4).*

*II. Another with his disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees (v. 5-12).*

*III. Another with them concerning himself, as the Christ, and concerning his church built upon him (v. 13-20).*

*IV. Another concerning his sufferings for them, and theirs for him (v. 21-28). And all these are written for our learning.*

## Matthew 16:1 (New International Version)

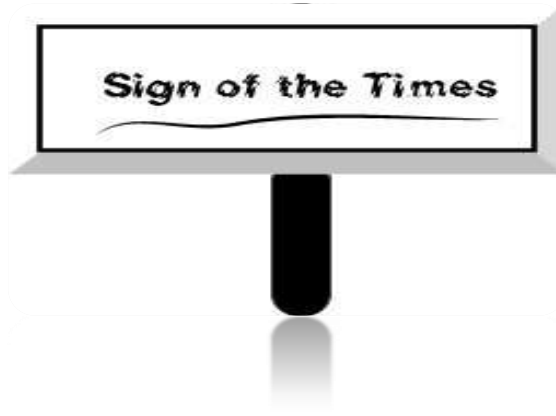
### The Demand for a Sign

**<sup>1</sup>The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven**

We have here Christ's discourse with the Pharisees and Sadducees, men at variance among themselves, as appears Acts 23:7-8, and yet unanimous in their opposition to Christ; because his doctrine did equally overthrow the errors and heresies of the Sadducees, who denied the existence of spirits and a future state; and the pride, tyranny, and hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who were the great imposters of the traditions of the elders. Christ and Christianity meet with opposition on all hands.

### Acts 23:7-8 (New International Version)

**<sup>7</sup>When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. <sup>8</sup>(The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.)**



### Matthew 12:38-39 (New International Version)

#### The Sign of Jonah

<sup>38</sup>Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you."

<sup>39</sup>He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

*Some other sign than what they had yet had. They had great plenty of signs; every miracle Christ wrought was a sign, for no man could do what he did unless God were with him. But this will not serve, they must have a sign of their own choosing; they despised those signs which relieved the necessity of the sick and sorrowful, and insisted upon some sign which gratify the curiosity of the proud. It is fit that the proofs of divine revelation should be chosen by the wisdom of God, not by the follies and fancies of men. The evidence that is given is sufficient to satisfy an unprejudiced understanding, but was not intended to please a vain humor. Ant it is an instance of the deceitfulness of the heart, to think that we should be wrought upon by the means and advantages which we have*

not, while we slight those which we have. If we hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would we be wrought upon though one rose from the dead.

### Luke 16:19-31 (New International Version)

#### The Rich Man and Lazarus

**<sup>19</sup>"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. <sup>20</sup>At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup>and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. <sup>22</sup>"The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup>In hell,<sup>[a]</sup> where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. <sup>24</sup>So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'<sup>25</sup>"But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup>And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' <sup>27</sup>"He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, <sup>28</sup>for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' <sup>29</sup>"Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' <sup>30</sup>" 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' <sup>31</sup>"He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' "**

### Mark 8:11-21 (New International Version)

<sup>11</sup>The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. <sup>12</sup>He sighed deeply and said, "Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to it." <sup>13</sup>Then he left them, got back into the boat and crossed to the other side.

#### The Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod

<sup>14</sup>The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. <sup>15</sup>"Be careful," Jesus warned them. "Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod." They discussed this with one another and said, "It is because we have no bread." Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? <sup>18</sup>Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don't you remember? <sup>19</sup>When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" "Twelve," they replied. "And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of

pieces did you pick up?"

They answered, "Seven."

<sup>21</sup>He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

### [Luke 12:54-56 \(New International Version\)](#)

#### [Interpreting the Times](#)

<sup>54</sup>He said to the crowd: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. <sup>55</sup>And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. <sup>56</sup>Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time?"

### [Luke 11:16 \(New International Version\)](#)

<sup>16</sup>Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.

### [1 Corinthians 1:22 \(New International Version\)](#)

<sup>22</sup>Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom,

### [1 Corinthians 1:22-24 \(New International Version\)](#)

<sup>22</sup>Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup>but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup>but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

### [Romans 10:8-9 \(New International Version\)](#)

<sup>8</sup>**But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,"<sup>[a]</sup> that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: <sup>9</sup>That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.**

### [Hebrews 12:18-24 \(New International Version\)](#)

<sup>18</sup>**You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; <sup>19</sup>to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, <sup>20</sup>because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned."<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>21</sup>The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."<sup>[b]</sup>**

**<sup>22</sup>But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, <sup>23</sup>to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, <sup>24</sup>to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.**

*1 Corinthians 10:9 (New International Version)*

**<sup>9</sup>We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes.**

*Matthew 16:2 (New International Version)*

**<sup>2</sup>He replied,<sup>[a]</sup> "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,'**

*Matthew 16:3 (New International Version)*

**<sup>3</sup>and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.**

*Christ's reply to this demand; lest they should be wise in their own conceit, he answered these fools according to their folly, Proverbs 26:5.*

*In his answer, 1. He condemns their overlooking of the signs they had, v. 2, 3.*

*They were seeking for the signs of the kingdom of God, when it was already among them. The Lord was in this place, and they knew it not. Thus their unbelieving ancestors, when miracles were their daily bread, asked, Is the Lord among us, or is he not?*

*To expose this, he observes to them,*

*(1.) Their skillfulness and sagacity in other things, particularly in natural prognostications of the weather; "You know that a red sky over-night is a presage of fair weather, and a red sky in the morning of foul weather." There are common rules drawn from observation and experience, by which it is easy to foretell very probably what weather it will be. When second causes have begun to work, we may easily guess at their issue, so uniform is nature in its motions, and so consistent with itself. We know not the balancing of the clouds (Job 37:16), but we may spell something from the faces of them. This gives no countenance at all to the wild and ridiculous predictions of the astrologers, the star-gazers, and the monthly prognosticators (Isa. 47:13) concerning the weather long before, with which weak and foolish people are imposed upon; we are sure, in general, that seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, shall not cease. But as to the particulars, till, by the weather-*

*glasses, or otherwise, we perceive the immediate signs and harbingers of the change of weather, it is not for us to know, no, not that concerning the times and seasons. Let it suffice, that it shall be what weather pleases God; and that which pleases God, should not displease us.*

*(2.) Their stupidity in the concerns of their souls;*

Can ye not discern the signs of the times?

*[1.] "Do you not see that the Messiah is come?" The sceptre was departed from Judah, Daniel's weeks were just expiring, and yet they regarded not. The miracles Christ wrought, and the gathering of the people to him, were plain indications that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, that this was the day of their visitation.*

**\*\*\*Note, First, There are signs of the times, by which wise and upright men are enabled to make moral prognostications, and so far to understand the motions and methods of Providence, as from thence to take their measures, and to know what Israel ought to do, as the men of Issachar, as the physician from some certain symptoms finds a crisis formed.**

*Secondly, There are many who are skillful enough in other things, and yet cannot or will not discern the day of their opportunities, are not aware of the wind when it is fair for them, and so let slip the gale. See Jeremiah 8:7; Isaiah 1:3.*

*Thirdly, It is great hypocrisy, when we slight the signs of God's ordaining, to seek for signs of our own prescribing.*

*[2.] "Do not you foresee your own ruin coming for rejecting him?"*

*You will not entertain the gospel of peace, and can you not evidently discern that hereby you pull an inevitable destruction upon your own heads?"*

**\*\*\*Note, It is the undoing of multitudes, that they are not aware what will be the end of their refusing Christ.**

### ***Matthew 16:4 (New International Version)***

***<sup>4</sup>A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away.***

*He refuses to give them any other sign (v. 4), as he had done before in the same words, Matt. 12:39.*

***Those that persist in the same iniquities, must expect to meet with the same reproofs.***

Luke 11:29 (New International Version)

The Sign of Jonah

<sup>29</sup>As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.

Matthew 4:13-16 (New International Version)

<sup>13</sup>Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali— <sup>14</sup>to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

Matthew 21:17 (New International Version)

<sup>17</sup>And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

He refers them to the sign of the prophet Jonas, which should yet be given them; his resurrection from the dead, and his preaching by his apostles to the Gentiles; these were reserved for the last and highest evidences of his divine mission.

**\*\*\*Note, Though the fancies of proud men shall not be humored, yet the faith of the humble shall be supported, and the unbelief of them that perish left for ever inexcusable, and every mouth shall be stopped.**

This discourse broke off abruptly; he left them and departed. Christ will not tarry long with those that tempt him, but justly withdraws from those that are disposed to quarrel with him. He left them as irreclaimable; Let them alone. He left them to themselves, left them in the hand of their own counsels; so he gave them up to their own hearts' lust.

To see the Sign of Times Chart go to [http://www.ebccnet.com/lcharts/redrawn-b-w-charts/signs\\_of\\_the\\_times\\_bw](http://www.ebccnet.com/lcharts/redrawn-b-w-charts/signs_of_the_times_bw) and learn more.

