

Matthew 16

The Sign of Jonah

Mat 16:1 And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test Him they asked Him to show them a sign from Heaven. **2** He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' **3** And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. **4** An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So He left them and departed.

- After Jesus “went to the region of Magdala (*Gk.3093- the tower*)” (*15:39*) once again, although possibly another group of Pharisees along with some Sadducees, His Messiahship is being questioned by asking Him to ‘perform’. This time His response includes atmospheric signs that predict the weather along with the sign of Jonah He gave back in chapter *12:39-41*. The Pharisees were a sect that held to a strict interpretation of the Law and were highly influential, politically, over the Jewish people. The Sadducees however, did not hold the same teachings where it involved the resurrection (*22:23*), life after death or even in the existence of angels.

Act 23:6 Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial." **7** And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. **8** For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

Both were testing Jesus; the Pharisees because Jesus challenged their strict adherence to **their** interpretation of the Law, and the Sadducees because they wanted to disprove Him as being the Christ because of His teachings on life after death.

- “the sign of the times”- Noting their ability to interpret the patterns of the weather to make predictions on it, Jesus here rebuked them for their hardened hearts where prophecies that spoke of His miracles were concerned (*Isa 3:5-6; Mat 12:17-21, etc.*). The signs He was performing publically and by which “all the people were amazed” (*12:23*), these men were oblivious to because of their pride, jealousy and distain for “the carpenter’s Son” (*13:55*) Who would be the Christ. He not only challenged their notoriety but proved them wrong in their interpretation of Scripture which the average Jew, obviously, didn’t comprehend the fact that they might be misrepresenting it... unlike those of Berea (*Act 17:10-11*).

The leaven of the Pharisees

Mat 16:5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. **6** Jesus said to them, "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." **7** And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." **8** But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? **9** Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? **10** Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? **11** How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

- After having witnessed two notable events (14:21; 15:38) where Jesus miraculously multiplied what scarce food was available in order to feed the masses that came to hear Him, His disciples were afraid to ask Him what He meant here, not recalling that had they needed anything He would have just produced it from whatever (4:3 where the devil knew Jesus could have turned the stones into bread, along with in Jn 1:3 where Christ, along with the Others of the Godhead, created everything from nothing.). He had time and again rebuked their lack of faith and instead of focusing on the meaning they “[discussed] it among themselves”, having been too timid to approach the Lord. If they had only humbled themselves and asked Him, as their Teacher, He would have enlightened them. Then He repeated what He said earlier after rebuking their disbelief.

Mat 16:12 Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

- Such “teaching”, if they would have adhered to it, would have damned their eternal souls. These men (*Pharisees and Sadducees*) were highly esteemed by the Jews and thus had influence over them (*like the influence of political parties that often cloud judgments of their “Christian” constituencies*). Any doctrine they promoted was accepted by the average Jew without investigation. Like some preachers who like the esteem they receive when they tickle “itching ears” (2 Tim 4:3). Jesus exposed them for whom they really belonged to (Jn 8:44). Those who “[live] on [the] milk” of the word are “unskilled” in it (Heb 3:13), being “carried about by every wind of doctrine” (Eph 4:14); whether the average Jew under the Mosaic Law or the average Christian “in the word of righteousness” today. The only way to know what is true is to study it out and not rely on others to do it for us.

2Ti 2:15 Give diligence to present yourself approved to God, a workman unashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. (*Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*)

 The Son of Man

Mat 16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But Who do you say that I am?"

- Jesus often referred to Himself as “the Son of Man”, or others called Him the “Son of David” but most importantly is His designation as the “Son of God”. In each of these references lies a relationship to the person Jesus is the “Son of”. He came, as recorded in His genealogies (Mat 1; Lk 3), physically through Mary, legally through Joseph and in the succession of kings through David (*whose throne ultimately belonged to the Lord [1 Chr 29:23] but which Jesus regained [Heb 8:1] while His “enemies [are being made His] footstool”- Mat 22:44*). Using this phrase to describe Himself shows the nature of His willingness to leave the majesty of Heaven to inhabit the “body prepared” for Him (Heb 10:5) and “[humble] Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (Php 2:8) by which act God...

Joh 5:27 ... has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

- When He queried His disciples on who others thought He was (*obviously not out of vanity*), the responses were as if most people didn't really know, only that He resembled in some way those men of extreme faith listed by the disciples. He then made them question themselves about Who He is since it was obvious to Him how fragile their faith, at that point, remained. Were they yet in doubt because of what others believed? Not all.

Mat 16:16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father Who is in Heaven.

1Co 12:3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

- Only those who have received the "seal" of Holy Spirit (*Eph 1:13*) via baptism (*Act 2:38*) can relate in truth, because of their covenant relationship with Christ, that "Jesus is [their] Lord". Any outside that covenant relationship clearly cannot. Peter obviously had such a relationship. At this point we can see that Peter had already been given a miraculous knowledge via inspiration by the Holy Spirit that Jesus said he would receive (*Mat 10:19-20*).

Mat 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of [Hades] shall not prevail against it.

- "Peter"- Gk.4074- a (piece of) rock; "rock"- Gk.4073- a (mass of) rock. When we understand the context without misinterpreting what Jesus said we can conclude that Peter wasn't the foundation upon which Christ was going to build His church (*as some believe he was the first pope*) but on his **statement** about Who he understood Jesus really is (*concerning His Messiahship*). Without Christ being the prophesied Messiah the church would have nothing upon which to be established. Also, which would any real builder want for a foundation, a "piece of rock" or a "mass of rock"? At this point Christ hadn't yet built His church ("*I go to prepare a place*"- *Jn 14:2*). But after His ascension it came as "the holy city, New Jerusalem... out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her Husband" (*Rev 21:2*) "when the day of Pentecost arrived" (*Act 2:1*), about which the apostle Paul later wrote.

1Co 3:11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is (*now*) laid, which is Jesus Christ. (*Not Peter!*)

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** (*having been*) built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the Cornerstone, **21** in Whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

- "the gates of [Hades]"- A gate representing *entrance (with no exit in the context)* into the Hadean realm, Hades is the place of the departed souls and once there, as is stated in Lk 16:26 and the "great chasm [that] has been fixed", a soul can no longer leave without Divine intervention (*as in Mat 11:5 proving to the disciples of John that Jesus is the Christ and in 1 Sam 28:15 where Samuel asked Saul "Why have you disturbed me by*

bringing me up?" See also *Rev 1:18* and *Jesus' authority over "Death and Hades"*). The only way to get into the Hadean realm is to die physically, but *Jesus* came to destroy "death" (*1 Cor 15:26*) which, along with "Hades", will be "thrown into the lake of fire (a.k.a.) the second death..." (*Rev 20:14*). *God* raising *Him* up from the grave would give witness that *He* is the *Christ* (*Act 2:32*) and through it "deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (*Heb 2:15*). The entrance gates into Hades would **not** keep *Jesus* from exiting. (*Compare to the gates of the "city foursquare"- Rev 21:25.*)

Rom 6:9 We know that *Christ*, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over *Him*.

Mat 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." 20 Then *He* strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that *He* was the *Christ*.

- Actually, what the apostles either bound or loosened would only have been accomplished through *Holy Spirit's* involvement, having previously been established in Heaven before they became church doctrine on earth. It was the same inspiration *Paul* employed when he said in *1 Cor 7* that there were some things he received from *Christ* personally (*v. 10*) and others (*v. 12*) by having "the mind of *Christ*" (*1 Cor 2:16*), i.e., inspiration via *Holy Spirit*.

"And whatever you bind on earth shall occur, **having been** bound in Heaven. And whatever you may loose on the earth shall be, **having been** loosed in Heaven."

Literal Translation of the Holy bible

- These keys represent the message of the Gospel and how it would either "proclaim liberty to the captives" (*Lk 4:18; Eph 4:8*) or "bind" as they have *Satan* during his "thousand years" imprisonment of *Rev 20:2*.
- To have "strictly charged" *His* followers not to reveal *His Divine* incarnation is a bit puzzling since *He* had earlier debated *His Messiahship* with the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, and also convinced *Martha (a sister of Lazarus)* that *He* is "the *Christ*, the Son of God, Who is coming into the world" (*Jn 11:27*). They had recently been given a limited commission through which they were to announce the presence of the kingdom, but not, at that time, announce that *Jesus* was the *Messiah* that should come. Why? Because they weren't yet equipped to make such a convincing argument due to their yet fragile understanding of *His Deity* as is evidenced by the fact that they didn't come right out and tell *Him* what they themselves believed when *He* asked them what others thought. And any student of the Bible who is new to the faith would not make the skilled defense of the Gospel that a more seasoned student would. In the cases where *He* personally defended *His* status; remember it was *Him Who* was making the defense based on *His* personal knowledge of *Who He Himself* really is.

1Co 2:11 For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of *God* except the *Spirit of God*.

It wasn't until after *Pentecost* that the apostles were spiritually equipped "for the defense of the Gospel" (*Php 1:16*). At that point *Paul* was able to make the statement...

1Co 2:16 ..." But we have the mind of Christ.

Mat 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. **22** And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord! This shall never happen to You." **23** But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

- The purpose of His coming was about to be fulfilled but before He could return to Heaven to "prepare a place for [them]" (*Jn 14:2- a.k.a., the church- Rev 12*), He first had to become the final, spotless sacrifice (*Heb 9:14*) for the atonement of sin that was necessary for anyone to enter it (*Eph 5:27*). God's "purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, [was] to unite all things in Him, things in Heaven and things on earth" (*Eph 1:9-10*). Jesus laid out the succession of events that were about to happen, which included purchasing man (*via His crucifixion*) "with [His] precious blood" by which "He was foreknown before the foundation of the world" (*1 Pet 1:19-20*). But Peter, not understanding the scheme of redemption that included Christ being sacrificed, wasn't going to have any part of that. Taking Jesus aside he revealed something about his own nature; he was a man of impulse. He didn't wait for the Lord to explain the reason for what was about to happen. Like a Bible student questioning things, that if he had given the instructor the time to explain, he wouldn't have gotten ahead of what was about to be clarified. Jesus rebuked him calling him "Satan". He had "suffered when tempted" (*Heb 2:18*) by Satan in Mat 4 and it was as though, as was written in Lk 4:13, this was the "opportune time" in which Satan saw that he could once again attempt to break Him, this time through Peter. Jesus knowing the suffering that those on crosses endured, along with a prior Roman scourging, should have been enough to give Him second thoughts about what was imminent. Why else would Jesus have told Peter (*calling him Satan*) that he was "a hindrance" to Him, telling him his mind wasn't set "on things that are above" but "on things that are of the earth" (*Col 3:2*)? His intentions may have seemed good, even to us today, but in the scheme of things Peter was being "outwitted by Satan" being, at that time, "ignorant of his designs" (*2 Cor 2:11*).

Mat 16:24 Then Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. **25** For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. **26** For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

- In keeping with the context, Jesus then responded to Peter's remark on how, if He were to save Himself from the prophesy He came to fulfill, there would be an awful price to pay by the souls He came to save. Paul said "I die daily" (*1 Cor 15:31- KJV*). **Deny-Gk.533-** to deny utterly, that is, disown, abstain. If we belong to Christ we are "not [our] own" (*1 Cor 6:19*). Once we belong to Christ we have to separate ourselves from anything that would separate us from Him as He disavowed the idea of saving Himself from a tortuous death on a Roman cross, a symbol of death. Taking up our crosses symbolizes that we separate ourselves from the world outside the church, yet not altogether "since then [we] would need to go out of the world" (*1 Cor 5:10*). Precious beyond any gem or metal is a person's soul. After all, Jesus paid an horrific price to save it. Nothing in the world combined can equal its value. Why else did Jesus come "to seek and to save the lost" (*Lk 19:10*)?

1Jn 2:16 For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions--is not from the **Father** but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of **God** abides forever.

Mat 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come with His angels in the glory of His Father, and then He will repay each person according to what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

- “going to come” and “coming” are both forms of visitations; the first here has to do with the final judgment of the world, the second having to do with what was to happen, soon after this, on Pentecost. To say that this particular prophetic utterance by **Jesus** hasn’t happened yet is to say that there are people alive today that are about two thousand years old. Noting the “some standing [there]” who would not see death also meant that there would be some that would, which happened during the Feast of Pentecost after His resurrection (*compare Act 2:47 and Col 1:13*). **Jesus** mentioned the latter visitation here as a reminder that whatever we do in this life as it pertains to the faith will be rewarded or punished when He returns “to grant relief to [those] who [have been] afflicted” and “in flaming fire, [to inflict] vengeance on those who do not know **God** and on those who [have not obeyed] the Gospel of our Lord **Jesus**” (*2 Thes 1:7-8*). All this is to show the realization of **God’s** “glory” (*Gk.1361- dignity, honor, praise, worship*) by which **Jesus** will return. He gave up that glory through His incarnation and “in bringing many sons to glory”, having become “perfect through suffering” (*Heb 2:10*) He is to retrieve it and return to Heaven taking it, along with His bride the church who “made herself ready” (*Rev 19:7*), back with Him where He is now “seated at the right hand of **God**” (*Col 3:1*).

Num 23:19 **God** is not man, that He should lie, or a son of man, that He should change His mind. Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not fulfill it?

Charli Yana
June 5, 2018

www.truthdiscovered.net