

Sign of the Times (146)

Read = Matthew 15 v 39-16 v 4

Intro- He sent away the multitude and came to the coast's of Magdala.

A town on the West coast of the sea of Galilee at about 9am on the map. Name comes from the Hebrew word '*Migdal*' which means 'Tower'.

Mary Magdalene also came from this area. Then an event occurs which I will summarise in the 3 headings.

1. Annoying Pest's (v 1)

2. Sign , Like the Weather is Obvious(v 2-3)

3. No More Sign's But Jonah's (v 4)

1. Annoying Pest's (v 1)

Here they come,

the Pharisee's- the proud Tyrant's who like to impose tradition's upon people and make religion hard, who also happen to be hypocrites.

and the Sadducees The liberal's who do not believe in spirits or the future state or anything much at all just their own favourite bit's off their Bible. The pick and mix squad. (like many in churches today, only believe certain bit's of the Bible that they like)

And they all dislike Jesus because His doctrine/preaching contradicts both fanaticism and Liberalism.

Show us a sign? What?!!

They want a sign from heaven that proves Jesus is the Messiah.

Well let's see what are the Messianic sign's recorded in the Old Testament?

Read Isaiah

29 v 18,

35 v 4-6,

61v1.

Biblical Messianic signs?

- 1. Preach to Meek
- 2. Bind Broken-hearted.
- 3. Proclaim Liberty to the Captives.

- 4. Open Prison for the Bound (Demonically and sinfully)
- 5. Blind see
- 6. Deaf hear.
- 7. Lame leap.
- 8. Dumb speak.
- 9. Meek and poor rejoice in the Holy one of Israel.

What has Jesus been doing so far in Matthew's gospel?

All these things in plain public view.

Lol how many Messianic sign's do you want?

Are these Pharisee's and Sadducees totally blind or just stupid?

Neither, they are just BIAS! (which is far worse)

They are annoying pest's who refuse to see the obvious and are just there for the argument

But you see they ask a question but they do not want an answer to it.

It say's in v 1 they came and asked

'Tempting him' = 'Make trial off, test, in a bad sense to test one maliciously' (present active participle) They

were asking this because they were presently actively testing him to see if He made a mistake.

They did not want a sign they had many Messianic signs from the Scriptures filled out before their eyes. As Matthew Henry says:

"Some other sign then what they had yet had. They had great plenty of signs every miracle of Christ did was a sign. But this will n to serve, they must have a sign of their own choosing; they despised those signs which revived the necessity of the sick and sorrowful and in insisted upon some sign which would gratify the curiosity of the proud." (p225)

So what we have here are these annoying pests refusing to see the obvious and asking questions under a pretence of wanting to know and answer but in reality they were just trying to be annoying.

Let us be careful never to be like this and not to be asking questions, when we really don't want an answer to the question. All we want is an excuse to disagree and argue with what the persons says to show our own cleverness or superiority over them. And even worse to make them look foolish or wrong in front of others this is indeed a sinful attitude.

2. Sign, Like the Weather is Obvious(v 2-3)

What? you can discern the weather from the sky.

But you cannot discern the obvious signs of Messiah?

Jesus here takes an example from nature and shows how these people do attempt to read the signs in the sky for telling the weather, which is a lot more unpredictable than the obvious signs of His Messiahship. The example is in the evening time if the sky is orange or red at sunset it usually predicts/ or is a sign of good weather tomorrow. But if in the morning the sky at sunrise is red/orange it will probably be foul weather that day.

Or as MH says:

"These are common rules drawn from observation and experience by which it is easy to foretell very probably what weather it will be." (p226)

The Lord then calls these people in verse 3 'you hypocrites' because they can see the signs of the weather and yet they pretend that they cannot see/discern the signs of the times.

The point here of course being these Pharisees and Sadducees childishness and stupidity in not seeing the more obvious signs of Messiah, in Christ miracles.

Can you not see that the Messiah has come, the miracles that Christ did and the gathering of great crowds onto Him were plain indications that the

kingdom of Heaven was at hand and this was the day of their visitation? They were great hypocrites in slighting the signs that God had shown them in wanting to make up signs that suited themselves.

The truth of the matter is that there is no one so blind as those that will not see,

those that refuse to see anything that they do not want. They are the ones that will never be convinced of any argument or anything simply because they do not want to be. And here in lies their hypocrisy.

3. No More Sign's But Jonah's (v 4)

You are not getting any more signs!

For this type of blind person who refuses to see the obvious and will not be taught nor learn Jesus simply refuses to give them any more signs. Because it would all be pointless anyway because they really don't want to see any more signs they just want to argue. So he says, 'You are a wicked and adulterous nation and you will not be given any more signs except the sign of Jonah the prophet.'

The Lord has mentioned this before in Matthew's Gospel the sign of Jonah the prophet that as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly

of the fish so the Son of man will be three days and three nights buried in the Earth.

This of course is referring to His resurrection after crucifixion which would be the only sign that these hypocrites would receive. (And we know that even in that circumstance when it happened they still did not believe but made excuses about how His disciples stole the body.)

In this verse Jesus reproves these sign seekers/unbelievers and then He leaves them, and leaves them alone.

MH says:

"He refuses to give them any other sign . . . those that persist in the same iniquities, must expect with the same reproofs. He refuses to gratify their desire. Christ will not be prescribed to." (p226)

Please note, that the point of Christ's words to these people highlights one main thing. The Lord has no time for those who want to question and talk just for the sake of argument, He does not company with those who are prone to quarrel about everything. Yet we do find in the Gospels that the Lord has plenty of time for ordinary people though they be ignorant so long as they want to learn.

Let us draw to a conclusion and application.

1. Annoying Pest's (v 1)

2. Sign , Like the Weather is Obvious(v 2-3)

3. No More Sign's But Jonah's (v 4)

Any application?

-They came tempting him. Asking a question whilst not wanting an answer, but just for the sake of argument.

Let us as Christians never be like that? We can be some are?

A group of Christians meet and talk and but there are certain people who will always bring up some issue upon which they differ.

Denominational differences for eg. 'oh how does your church do this?'

But they already know the answer and are only raising it to correct the other person , or say how wrong their church is.

We can be like Pharisee's and ask questions for the sake of argument and differences rather than for the sake of really wanting to know and unity and agreement.

Take eschatology for eg, your view of prophecy and end times.

It's easy to say ah will the millenium be a literal thousand years?

Is it in the future or are we in it now?

or is it just symbolic?

Will Christ come for his people , pre 1/2 way or post tribulation?

Or you can say, ' Do you know that all Christians agree on this.

Jesus is coming back literally/ bodily with the hosts of heaven for His people to take them home, and He will come when the trumpet sounds and every eye will see Him, even those who scorned Him and He will reign forever and those who are dead in Christ will be bodily resurrected for the grave and those alive to and we will all see Jesus and be with Him and all believers will live forever with Him in Heaven.

There will be no more sin no more pain no more death nor sorry for all these things will be passed away.

And we can comfort one another with these words.

And you and I both know which is better and more edifying.,

Let us not be just people who ask questions that emphasise our disagreements, but talk about the 90+% we agree on?

-They refused God's will, God's signs and would not learn because it did not suit them and what they wanted.

Let us not be like them? God's will signs are plain but we refuse to see because it must be done our way?

' Oh I know God's Word say's not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, BUT we love each other and it is God's will that we marry!!'

Ah God's will must suit me and be done my way!! I refuse God's plain will because it has to suit ME?

That is exactly what these Pharisees did.

-Liked to Discern Complicated things but ignored the obvious plain things?

Oh we can try and work out and predict the weather from when the red sky is, but the plain obvious signs that Jesus is Messiah we cannot see?

Many Christian are like that?

Attempted great knowledge of the complex whist ignoring the obvious.

There are Christians who 'know' what the number of the beast means 666 and can place Daniels 11 weeks.

But the plain things the Bible teaches- Are you Baptised? do you attend the Lords table? Do you give God His tithe? Are you living a Holy life and trying to be a good witness in evangelism?

Like the complicated but ignore the obvious signs of God's will?

Let us not do that

- They are left alone, Jesus Christ leave such people alone. He has no desire of their company!

It's not as if He didn't give them a chance at all, no, no its only when they prove themselves impervious to the truth and determined to argue and disagree He then leaves them alone.

v4 'He left them and departed'

The crux of all this passage is, the Lord has had enough of those who are off

'Disagreeable spirit'