

## Matthew 12:38-40 Pretending to Want a Sign

Introduction: In order to get the setting for this text let us back up and read Matthew 12:14, 22-24.

### I. The request for a sign, Verse 38.

- A. The idea is “Prove to us that you are the Christ and we will believe you.”
- B. In spite of their hatred of Him they were very polite.
  - 1. They called Him “Master” which here means “teacher.”
  - 2. This was a term of respect, equivalent to “Rabbi”.
  - 3. But they had no respect for Him in their hearts. (They played the part of the hypocrite.)
- C. If their desire had honestly been to know the truth, God would have helped them to learn the truth, John 7:17.

### II. Ignoring the signs they already had.

- A. They had the sign of the Messiah's lineage.
  - 1. The Messiah was to be of the lineage of David.
  - 2. Jesus was of David
- B. They had the sign of His place of birth. (Bethlehem)
- C. There was the sign of the virgin birth.
- D. They had the sign of a voice from heaven, Matthew 3:17.
- E. They had the sign of the miracles that Jesus did.
  - 1. These were not like the woman Oral Roberts pronounced healed of her cancer and she died two month later from her cancer.
  - 2. When Jesus healed there was no doubt. (The lame walked, the blind saw, the deaf heard.)
- F. If they needed a greater sign, what about Jesus raising the dead to life again?

### III. The kind of sign they wanted.

- A. There is some doubt as to what they really wanted.
- B. Some have suggested that they wanted:
  - 1. Fire from Heaven
  - 2. A star from heaven
  - 3. Manna from heaven
  - 4. An earthquake, or
  - 5. An angel from heaven

### IV. The evil of their request, Verse 39.

- A. It came from an evil heart.
  - 1. Jesus called them an evil generation.
  - 2. They were evil in their hearts. (Their spiritual condition was evil.)
- B. Jesus called them an adulterous generation.
  - 1. He was not accusing them of unfaithfulness to their wives or being unfaithful to their marriage vows.
  - 2. He was accusing them of being unfaithful to God and breaking the marriage vows or covenant with God.

V. The Lord's refusal of their sign, Verse 39.

- A. Note please that Jesus did not say that He would perform no more miracles.
  - 1. The Biblical record shows that He would do several.
  - 2. One especially that He would yet do is to raise Lazarus from the grave.
- B. But He did refuse to do some kind of heavenly sign just for them.
- C. For one thing, Jesus knew that they still intended to kill Him no matter what sign He might give them to prove that He is the Christ.

VI. The promise of the sign of Jonas, Verses 39-40.

- A. Jesus did promise them one sign whereby they could know that He is the Christ.
  - 1. He promised the sign of Jonas.
  - 2. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, even so Jesus would be in the heart of the earth for three days and nights.
- B. He speaks of His own resurrection of the dead.
- C. In effect here is what He said: "Go ahead and kill me. After three days and three nights I will come back to life again. If you are willing to be convinced that ought to convince you."

Conclusion:

There are some today like the Pharisees. They say, "Prove that Jesus lived. Prove that He is the Son of God. Prove that He arose from the grave," etc.

But they really do not want proof. They have ignored the proof of testimony from good Christians. They have ignored the testimony of God's Word. They would not be persuaded by anything we could do or say, Luke 16: 30, 31. They have one sure way of knowing. When they see Him in judgment they will know.

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