

16:1-12

● REVIEW...

- o FIRST - The Presentation of the King – **Matthew 1-7**
- o SECOND – The Ministry of the King – **Matthew 8-18**
- o Lesson in Faith...
 - Having confronted the SCRIBES and PHARISEES for a FOURTH time [traditions]
 - Jesus left the area of the Decapolis - and went up to Tyre and Sidon...
 - A GENTILE woman came and begged Jesus to help - but He ignored her [called to Israel]
 - Then He told her it was NOT right to give the kids food to the DOGS...
 - She did not argue - but added even the DOGS eat the scraps from the MASTERS table...
 - Because of her GREAT faith - Jesus healed her daughter!
- o Lesson in Provision...
 - Jesus returned to the area of the Decapolis - taught a large CROWD for THREE days...
 - He did NOT want to leave without food - but the DISCIPLES argued they did NOT have enough...
 - Jesus took SEVEN loaves and a few SMALL fish and fed FOUR thousand men [plus wives and kids]
 - Showing AGAIN - it is NOT about what we have - but WHO we give it to!

● 1ST – SEEKING A SIGN... vs. 1-4

- o 1st - The Test... vs. 1
 - Frenemies...
 - Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came!
 - PHARISEES [Φαρισαῖος] 100x in NT - were the CONSERVATIVE sect of Judaism...
 - Israel was sent into CAPTIVITY because they rejected God - **II Chronicles 36:16**
 - The PHARISEES were formed after the CAPTIVITY to keep Israel HOLY...
 - Their name comes from the Hebrew word [פָּרִישׁ] to be SEPARATE!
 - SADDUCEES [Σαδδουκαῖος] 14x in NT - were the LIBERAL sect of Judaism...
 - Their name means those who are RIGHT [צְדִיק] - but they were WRONG...
 - They did NOT believe in the resurrection - hell - or angels - **Matthew 22:23**
 - It should come as NO surprise these two groups did NOT get along...
 - When Paul was being JUDGED before the COUNSEL [Sanhedrin] - **Acts 23:7**
 - He realized BOTH groups were present - and he used their DIFFERENCES to divide them!
 - The world does NOT agree on much - they will ARGUE about almost anything...
 - What is the BEST sport team - what is the BEST food - what is the BEST country...
 - But the ONE thing that seems to UNITE everyone - is Jesus Christ...
 - Either people are FOR Him - or they are AGAINST Him...
 - And when we stand up for Jesus - people will likewise either LOVE us or HATE us!
 - **II Corinthians 2:15:16** - "We are the fragrance of Christ... to those who are perishing we are the aroma of death... and to those who are being saved the aroma of life leading to life."
 - From heaven...
 - Testing [Jesus] they asked that He would show them a sign from heaven!
 - The PHARISEES [and scribes] had already challenged Jesus FOUR times...
 - FIRST - they ASKED why Jesus ate with SINNERS - **Matthew 9:11**
 - SECOND- they ACCUSED His DISCIPLES breaking the Sabbath - **Matthew 12:2**
 - THIRD - they DEMANDED Jesus show them a SIGN - **Matthew 12:38**
 - FOURTH - they CHALLENGED Him about their TRADITIONS [washing hands] - **Matthew 15:2**

- NOW - they demanded [ἐπερωτάω] Jesus show them a SIGN [σημεῖον] from HEAVEN!
- One might ask - why did Jesus NOT just mention one of His recent MIRACLES...
- He fed FIVE thousand men with FIVE loaves and TWO fish - He walked on water...
- He cast out the demon from the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman...
- Healed countless lame - the blind - the deaf - and the mute...
- Then fed another FOUR thousand more people with SEVEN loaves and few SMALL fish!
- Rejection...
 - There was NO sign that Jesus could give that would convince them...
 - He could have done a THOUSAND miracles and they still would NOT have believed...
 - The problem was NOT with Jesus – the problem was they did NOT want Jesus!
 - I was filling out a form the other day to register a SIM card for Hallel...
 - I had ALREADY filled out the form for myself - but it asked for ALL the info AGAIN...
 - So I gave it my LICENSE - but it wanted my PASSPORT - and IMMIGRATION card...
 - Having given all the information and IDs - it asked to take my picture - DONE...
 - But then it said it could NOT process my application - they could not verify who I was!
 - People do NOT deny Jesus because of a LACK of evidence...
 - They REJECT Jesus because they do NOT want Him...
 - They do NOT want to REPENT - they do NOT want to give up their SIN!
 - John 3:19 - “This is the condemnation... men love darkness rather than light.”
- o 2nd - No Discernment... vs. 2-3
 - The Weather... vs. 2-3
 - [Jesus] answered and said to them:
 - When it is evening you say It will be fair weather for the sky is red.
 - And in the morning. It will be foul weather today for the sky is red and threatening!
 - If a SKY is red at SUNSET - it is because there is a lot of DUST in the air...
 - The DUST is a sign of HIGH pressure - because there is NO rain to clear the air...
 - The light of the SUN then gets scattered by the DUST - which we see as RED light...
 - BUT - if the SKY is red at SUNRISE - is because there is a LOT of MOISTURE in the air...
 - This is a sign of LOW pressure - and often means RAIN is coming!
 - It turns out this Jewish TRADITION is based in science...
 - But the PHARISEES did NOT know the SCIENCE - they just OBSERVED the facts...
 - Years of experience taught them what a RED sky meant!
 - Hypocrites... vs. 3
 - Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky.
 - But you cannot discern the signs of the times!
 - Since they KNEW how to JUDGE [διακρίνω] the WEATHER...
 - How did they lack the POWER [δύναμις] to read the SIGNS [σημεῖον] right in front of them...
 - Jesus was NOT fooled - He called out their HYPOCRISY [two faced]
 - Just as they SAW the weather - they SAW the signs Jesus had already given!
 - I had a co-worker years ago who believed in EVOLUTION - because of the FACTS...
 - He challenged me that if I could show him he was WRONG - he would change his mind...
 - I took up the challenge and did some homework:
 - SECOND law of thermodynamics says - things go from order to chaos [opposite of Evolution]
 - Darwinian EVOLUTION was disproved - discovery of DNA code [code speaks of design]
 - Modern EVOLUTION is based on MUTATIONS of the DNA code...
 - But almost all MUTATION are harmful or deadly [cancer] - only ONE in a million are good...
 - When I presented these flaws of EVOLUTION - he admitted he could NOT defend it...
 - But he still believed in EVOLUTION - because he WANTED to!

- People are NOT dumb - but they do have ULTERIOR motives...
- The reason the world believes LIES - is because they do NOT want the truth...
- But we are NOT called to PROVE that God is REAL - the evidence is all around us...
- Instead it is the world that needs to DEFEND why they REJECT what they can SEE!
- **Romans 1:20** - "Through everything God made - [people] can clearly see... His eternal power and divine nature. So they have NO excuse for NOT knowing God!" [NLT]

o 3rd - Only Sign... vs. 4

- Evil generation...
 - A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign!
 - An EVIL and ADULTEROUS generation SEEKS [present] a sign...
 - EVIL [πονηρός] - speaking of a heart that is FAR from the LORD...
 - ADULTEROUS [μοιχαλίζ] - 7x in NT – used to describe SPIRITUAL adultery...
 - Because in the Old and New Testament – both Israel and Church are likened to a BRIDE...
 - And when a BRIDE is NOT faithful to her husband – she is an ADULTERESSES!
 - People have an AFFAIR - because they think another person will make them HAPPIER...
 - No one throws away their marriage because they think they will be MISERABLE...
 - In the same way - the only reason someone CHEATS on Jesus...
 - Is because there is something else that they think will make them HAPPIER than God!
 - Be careful of a divided heart - desiring to FOLLOW Jesus - but FLIRTING with the world...
 - Trying to LOVE this world and the Lord - is CHEATING on Jesus!
 - **James 4:4** - "To be a friend of the world [is to be] an enemy of God."
- Sign of Jonah...
 - No sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah!
 - Just as JONAH was THREE days and nights in the whale - **Jonah 1:17**
 - Jesus would also be THREE days and nights in the earth - **Matthew 12:40**
 - This is the SECOND time Jesus told them THIS was the ONLY sign He would give...
 - Because the ANSWER does NOT change!
 - There is only ONE solution to the problem of SIN - and it is the CROSS...
 - And it does not matter how many times people ask - the TRUTH is still the TRUTH!
 - **John 14:6** - "No one comes to the Father except through Me."
- Abandoned...
 - [Jesus] left them and departed!
 - This is an EMPHATIC statement - repeated TWICE - left and departed...
 - Jesus LEFT [καταλείπω] - to abandon - or to forsake...
 - This is the LAST time the RELIGIOUS leaders would ask for a SIGN...
 - Because Jesus had EXPOSED them for the HYPOCRITES they were...
 - And NEXT time they met - they would be looking for a reason to CRUCIFY Him!

• 2ND - BEWARE THE LEAVEN... vs. 5-12

o 1st - Missing the point... vs. 5-7

- Leaven... vs. 6
 - Jesus said to them: Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees!
 - Jesus and the DISCIPLES crossed back over to the Decapolis [away from the Religious leaders]
 - And the Lord commanded [imperative] the DISCIPLES to SEE and BEWARE the LEAVEN!
 - LEAVEN [ζύμη] - yeast is a micro-organism [plant] that causes DECAY...
 - The process causes CO² to be released causing the BREAD to rise...
 - A little YEAST is ALL that is needed to INFECT the whole batch of dough!
 - A commonly used picture in the Bible - always to describe SIN...
 - SIN has the ability to DECAY – and it only takes a LITTLE for it to SPREAD!

- **I Corinthians 5:7** - "Get rid of the [leaven] by removing wicked... from among you." [NLT]
- Not understanding... vs. 5/7
 - Now when His disciples had come to the other side they had forgotten to take bread.
 - And they reasoned among themselves saying: It is because we have taken no bread!
 - The DISCIPLES did NOT know what YEAST Jesus was talking about...
 - But since they had carelessly FORGOTTEN to bring bread [which has yeast in it]
 - They THOUGHT [imperfect] He was upset for NOT bringing the FOOD...
 - Their PROBLEM - they did NOT ask Jesus what He meant...
 - They were FOCUSED on their mistake - and FORGET to ask the one with the ANSWERS!
 - When people do NOT understand WHAT is happening in their lives...
 - They attempt to try and figure out WHY it is happening...
 - They go so far as to ask others what they THINK - but do NOT ask God...
 - But He has the right ANSWERS - if we would just ask Him!
 - **Isaiah 1:18** - "Come now and let us reason together - says the LORD!"
- o 2nd - Remember... vs. 8-11
 - Little Faith... vs. 8
 - Jesus being aware of it said to them: O you of little faith.
 - Why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread!
 - You can almost paint the scene - the DISCIPLES huddled in a corner whispering...
 - Trying their best to come up with the SOLUTION to the riddle of the LEAVEN...
 - But Jesus KNEW [γινώσκω] - and REBUKED them for their LITTLE faith...
 - WHY [Τί] - would they THINK the answer was forgetting bread...
 - FOURTH and FINAL rebuke of the disciples for having LITTLE faith [ὀλιγόπιστος]!
 - LITTLE faith - is when we forget the EXAMPLE [flowers] God provides - **Matthew 6:30**
 - LITTLE faith - is when we forget the WORD of God [calm storm] - **Matthew 8:26**
 - LITTLE faith - is when we forget to LOOK to Jesus [Peter on the water] - **Matthew 14:31**
 - Little faith - is when we THINK we have the ANSWERS!
 - FAITH is not about QUANTITY or QUALITY - it is about WHO we put our TRUST in...
 - If we put our FAITH in something that does NOT have power - what we THINK...
 - Then we are going to end up with LITTLE faith!
 - Feeding thousands... vs. 9-10
 - Do you not yet understand.
 - Remember the five loaves of the five thousand and how many baskets you took up.
 - Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many large baskets you took up!
 - All the DISCIPLES had to do was REMEMBER...
 - When Jesus fed FIVE thousand with FIVE loaves of BREAD...
 - They were given TWELVE baskets full of food left over - **Matthew 14:20**
 - And a SECOND time when He fed FOUR thousand with SEVEN loaves of BREAD...
 - They were given SEVEN large baskets full of food left over - **Matthew 15:37**
 - The Lord is NOT concerned about being able to provide for our NEEDS...
 - He can feed THOUSANDS with just a FEW loaves of bread...
 - But He is CONCERNED about us growing stronger in our RELATIONSHIP with Him!
 - I know many people who WORK on Sunday because they NEED more money...
 - But when you ask them if they are any RICHER for their efforts - the answer is NO...
 - Then ask them if they are CLOSER in their relationship with Jesus - the answer is NO!
 - Calloused... vs. 11
 - How is it you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread.
 - But to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees!
 - In light of what they had SEEN - Jesus FEEDING thousands...

- HOW then did the DISCIPLES NOT understand [νοέω] it was NOT about BREAD...
 - He adds in the account from Mark - is your heart still HARDENED - **Mark 8:17**
 - HARDENED [πωρόω] - to be [perfect] CALLUSED [passive]!
 - If we do NOT understand what the God is saying to us [calloused]
 - It is usually because we are MISSING the lessons Jesus is trying to teach us [multiple times]
 - Often because we are focused on our MISTAKES - rather than the LESSON...
 - Or we only see the PHYSICAL [food] - rather than look to the SPIRITUAL [word]
 - Bottom line because our FAITH is misplaced [little] - and we need to focus on the Lord!
- o 3rd - Bad Doctrine... vs. 12
- Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread.
 - But of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees!
 - With that the DISCIPLES were able to PUT together [συνίημι] what Jesus meant...
 - He was WARNING them about the TEACHING [διδασχί] of the RELIGIOUS leaders!
 - I avoid oysters - I am sure they are tasty - but they also have a reputation...
 - Anyone who has every had a BAD oyster - knows how much damage they can do...
 - Food poisoning is no joke - it can put us in a person in the hospital!
 - We need to be ALERT to what people are teaching - cautious...
 - Because bad DOCTRINE is like BAD food - it does a LOT of damage...
 - Therefore we must TEST what is TAUGHT - to be sure it is from the LORD!
 - **I John 4:1** - "Beloved do not believe every spirit - but test the spirits whether they are of God. Because many false [teachers] have gone out into the world."