

# A NEW TESTAMENT WEATHER FORECAST

Matthew 16:1-4

## INTRODUCTION:

- A. Have you ever heard the old saying: "Red skies at night, sailors delight; red skies at morning, sailor's take warning." I had heard that statement for years before I even knew it had its basis in scripture.
- Matt.16:1-4**- *"The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. 2) But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' 3) "And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times? 4) "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah." And He left them and went away."*
1. The Jews of Jesus day, though they did not have the scientific knowledge of modern weather forecasters, did try to forecast the weather.
  2. They based their forecasts upon past observations and Jesus says in our text that they claimed to be able to foretell the weather by certain signs that they saw in the sky, as per our text!
- B. Of course, our Lord was dealing with the Sadducees and Pharisees who had asked Him to show them a sign from heaven to prove that He was the Son of God as He claimed.
1. Jesus had already showed sufficient signs for that purpose as found in places like **Matt.15:31**- *"So the crowd marveled as they saw the mute speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel."*
  2. And it was shortly following these signs that Jesus fed a multitude of thousands with seven loaves of bread and a few fish.
  3. **Yet, the Jews now ask Him for another sign from heaven.**
- C. Did Jesus give them another sign on this occasion?
1. Did He drop everything and perform some great miracle? **He could have, BUT HE DID NOT.**
  2. **Instead He told them that if they forecast the weather by the signs they saw in the sky, then they should be able to know He was the Son of God by the signs He had already done.**
  3. If they were going to ignore **those signs** then why give them **others**?
- D. What Jesus **DID DO**, instead of giving them a sign, was to point them to a future sign.
1. He pointed them to His death, burial and resurrection from the dead.
  2. His resurrection from the dead should have proven beyond any doubt that His claims to be the Son of God are true. cf. **Rom.1:4**- *"who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,"* **Heb.2:4**- *.. God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will."*
- E. Sadly, there are many in our day who have abundant proof before them of those truths God wants us all to know, but who are still asking for the Lord to **give us another sign.**

## I. FOR EXAMPLE, CONSIDER THOSE WHO ARE LOOKING FOR MODERN MIRACULOUS SIGNS.

- A. How many times have modern "healers" declared to vast audiences: "**Lord, we expect a miracle.**"
1. These are just people looking for a sign TODAY, **even DEMANDING a sign from the Lord.**
  2. Such proclaimed expectations for signs from the Lord today are **usually** just DECEPTIONS to bring in **GREATER MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS!**
- B. Is there a need for modern miraculous signs? What purpose could such signs serve?

1. **WE MIGHT DECLARE** that we need modern miraculous signs to convince people that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
  - a) Could that possibly be true? IT WAS CERTAINLY one of the purposes of the miracles found in the New Testament.
  - b) **John 20:30-31**. Answer that again: Why are the miracles of the Lord recorded for us in the New Testament? To create the strength of FAITH which will bring about our salvation.
  - c) **IF A DIVINE RECORD** of the miracles that Jesus did already exists, WHY SHOULD IT BE NECESSARY for us to need a sign? Since the miracles of Jesus are recorded for the express purpose of creating faith in Christ, WE NEED NO MODERN MIRACLES to accomplish that end.
  - d) When a young man has showered the flower of his affections with gifts, kind words, and many actions from pure motives, and **then has asked her to be his bride**, would you think it necessary to go tell her that this guy loves her? **ABSOLUTELY REDUNDANT, isnt' it?!**
2. And to ANYONE who suggests we might need modern miraculous signs to confirm the teachings of the **CONFIRMED Word of God** for people today – we say the same thing: **ABSOLUTELY REDUNDANT!**
  - a) Now we recognize that certainly in the New Testament the signs, wonders and miracles were used as a means of confirming the spoken word of God.
  - b) Wasn't the truth, delivered by Jesus and the apostles, confirmed by miracles in the first century? That's CLEARLY what the New Testament reveals in **Heb.2:1-3**- *"For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2) For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3) how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,"*
  - c) DON'T WE HAVE THAT SAME TRUTH TODAY? Since **WE DO HAVE THE SAME TRUTH WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN AUTHENTICATED** by miracles & signs & wonders, why should we be seeking **MODERN MIRACULOUS SIGNS** for confirmation? There's no need to **CONFIRM** what **GOD** has already been **CONFIRMED, IS THERE?**
3. ANYONE who claims the need of miracles today, is simply ignoring what God has already given in the New Testament.
  - a) In essence, we'd be saying that those signs which are expressly stated to have been recorded for the purpose of creating faith in Christ **are not sufficient for those purposes and so we need additional signs – even though they have already confirmed the very Word of God which we have and teach today as the truth!**
  - b) And so now we are hearing today, **"Lord, SHOW US MORE SIGNS."**
- C. When the Sadducees and Pharisees refused the signs that had already been done and sought an additional sign, Jesus said, *"This evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" and also added, "there shall be no sign given unto it, but the sign of Jonah."*
  1. The claim of modern miraculous signs is a denial of the all-sufficiency of the already confirmed word of God.
  2. And our Lord's answer to those seeking a sign today is still the same as it was then – **"there shall no sign be given, but the sign of Jonah."**
- D. But **THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE** we can learn from these events . . . .

## **II. ALTHOUGH THOSE FIRST CENTURY JEWS COULD FORECAST WEATHER BY CERTAIN SIGNS, THEY COULD NOT SEE THEMSELVES FOR WHAT THEY REALLY WERE.**

A. **JESUS SAID THEY WERE A SINFUL AND ADULTEROUS GENERATION.**

1. But is that how they viewed themselves?
2. **CERTAINLY NOT!** They viewed themselves as faithful followers of God and protectors of the Jewish religion. They looked at Jesus and saw **HIM** as a **rebellious blasphemer**, an **impostor** and a **threat to Judaism!**
3. ***They refused to see themselves*** in their true spiritual light as **hypocrites**, & *souls in danger of hell.*

B. ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS FOR ANY OF US TO DO IS TO SEE OURSELVES AS WE REALLY ARE.

1. It's so much easier to see the faults or even the imagined faults of others than it is to see our own genuine faults.
2. How often do you think that most of us take a good hard look at ourselves? At our attitudes, our religious beliefs, our actions toward others. How often have **WE ACTUALLY DONE THAT?**
3. Yet, the Bible admonishes us to do that very thing.
  - a) Note the example of David. **Psa.119:59-** *"I considered my ways And turned my feet to Your testimonies."*
    - 1) What did David mean when he said, *"I considered my ways?"* He meant that he took an account of himself, of his actions, his thoughts, his beliefs, the direction of his life.
    - 2) When he did he found some things wrong, he said: ***"I turned my feet to Your testimonies."*** David changed directions in life. His ways were wrong so he turned to God for the right direction in his life. But it was necessary for him to think on this ways before he saw the need for change.
  - b) **Lam.3:40-41-** *"Let us examine and probe our ways, And let us return to the LORD. 41) We lift up our heart and hands Toward God in heaven;"*
    - 1) When we search and try our ways we will see ourselves as we really are.
    - 2) Strong says the Hebrew word translated **"try our ways"** means *"to penetrate; hence to examine intimately."*
    - 3) A profitable self-examination will not be just a quick look but a penetrating and intimate examination.
    - 4) This type of self-examination will allow us to lift up our hearts to God in the heavens.
  - c) **Haggai 1:5-7-** *"Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, "Consider your ways! 6) "You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes." 7) Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Consider your ways!"*
    - 1) In the context of this verse God is saying to his people that you have not enjoyed the tremendous blessings you could have been enjoying simply because you have been walking the way of rebellion and indifference toward the Lord with your self-serving attitude!
    - 2) You have refused to see yourself as you really are therefore you need to consider your ways, you need to take a good hard look at yourselves.]
  - d) The New Testament says in **2 Cor.13:5-** *"Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves ....."*
    - 1) What is **"the faith?"** It is simply the gospel of Christ or the New Testament.
    - 2) One who is "in the faith" is one who is being faithful to the teaching of Jesus Christ in the gospel.
    - 3) And the Bible tells us that we need to examine ourselves to make sure that we are following the teaching of Christ in every area of our lives!

- C. WHAT THIS MEANS IS THAT GOD WANTS US TO SEE OURSELVES FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE!
1. **Because He sees us as we really are.** There is NOTHING HIDDEN regarding our character or life.
    - a) There's nothing that He cannot see, clearly and accurately!
    - b) Have you ever considered that God knows every intimate detail of your life?
    - c) He knows what we do and what we think, and the motives behind all of our actions!
    - d) Consider this sobering account in Heb.4:13- "*And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*"
  2. When we examine ourselves we should REALLY LOOK CLOSELY at our **relationship with God**, as well as our relationship with those others we contact every day!
    - a) What is our attitude **toward our brethren, toward those who are lost, toward members of our immediate family**?
    - b) What are our actions/attitudes toward them? How do we treat each other? How do we treat members of our family? Do we love our brethren/ honor our parents/ cherish our children?
  3. Am I **caring and giving** or **SELFISH AND SELF-CENTERED**? Am I concerned/ indifferent toward the LOST? Do I put the **things of the Lord - OR - my own selfish desires & wants** first in my life? Do I honestly seek to follow the Bible as my guide in life or is learning God's truth important to me?
- D. AM I A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE LORD'S, OR A PARTICIPANT OF THIS EVIL AND ADULTEROUS GENERATION? **God knows about us!** AND FRIEND, it's most likely that we are aware about ourselves, too!

### CONCLUSION:

Rather than seeking a sign we should each accept the signs that have already been given and are recorded for us in the New Testament of Jesus Christ. There is hope for one who makes the changes in his life that a thorough examination of self reveals as necessary.

Refusing to use the magnifying glass on oneself and turning it only on others will cause a failure in pleasing God. It's not just DANGEROUS, but it's SOUL-CONDEMNING to be one who can see the signs of the weather but who cannot see himself for what he really is.