

It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Isaiah 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

POD: The Lord will never turn away anyone who approaches Him in faith with genuine humility (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30).

POD: The genuinely humble believer acknowledges his inability and turns to the Lord dependently in prayer.

POD: Genuine humility fosters dependence upon the Lord in the throne of grace to find help in time of need.

POD: Our Lord always provides in grace for those who have positive volition (Mark 8:1-9 cf. Matthew 15:32-38).

➤ We left off with the Lord feeding over 4,000 Gentiles in Decapolis.



Matthew 15:39 And sending away the crowds, Jesus got into the boat and came to the **region** of Magadan.

- City of Magdala
- Western side of the Sea of Galilee
- The parallel to Matthew's account is found in **Mark 8:10-13**.

Mark 8:10 And immediately He entered the boat with His disciples and came to the **district** of Dalmanutha.

- Matthew - **the region of Magadan**
 - **Region** - ὄριον – **HORION** – *region; a district around or near a city*

- Mark - **the district of Dalmanutha**
 - District – **μέρος** – **MEROS** – *part or branch*

Mark 8:10-11 And immediately He entered the boat with His disciples and came to the district of Dalmanutha. ¹¹The Pharisees came out and began to **argue** with Him. . .

- **Argue** - **συζητέω** – **SUZETEO** - *To dispute or debate*
 - The purpose of meeting the Lord as He is getting out of the boat is to debate Him.
 - The Pharisees are irritably persistent.
 - They want to trap the Lord to drive a wedge between Him and the people.
 - Many of the people believed He was a prophet and were beginning to think that He might be the promised Messiah.

. . . **seeking** from Him a **sign** from heaven, to test Him.

- **Seeking** – **ζητέω** – **ZETEO** –
 - Their desire was to debate the Lord with the hope of trapping Him.
 - The objective of their debate was for Him to perform a sign.
- **Sign** - **σημείον** – **SEMEION** - *a miracle proving His divine authority*

But not just any miracle – “a sign from heaven”!

He had performed many miracles up to this point - -

- Given sight to the blind
- Made the lame and crippled to walk
- Cleansed lepers
- Made the deaf hear
- Cast out demons
- Raised the dead
- All things that were indicative that Messiah’s kingdom was on the brink of being instituted!
- Miracles that Messiah was prophesied to do when He came to the nation Israel were being fulfilled.

The religious leaders should have been able to interpret these signs - pointing to the fact that He was their Messiah.

They demanded a sign from heaven - -

- Turn the sun back in its course above.
- Rain fire down out of heaven.
- Reveal the heavenly host above.
- Place a rainbow in the sky.

. . . **seeking** from Him a **sign** from heaven, to test Him.

- **πειράζω** - *Tempting Him*

The religious leaders were not requesting this miracle in faith like the Syrophenician woman!

They were requesting a sign from heaven in unbelief.

They did not believe that He could it!

POD: God does not do things for those who do not believe that He can.

That's true in salvation as well.

In salvation, the sinner turns with an attitude of expectancy toward God to perform a perfect saving work in his life - faith.

- That's why many prayers go unfulfilled as well.
- The believer never turns to the Lord in the throne of grace with an attitude of expectancy.

“ . . . all things are possible to Him that believeth.” Mark 9:23

A lack of faith results in stunted prayer requests, unbecoming of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the One who is at the right hand of God the Father in a position of authority to fulfill those requests.

James 1:6-7 “. . . ask in faith without any doubting . . . for that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.”

- In **Matthew 16:1** we observe that it wasn't just the Pharisees who came out to debate the Lord.
- The Sadducees were with them.
- The Sadducees had several disagreements with the Pharisees.
- The Sadducees were more liberal whereas the Pharisees were more rigid and dogmatic in their interpretation of the Law and the prophets.
- This produces a compromise between these parties to form a united front against the Lord.
- They are asking, in unbelief, that He give them a sign from heaven.
- They do not believe that He can!
 - That is why they are asking for a sign from heaven.
 - When He refuses to do it [*because He can't in their minds*], the thought in many minds that He might be the Messiah, will be extinguished.
 - This is the leaven of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Herodians.

Mark 8:12 *Sighing deeply in His spirit,*

ἀναστενάξας τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ

- **ἀναστενάζω – ANASTENAZO –**
 - Hapax legomenon – this occurs only one time in the Bible.
 - This is the result of our Savior's deep grief.
 - He sighs deeply in His spirit - from the depths of His humanity.
 - He's grieved because they don't believe in Him.
 - He knows what the results of unbelief are for the nation.

Matthew 23:37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

The Lord grieves because they are not willing in their unbelief.

Mark 8:12-22 Sighing deeply in His spirit, He said, “Why does this generation seek for a sign . . .

Matthew 16:4 “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign”

. . . Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.”

- From Matthew’s account He says – “except the sign of Jonah”
- Reference to His resurrection from the dead after being in the earth for three days

¹³ Leaving them, He again embarked and went away to the other side.

- Heading for Bethsaida proper

¹⁴ And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. ¹⁵ And He was giving orders to them, saying, “Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.”

- The Lord is referring to what the Pharisees are going to do with His refusal to provide a sign from heaven.
- “He didn’t do it because He can’t and therefore He is not the Messiah.”
- That’s enough leaven to leaven the whole lump of the nation with unbelief.

¹⁶ They began to discuss with one another *the fact* that they had no bread. ¹⁷ And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you discuss *the fact* that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart?” ¹⁸ “HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE? AND HAVING EARS, DO YOU NOT HEAR?”

- It should not matter to the disciples that they have only one loaf.
- When you take what you have and make it available to the Lord, He will do wonderful things with it.

“Why do you discuss *the fact* that you have no bread?”

Have you not seen me provide before?

And do you not remember, ¹⁹ when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?” They said to Him, “Twelve.” ²⁰ “When I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?” And they said to Him, “Seven.” ²¹ And He was saying to them, “Do you not yet understand?”

- He grieved over the rejection in unbelief and what the religious leaders are going to leaven the nation with as a result of His refusal to perform a sign from heaven.
- He’s also disappointed with the disciples.

PRINCIPLE: Don’t let your Savior grieve over your unbelief.

He stands at the ready to accomplish the impossible for those who believe.

All things are possible with Him who is at our Father’s right hand.

²² And they came to Bethsaida.

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.