

Matthew 12:38-50 The Sign of Jonah

There was a Christian lady who lived next door to an atheist. Houses were close

A)The Christian lady was a prayer warrior – prayed about everything – often prayed out loud

B)Summer months when the windows were open – the Atheist lady could hear – Christian Praying
1)It Drove her crazy!!!!

C)One day the Christian lady was praying for Provisions – this atheist heard the Christian lady praying for groceries because she had run out and she said, "Lord, I trust You. You can do anything and I know that You're going to provide my every need."
And she just listed the groceries that she needed and said in Jesus name.

D)**The Atheist decided – I'll show her**

1)Went out and bought everything the Christian lady mentioned in her prayer

The Atheist the next day put them on door step – rang door bell and hid in the Bushes

A)The Christian lady – Praise the Lord – I knew You would provide

B)Atheist lady jumps out – stupid Christian – it wasn't God – it was me.
1)Christian lady got even more excited –

C)The Atheist lady was perplexed – what are you so excited about
"I knew God was going to provide the groceries. I just didn't know He was going to make the devil pay for it."

At this time in the ministry of Jesus – the enemy in the form of the Religious leaders in Israel were coming against him in full force.

A)They were antagonistically opposed to him – always looking for some way to trip him up and bring him down.

B)But Jesus was not swayed one ounce by their tactics – **but always found a way to turn the tables on them so to speak.**

C)In the previous verses we see that they were

trying to say that – Jesus was casting out demons by the power of Satan.

Jesus' response to that was simple: That makes no sense because that would mean that Satan was fighting against himself.

A)Jesus proceeded to bring the indictment against them by suggesting that they were in danger of committing the unforgiveable sin

B)Their rejection of the Holy Spirit in their lives

C)We pick up with their response: V.38

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

A)Now we read that and think – are you guys serious – He has already Raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, healed withered hand

B)Cleansed a Leper – that had never been done in their History of Israel – we could go on and on

39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

A)Few things here that are worth noting: #1 **An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign**

B)**Contrary to popular belief – signs don't necessarily produce faith.**

1)These guys had seen plenty of "SIGNS" and MIRACLES – but they didn't believe

C)They didn't need another sign!

It is the same today, when many more signs than those seen by the men of that far distant day have been given.

A)Today there is overpowering evidence for the claims of Jesus to be the unique Son of God and the Savior.

B)People still will not believe, and it is an insult to God to claim that there is insufficient evidence.

C)I remember counseling with a guy a while back. – Said he didn't believe in Jesus. Didn't really believe in God.

I asked him – Have you ever studied the law of Design – the Design speaks of the Designer – existence of a Creator – NO

A)Have you ever looked into the reliability of the Bible?

B)Studies that have been done – Most reliable ancient document ever written – NO

C)Have you ever considered the proof pointing to the proof of the reliability of the Resurrection of Jesus – NO

D)Then I said- So you are telling me that you are basing your **entire ETERNAL DESTINY on a Hunch**

1)That none of this is true? - Uh – I guess so –

Then I said: **That is kind of stupid don't you think.**

A)I said: Look if I am wrong – I haven't lost much

B)But if you are wrong – you are going to spend eternity in Hell – not a fun place

1)He didn't know what to say

C)The Bottom line with him and so many like him – is this – He didn't want to believe in Jesus –

1)That would mean he would have someone to answer to and he didn't want that. -

They asked for a sign – Jesus said the only sign that would be given would be the sign of Jonah. –

A)What is the sign of Jonah – Resurrection!!!! –

B)Remember the story of Jonah: Go to Nineveh – preach- No

C)Ran in the opposite direction: Ship to Tarshish

1)Storm – throw me over board

D)Jonah was swallowed by the great fish – 3 days – nights

1)Cried out – Ok I will go and God had the Fish Barf Jonah on the beach

Researchers have said that Jonah would have looked like quite a sight – skin bleached from the acids – Hair all gone

A)Jonah was the sign – this dude cruises into town – Starts preaching – 40 days destruction comes

B)The whole city repents – Don't want to end up looking like him

C)Jesus says – that is the sign – **Resurrection – 3 days and nights in the fish –**

1)I will be 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth

People would see Jesus Risen! – Personal testimony!

A)That would be the ultimate SIGN – OUR WHOLE faith hinges on that –

B)If Jesus didn't rise from the dead – Our faith is in Vain

1)This is all meaningless

1 Corinthians 15:13-14

¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. ¹⁴ And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

C)Everything hinges on the Resurrection!!!!

Another thing that is interesting to note about Jesus' response is that – He validates the story of Jonah.

A)There have been those who have argued that it is physically impossible for a man to have been swallowed by a whale and survive.

B)Not what is interesting is that there are some documented accounts of a few men who had whaling ships

1)Recovered and were alive.

C)But even more so than that – Jesus here speaks of the Story of Jonah as a fact – **a real guy was swallowed by this great fish**

1)NOTE: DOESN'T SAY A WHALE –

Love the story of the little first grade girl – public school – came to school one Monday –

A)Teacher asked – Anyone do anything exciting this weekend

Little girl – I went to church and learned about the story of Jonah being swallowed by a whale

B)The teacher said – that story is not true – began to site how the grey whales throat was not big enough for a man to pass through

C)The little girl argued – no the Bible says it is true and when I get to heaven – **I am going to ask Jonah how it happened**

1)To which the teacher replied – what if Jonah isn't in heaven – what if he is in Hell? – **THEN YOU CAN ASK HIM**

SO JESUS declares the only sign you will see – big one – Sign of Jonah – Resurrection!!!

V.41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a **greater than Jonah is here.** Nineveh repented – Israel would not

⁴² The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is here.*

Jesus is referring to the account in 1 Kings 10, wherein we read the Queen of Sheba cruised up from Africa to see Solomon.

A)Having heard about his splendor, his majesty, and his wisdom, she went away saying, “Amazing!

B)The half wasn't even told to me. What I've seen here is a mind blower.” **Yet a greater King than Solomon was in their midst.**

C)Solomon had wisdom from God.

➤ Jesus is the wisdom of God.

1)Solomon was a great king.

➤ Jesus is the King of kings.

D)Solomon spoke practically to his nation.

➤ Jesus spoke powerfully to all of creation.

E)Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba gifts.

➤ Jesus is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think.

At this point Jesus proceeds to given an interesting analogy

⁴³ “When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none.

⁴⁴ Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds *it empty,*

swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”

Now this analogy is not primarily meant to be a teaching on Demonology – but an illustration of what was happening in Israel

A)**Demon possession is real** – but I think that the Bible makes it clear that a Christian cannot be demon possessed

B)Light and Darkness – don't mix – Holy Spirit lives in a Christian so a demon Cannot –

C)And in most cases in a Christian setting when a person gets delivered from Demon Possession – they receive Christ

1)His Spirit comes to live inside of them

D)But in an instant when a person doesn't become a Christian –

1)Jesus is saying the Demon can come back with friends

But the Primary reason he gives this analogy is – He is really pointing out what the people of Israel have been doing.

A)**Key Phrase is there at the end: So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”**

B)See even though the nation had turned from the idolatry of it's past –

1)**She still wasn't in a right place with God.**

C)They had merely cleaned up the outside of the vessel –

1)they swept things clean – but had neglected to take care of the heart.

D)A problem that plagues religious Israel to this day.

E)The evil that had come upon the nation in the past was greatly surpassed by Hitler and the Nazi's

1)And will be even worse – when the Anti-Christ comes into Power

Application for us is this:

A)It doesn't do any good for us to clean up the outside of our lives – **if we are going to neglect the heart.**

B)Jesus called the religious leaders in Israel – whitewashed tombs

1)They looked good on the outside – robes and prayers and rituals

C)But they were full of dead men's bones

Same is true today: Many people who religiously look good on the outside –

A)But they are dead on the Inside – because they don't know Christ!

B)Change that IGNORES THE HEART WILL NOT TRANSFORM A LIFE!!!

C)Why our emphasize is not merely REFORMATION –

1)OUR society doesn't need REFORM

D)As much as it needs REGENERATION – REVIVAL

Now what happens next in our text is very interesting;

46 While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him. 47 Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."

48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?"

49 And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!

50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

A)Now Mark's gospel Chapter 3:21 tells us that his family had showed up – **because they thought Jesus had snapped**

B)They thought he was out of his mind. – They had been hearing the reports – teaching about Dying

C)We need to go and rescue him – that is why they showed up

Which is a really interesting thing to ponder – that really highlights how normal Jesus was as a kid / teens and 20's

A)Remember he didn't begin his public ministry until he was 30 years old.

B)He grew up in Nazareth – Mary and Joseph had other Children together – Jesus had Bros/ sisters

C)But we know that his brother James and Jude were not believers in him during his earthly ministry.

1)That is our brother – he has this messiah complex – not buying it

D)**Jesus was just a normal kid:** Wasn't miraculously doing his chores - Crazy to think about

But James and Jude would become radical followers of Jesus – after the Resurrection!

A)To me it is another great proof text to the VALIDITY OF THE Resurrection!

B)His bros – didn't believe before – but radically did after

C)James would call Jesus in his epistle: His Lord!!!

1)That is quite a Change!!!

But at this point they show up to take Jesus away- "Save him from himself"

A)Jesus says who are my brothers and sisters – In other words there is something greater than Physical Family

B)**It is the Spiritual Family** - My Brother and sister and mother – are the ones who do the will of my Father – Heavenly Father

C)John 6 ²⁸ Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

²⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

D)That is the Will of God – Believe on his Son

When We believe – we are connected – Family

A)Blood brothers and sisters – Connected by the Blood of Jesus Christ!!!!

B)Do you belong to the family of God?

C)Tonight – Pray