



## World Christian Fellowship

[www.wcflondon.com](http://www.wcflondon.com)  
[wcflondon@gmail.com](mailto:wcflondon@gmail.com)

### 8<sup>th</sup> Response to Jesus- Hard Soil- Spiritual Blindness! Matthew 16:1-4

**Matthew 16:1-4**, *Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. <sup>2</sup>He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; <sup>3</sup>and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. <sup>4</sup>A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.*

**Chapter 13**, Kingdom Parables were spoken.

**Chapter 13**, Jesus says how the world is going to react to them. What it's going to be like out there as they labour and minister in the harvest.

Matthew gives us from **Matthew 13:53 till Matthew 16:12**, **eight incidents** in the life of our Lord which illustrate the kind of response that there will be to the King.

They are masterfully presented.

1<sup>st</sup> response: **Matthew 13:53-58**- Unbelief!

2<sup>nd</sup> response: **Matthew 14:1-12** Fear that Forfeit's Christ!

3<sup>rd</sup> response: **Matthew 14:12-21** Faith for only materials!

4<sup>th</sup> response: **Matthew 14:22-33** Jesus is Lord.

5<sup>th</sup> Response: **Matthew 14:36-15:20** Vain Worship.

6<sup>th</sup> Response: **Matthew 15:21-28** Mega Faith- Good Soil.

7<sup>th</sup> Response: **Matthew 15:29-39** Shallow Faith- Wayside Soil.

**Matthew chapter 13**, the Lord described this age. It began with His rejection, and it ends with His return.

This long sweep of time already nearly **2000 years**, this long period of time He called a mystery time.

In the Old Testament, there was clear prediction of the ultimate Kingdom, the millennial Kingdom, and how it would be. It is described in detail, but we are not there yet.

In the meantime, we are in a time that wasn't really described. It was hidden. That's why it was called a mystery.

**Matthew 13**, the Lord says, "Here are the parables that explain to you the nature of this mystery time." Jesus gave **8 parables**.

Now, the singular mark of those parables was to teach that the mystery time, the time in which we live, from the rejection to the return.

This time where there is mixture of belief and unbelief.  
Mixture of receiving and rejecting.

After giving us the parables to define this time as a time when some will believe but most will reject, the mixture that's the characteristic of the Kingdom, the wheat and the tares growing together.

After laying that out in parable form, the Lord then, in Matthew's gospel, gives eight illustrations of this period of time.

**6 out of the 8 discuss the rejection.**

The other two are dominated by the faith that exists in this time.

Mainly rejection, but some who believe.

We are at the last of those illustrations.

Those eight illustrations began in **13:53** and end in **16:12**.

The characteristic of the rejecters.

We will get a glimpse of the disciples who portray for us the good soil that received and believed the Word.

In the spiritual world, there are two kinds.

- There are the blind who will never see it,
- There are the blind who will be made to see it.

This passage we meet both kinds.

The difference between the two is what a person does with Jesus Christ.

- If you follow Jesus Christ and believe in Him, He makes you to see.
- If you reject Him, you go through life and eternity blind to spiritual reality.

**John 1:5-10**, *And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. <sup>8</sup> He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. <sup>9</sup> That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. <sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.*

**Romans 1:21**, *because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

**1 Corinthians 2:14**, *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

**1 Corinthians 2:8**, *But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."*

John says, "Men are blind."

Paul says, "Men are blind."

**Ephesians 4:17**, *This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,*

Men do not see.

**Psalms 82:5**, They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are unstable.

**Isaiah** said, "They have eyes, but they see not."

**Jeremiah** said the same thing.

**Exodus 5:2**, *And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go."*

Of course, Pharaoh didn't know the Lord.

No one does on their own.

**Psalm 73:22**, *I was so foolish and ignorant; I was like a beast before You.*

**Proverbs 4:19**, *The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble.*

**Isaiah 5:13**, *Therefore my people have gone into captivity, Because they have no knowledge; Their honourable men are famished, And their multitude dried up with thirst.*

**Isaiah 42:18**, *“Hear, you deaf; And look, you blind, that you may see.*

**Jeremiah 5:21**, *‘Hear this now, O foolish people, Without understanding, Who have eyes and see not, And who have ears and hear not:*

**Micah 4:12**, *But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord, Nor do they understand His counsel; For He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor.*

Now, men are blind.

We are physical creatures, incarcerated in a physical world of perception and unable to get outside of that to really perceive divine reality.

The Bible also says that three things contribute to the totality of this blind darkness.

1. Sin
2. Satan
3. God

### **1. Sin**

We are blind because sin has blinded us.

Sin is paralleled in the Scripture very often with darkness, and the Bible says that we walk in darkness.

**John 3:19**, *And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

We are trapped in the darkness of sin.

### **2. Satan.**

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**, *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup>whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

There is the blindness of sin compounded by the blindness of Satan.

### 3. God.

The blindness of sovereign judgment, and that's where God gets into the act.

**Luke 19:42-44**, saying, *“If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup>For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, <sup>44</sup>and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”*

You didn't perceive the spiritual reality.

You didn't see the sign of the times.

You didn't awaken to light when light was here.

God affirms that they are in blindness.

Men are triply blind.

- They are blinded by sin,
- They are blinded by Satan,
- They are blinded by sovereign God who places upon them the judgment of supernatural blindness.

The world is blind, all of us.

We were all sinners.

We were all in some sense subject to Satan's dominion and, consequently, under the judgment of God, and so we don't see that Kingdom that belongs to God.

Most people just go through the world as if the world was all there ever. Just grab it now while you got it and make the most of it because it isn't going to last forever.

This is the perception of the world around them, and they miss the reality of the spiritual dimension.

### **Main Transition.**

The Pharisees and the Sadducees. It is the last time that He really offers to them an invitation.

From now on when Jesus meets with them, it is a condemnation.

As if Jesus has flipped the switch right here and the lights went out. That was wilful, sinful blindness and satanic blindness becomes sovereign blindness.

It is at this point in which there is a very clear distinction. It is a transition in the Gospel of Matthew.

**Matthew 16:13**, onwards Jesus begins to spend His time with His disciples. Jesus has turning away from those who have ultimately rejected.

Jesus abandons them and He focuses on His own.

Jesus' ministry priority becomes not the multitudes, crowds, sceptics, but teaching, discipling His own. So that they will be ready for the task at hand when He leaves.

There are no more signs for the rejecters, only instruction for those who believe.

That is why we see in the passage the blind who will never see, and the blind who will see because the Lord reveals truth to them.

**V 1**, *Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.*

We come face to face with the rejecters again.

Wicked, personally wilfully blinded by their own sin.

Satanically blinded, and now sovereignly blinded by God.

**Matthew 13:14-15**, *And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; <sup>15</sup> For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see*

*with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'*

### **Where is Jesus now?**

Lord had just been across on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee in an area known as Decapolis, which stands for ten cities. A gentile area.

Jesus had fed four thousand men plus women and children. When they finished, He got in a boat and came across to the western shore.

**Matthew 15:39**, *And He sent away the multitude, got into the boat, and came to the region of Magdala.*

As soon as He gets out of the boat, He is back in Jewish territory.

Originally Jesus went north through Tyre and Sidon. Then He went over across the top, crossing the Jordan. Dropped down the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee to Decapolis.

As soon as He steps on the Jewish shore, He is immediately hit by His enemies. They waste no time in approaching Him.

The characteristics of people whose blindness will never end.

## 1. Seek darkness.

They seek fellowship with darkness.

**V 1,** *“The Pharisees with Sadducees came.”*

The Pharisees with Sadducees mingled in, and the Pharisees are the leaders.

They are named first.

Mark says the Pharisees do the speaking they are joined with Sadducees.

They both hated each other.

### **Who are the Pharisees?**

The Pharisees form the largest religious political party in New Testament times.

**Pharisees” means “separated.”** The Pharisees are believed to have separated themselves from society to teach the law. Some of them also believe that they separated from society because they considered themselves impure religious.

The Pharisees began with the Maccabees, and their main focus was teaching oral and written law and emphasizing Judaism.

The Pharisees led a simple life and had influence throughout all of Israel. They seemed loving and humble. They put great emphasis on oral tradition.

The Pharisees started Jewish gathering places known as synagogues, which became centres of local worship and education. Pharisees system of religion was more external than genuine faith.

The beliefs of the Pharisees include that the resurrection of the body, life after death, they believed that God should be believed and worshiped even outside the temple, education, oral teachings, etc.,

Their beliefs were contradictory compared to Jesus.

### **Who are the Sadducees?**

The Sadducees were the members of a religious group in Israel that had all powers except the military.

They were mainly the Jewish aristocrats known for their corrupt nature and devotion to God.

Sadducees name is believed to be derived from the Old Testament **High priest, Zadok.**

The Sadducees had a strong control over two institutions:  
**Sanhedrin and the temple in Jerusalem.**

The Sanhedrin was the body used for the government and legal affairs of the Jews, it was controlled by a high priest, usually a king, as an authority who was generally a Sadducee.

The Sadducees were described as a “lineage of vipers.”  
Jesus called them an “evil and adulterous generation.”  
Jesus even spoke of the Sadducees and warned his disciples about deceptive teachings.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Sadducees is that the members were primarily aristocrats or nobles by birth.

The Sadducees are believed to have had good connections with the political authorities in Rome and thus also had great influence over the political system.

The Sadducees loved to get mingled up politically with the gentile culture.

In fact, one of their daughters married Herod, and they even got mingled up with the Herodians.

They were compromisers.

They were politicians.

### **The beliefs of the Sadducees include.**

Belief in the Bible emphasized the first five books of Moses.

They believed that God had no role in the life of humans and that all that mattered is the fate of people.

They rejected the idea of supernatural things like an angel, demon, devil, hell, or heaven. etc.,

They strictly prohibited the oral tradition of the Pharisees.

## **Main differences between Pharisees and Sadducees**

- The Pharisees believed in the idea of the resurrection of the body, on the other hand, the Sadducees rejected the idea of the resurrection of the body.
- The Pharisees believed in supernatural elements such as hell, heaven, the devil, angels, etc., on the other hand, the Sadducees did not believe in such concepts.
- The teachings and beliefs of the Pharisees included oral traditions of teaching the law. On the other hand, the teachings and beliefs of the Sadducees rejected the oral tradition of teaching the law.
- The Pharisees were very dedicated to the cultural practices of Judaism, on the other hand, the Sadducees were more focused towards politics and other sectors except the military.
- The Pharisees were known as “new money” according to modern terminology, on the other hand, the Sadducees were known as “old money” according to modern terminology.
- The Pharisees were connected with the common people of Jewish culture, on the other hand, the Sadducees were connected with the aristocrats.

Pharisees and Sadducees were the two main groups that influenced culture and politics in Israel.

They both had different beliefs and teachings, their ways were different from each other, their goal was probably to worship God.

Both rejected the ideas and teachings of the other as the Sadducees rejected the idea of the oral teachings of the law.

They both had similarities as well, such as they did not like Jesus and therefore conspired against Jesus Christ and wanted Him to die. As Jesus' teachings and beliefs were more influential and different from both the Pharisees and Sadducees.

**Acts 23:6-10**, *But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!"* <sup>7</sup> *And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided.* <sup>8</sup> *For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.* <sup>9</sup> *Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees' party arose and protested, saying, "We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God."* <sup>10</sup> *Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.*

The amazing thing is that they got together here to come to Jesus to attack Him.

Here Pharisees, and the Sadducees have heard all that Jesus said, they have seen all that He has done, this massive display of divine power, and instead of seeking the light, they go back into the pit of darkness.

Always that's the way with people who are wilfully, sinfully blind. They do not come to the light for the answer. They go back into the same pit they have come out of and try to find truth from that pit. Because they are not willing to admit that there's none there.

They seek no light.

They are classic illustrations of our Lord's definition.

**Matthew 15:14**, *Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."*

So, the blind Pharisees go get the blind Sadducees.

They both come.

The Pharisees are the separatists, the Sadducees are the compromisers.

But these two can get together to get rid of their common enemy because even though they had those differences, it's

interesting to note that they both believed you were saved by works, self-righteousness, and on that they could agree, and so they came to attack Jesus.

Isn't it interesting how people who are sinfully blind always seem to seek the fellowship of others like themselves?

The characteristic of someone whose blindness will be permanent blindness because they never really seek the light. All they do is go into the pit to pull up the same kind of garbage that they themselves have found.

So, the ritualists and the rationalists join forces on the basis of a mutual contempt of Jesus Christ. Evil company.

They won't read the Scripture, obviously. They won't talk to the disciples. They love their darkness. In fact, the light is a terrible threat to them, just a terrible threat.

## **2. Trouble the light.**

*V 1, Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.*

They were offering Him a test, which they hoped He would fail.

They weren't trying to get Him to demonstrate and show them the truth so they could say, "we now believe."

- They were trying to discredit Him publicly.
- They were trying to make Him look bad.
- They were trying to get Him to do something He couldn't do.

When He couldn't do it, He would be publicly shamed and embarrassed.

Jesus Himself was a sign from heaven.

**Luke 2:34**, *Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against."*

**Where did they think He got all that food to feed the fifty thousand that must have been in those two feedings?**

Not from the earth.

**Where did those limbs come from that He reattached, and those eyes, and that life that He breathed into those who were dead?**

All they wanted to do was discredit him.

**John 8:6**, *This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.*

They wanted only to curse the light, that's all.

There are people who come to Christianity who want nothing more than to curse the light. They are not really interested in the truth, they only come to trouble the light.

The Jews had a superstition that demons could do earthly miracles, but only God could do heavenly ones.

### **What have you done could have been demons?**

**Matthew 12:24**, *Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons."*

Now they are saying that you do a heavenly one. They could have said, "*Joshua made the moon and the sun stand still. Elijah made fire come out of heaven. Now you do something up there in the heaven*".

It says a sign from heaven, proceeding out of heaven, rather than on earth.

We want to see it in the sky. They had rejected every single thing He had done already as being anything evidential of His Messiahship.

Even Nicodemus, who was a lot smarter than they were and a lot more pious had affirmed.

**John 3:2**, *This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."*

They had ignored all of that, and all they wanted to do was make Jesus look bad publicly.

They couldn't understand anything spiritual. They were of their father, the devil.

**John 8:44**, *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

They wanted signs, proof, only that Jesus might be discredited.

### **They are no different than Pharaoh!**

God kept demonstrating His power to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh kept hardening his heart.

He didn't want any answers.

He didn't want any signs.

Finally, God just devastated the whole kingdom.

They are little different than the brothers of the rich man.

**Luke 16:27-31**, *“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house,<sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’<sup>29</sup> Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’<sup>30</sup> And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’<sup>31</sup> But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’”*

If a person’s heart is turned to darkness, when the light comes, they will curse the light.

Unbelief will always find a way to reject the truth.  
Even today.

When they ask for signs, it was a mockery.

The blindness that will never see is that which looks only to fellowship with the darkness, and which curses the light.

You see people in religion who never want to come to the real light of the Word of God. Maybe they are the liberal critics of Scripture, the ones who want to deny the truth of God.

- They want to run to philosophy.
- They want to run to man’s religion.
- They want to run to human intellect.

- They want to run to rationalism.
- They want to run to scepticism.
- They want to run to their own ego and their own intellect.

All they are doing by doing that is demonstrating that they seek the darkness, not the light because they very often hold in their hand the light.

Then there are all those people who are in religions that are not of God. Religions that are total darkness, total blackness.

People hear some story about Mary appearing and then worship the place.

When you see people who are blind, whose blindness will never be eliminated, it is because they pursue like mad the darkness. Because when the light comes around, they curse the light.

The light's the only thing that can expose them, but they don't want to be exposed because they are not ready to give up their sin.

Now, our Lord's reply is masterful.

**V 2-3**, *He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red';<sup>3</sup> and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and*

*threatening.’ Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.*

A poor man’s weather report.

Mariner’s poem, **“Red sky at night, sailor’s delight. Red sky in the morning, sailor’s warning”**

Basically, they say that if the sky is red at night, it’s going to be a beautiful day the next day.

If the sky’s red in the morning, it’s going to be a stormy day.

Jesus tells them that you are good at telling the weather.

You got the little deals down.

You know what the common feeling is red sky at night.

You are good with the physical perceptions.

You can see the sign, clouds, and red sky, and you can say about the weather.

But you hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.

Your sensitivity to weather makes a mockery out of your insensitivity to God’s Kingdom.

Because you are not meteorologists.

You are better at the weather than you are at theology!

**What an indictment?**

This illustration was also used by our Lord in another context or a similar one in Luke 12.

**Luke 12:54-56**, *Then He also said to the multitudes, “Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, ‘A shower is coming’; and so it is. <sup>55</sup>And when you see the south wind blow, you say, ‘There will be hot weather’; and there is. <sup>56</sup>Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?*

They could see physical signs but not Spirit.

They thought that they knew what God was doing.

They were the religious experts, the theological experts, the experts on the Kingdom movements of God.

Jesus said to them.

- ✓ You haven't got a clue.
- ✓ You don't even know what's going on.
- ✓ You didn't recognize John the Baptist.
- ✓ You didn't recognize the Messiah.
- ✓ You didn't know what the miracles meant.
- ✓ You didn't know what my teachings meant.
- ✓ You missed the whole thing.

### 3. Go into deeper darkness.

They seek the darkness.

When the light comes, they curse the light and run deeper into the darkness.

The more miracles deeper they went into their rejection.

**Matthew 23:16**, *“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.’*

Jesus calls them *“blind guides.”*

**Can you imagine a blind guide?**

Most interesting insight into the Lord.

**Mark 8:12**, *But He sighed deeply in His spirit, and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Assuredly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.”*

“He sighed deeply in His spirit,” I wonder what His emotions were and what He was feeling and the pain.

Great emotion gripped His heart.

*You can’t discern the signs of the times.*

The word “times” here is not **chronos**,  
Minutes, hours, days, and weeks.

It's *Kairos*, seasons, periods, movements.

In other words, it isn't that you don't know what time of day, it's that you don't know what period in the flow of redemptive history.

You can't read God's working in the world.

This is a terrible indictment.

They don't see God's Kingdom.

They can't read the realities.

- We have got people who can tell you about the stock market. They can tell you whether it's going to go up and going to go.
- They can tell you about gold, whether gold's going to go up or down.
- They can tell you about economics and currency market.
- They can tell you whether you ought to buy or sell.
- They can tell you whether the interest rate's going to go up or down.
- They can tell you whether there is going to be an oil glut or a shortage.
- They can tell you whether we are going to have an increase in interest rates regarding mortgages or not.
- They can tell you what the latest fashions are going to be.
- People can tell you the social modes.
- People can tell you about the trends in education.

- They can predict wars, hot wars, cold wars, movements of nations.
- They can predict what's going to happen in the future.

They don't know because they cannot perceive the Kingdom of God.

**Story about a blind person asking the author of medium teller book story.**

The Pharisees didn't know anything, and there are so many people in our society like that.

The signs were all there.

**Matthew 11** disciples of **John the Baptist** came to Jesus asked Him about the Messiah.

**Matthew 11:3-5**, and said to Him, *"Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"*<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, *"Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

The signs are all over the place, but the unbelieving heart will never see the signs.

It is true even today.

There are signs all around that Jesus is coming back.

**Do you know what they are?**

**Do you know the hour in which you live?**

**Do you know how close it is to midnight?**

The disciples asked Jesus.

**Matthew 24:3**, *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*

There will be wars, pestilence, earthquakes, famines, etc.

We are living in time when you ought to look at the signs.

The Bible says, "In the end time, when Jesus comes, the hostile power to the north is going to come against Israel."

Certainly, we are at a time when we could easily understand that.

Finding out what God is doing because the truth is it doesn't matter what men are doing. Only matters what God is doing.

#### **4. Abandoned by God.**

*V 4, A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.*

People who are blind and will never see seek the darkness, curse the light, plunge deeper into darkness, and finally are abandoned by God.

Jesus calls them wicked because they are so evil, and adulterous because they have defected from their relationship to God, which Israel had given had been given.

They are an unfaithful wife.

They are adulterous spiritually.

Jesus calls them an evil and unfaithful generation who seek a sign. You wicked, unfaithful people are seeking a sign.

No sign will be given you.

God doesn't go around trying to convince the heart that seeks the darkness, curses the light, and plunges deeper and deeper into the pit.

That is not the heart that God responds to.

There's no sign.

The only sign, and that's going to be a sign for everybody, is the sign of the prophet Jonah.

### **What is the sign of the prophet Jonah?**

**Matthew 12:38-41**, *Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."<sup>39</sup> 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.<sup>40</sup> 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.<sup>41</sup> 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.*

Here is the sign.  
The resurrection.

Jonah was a type or an example or a model or an illustration of Christ going into the grave and rising.

The only sign you are going to see is the resurrection. Only Jonah's generation's going to be better off than you are because Jonah's generation repented, and you won't, and they didn't!

These same religious leaders, when they knew of the resurrection, took money, and bribed the soldiers not to say anything about Him rising.

**Matthew 28:11-15**, *Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. <sup>12</sup>When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, <sup>13</sup>saying, "Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.' <sup>14</sup>And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will appease him and make you secure." <sup>15</sup>So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.*

They cursed the light. Even when the resurrection happened, they bought off the soldiers' silence with money, see.

### **What is the result?**

**V 4**, *"He left them and departed."*

That is a severe word.

He abandoned them.

When God abandons somebody, that is the most severe of all acts!

That is what happens to people who are blind, seek only darkness, curse the light, plunge deeper. They are abandoned by God.

This passage, beloved, is a warning to you.

If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour,  
if you have not received the light of Christ,  
if you have not come to have your sin exposed and opened your heart to Jesus Christ and let the light flood you, that light which lights eternally the soul of one who believes,  
if you have not had that happen, then you are all always in the danger of going to the point where God abandons you to your darkness.

That is tragic!