
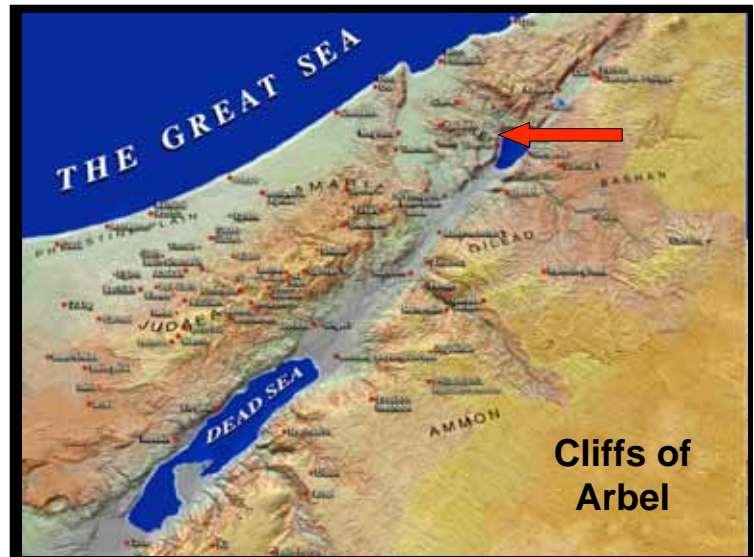


When Proof Is Not Enough



I. The Portrait of Unbelief (10-11)

- Background...
 - 7:24 - Jesus leaves Israel and heads to Tyre.
 - For several months ministers to gentiles in gentile cities and countries.
 - 7:31-37 & 8:1-9 both took place in the primarily gentile area on the east of the lake, an area called Decapolis.



Arbel, Sea of Galilee from Horns of Hattin



Dalmanutha

- On the western edge of the lake.
- Cf. Matt. 15:39 - And sending away the crowds, Jesus got into the boat and came to the region of Magadan.
 - Magadan is another name for Magdala.
 - A city in the plain of Gennesaret.



Arbel cliff and Plain of Gennesaret



Arbel cliff

Why back to Israel?

- 1) Jesus intended to minister in Israel again at length, but He changed His plans after encountering the antagonism of the Jewish leaders.
- 2) Jesus intended this to be a very short trip, knowing the response He would get.



Galilee shoreline from above (northwest corner)

The Sadducees

- Matt. 16:1 - The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.
 - Arose during the Inter-testamental period.
 - Primarily *priests*.
 - Mostly, the wealthy, aristocratic families that controlled the office of the high priest.
 - Most of the political leaders.
 - Believed the Pentateuch literally, but rejected oral law.
 - Anti-supernaturalists.
 - God doesn't intervene in the world he made.
 - There is no spirit world (angels).
 - And there is no resurrection.
 - Pragmatists and Hellenists.

Dalmanutha

- Two options...
 - 1) Magadan and Dalmanutha are simply different names for the same place.
 - Greek name for Magdala (Magadan) was Tarichea, which means salted or pickled fish.
 - 2) Magadan and Dalmanutha are distinct, but close to each other.
 - A cave just south of Magdala with the name Talmanutha engraved.
 - A small harbor and anchorage between Magdala and Capernaum.

A True Prophet?

- The OT required that to accept a prophet as legitimate, that several requirements be met...
 - 1) Deut. 18:21-22—the true prophet's predictions will always come true.
 - 2) Deut. 13:1-5—the true prophet's message will always be in complete doctrinal agreement with previous revelation.
 - 3) In addition, God would often authenticate the true prophet by empowering him to work miracles (Ex. 4:1-5, 27-31; 8:16-19).

Plenty of Signs!

- These leaders had personally witnessed a number of His miracles with their own eyes.
 - 1:21-25 – in the Synagogue on the Sabbath
 - 1:38-39 – in the synagogues throughout Galilee
 - 1:44 – a leper's healing made known to the priests
 - 2:5-7 – Jesus heals the paralytic and forgives his sin with scribes present.
 - 3:1-2 – healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath in the synagogue.
- And they have come to their verdict about Jesus.
 - 3:22 - The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

Two Basic Approaches to Proving the Truth

- 1) The Evidentialist
 - We all possess a common pool of facts and evidence.
 - A careful use of reason to assess these facts will lead to the agreement that Christianity is true and possibly to acceptance of the gospel.
- 2) The Presuppositionalist
 - God has revealed himself in creation, providence and conscience.
 - Man knows that revelation and knows it to be true (Rom. 1).
 - Man willfully and sinfully chooses to deny or disregard that revelation—or to hold it down (Rom. 1:18).
 - In fact, man is dead to God and unable to choose good if confronted with it.
 - Therefore, unbelievers cannot be rationally argued into saving faith; instead, God must bring regeneration (Eph. 2:1-5).
 - God accomplishes regeneration by means of the Spirit using the Word of God.

A Sign from Heaven

- Moses – bread from heaven (Ex. 16:15).
- Joshua – sun stand still (Josh. 10:13).
- Samuel – thunder and rain at harvest (1 Sam. 12:18).
- Elijah – calling down fire from heaven (1 Kings 18:38).
- Isaiah – the shadow of the sun dial reversed (2 Kings 20:11).
- This sign was to prove the source of Jesus' power.

II. Jesus' Reaction to Unbelief (12-13)


- Matt. 16:4 - "A sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah."
- Matt. 12:39-40 - But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; 40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
- Luke 11:29-30 (several weeks after Mark 8) - As the crowds were increasing, He began to say, "This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign, and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah. 30 "For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so will the Son of Man be to this generation.

Proof is Never Enough

- Miracles were intended to convince:
 - John 10:37-38 - "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."
- But miracles of themselves are not enough to bring a produce true faith:
 - John 7:5 - For not even His brothers were believing in Him.
 - John 12:37 - But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.
 - Luke 16:31 - "But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

II. Jesus' Reaction to Unbelief (12-13)

- Ps. 81:12 - "So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart, to walk in their own devices.
- Jer. 23:33 - "Now when this people or the prophet or a priest asks you saying, 'What is the oracle of the LORD?' then you shall say to them, 'What oracle?' The LORD declares, 'I will abandon you.'
- Matt. 7:6 - "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.
- Matt. 15:14 - "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."
- John 8:21 - Then He said again to them, "I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come."



II. Jesus' Reaction to Unbelief (12-13)

- John 12:36 - "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.
- Acts 13:45-46 - But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and *began* contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. 46 Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.
- Rom. 11:20 - Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief; but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;
- Cf. John 7:17 - "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether* I speak from Myself.