



May 01, 2022

# **Lakeland Hills Leader**

Lakeland Hills Blvd Church of Christ - 2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd, Lakeland Florida 33805

---

## **A Wicked Generation Seeks A Sign**

*Luke 11:29-32*

*By Chuck Richardson*

A wicked generation seeks a sign when many have been given already. This is the condition of the Pharisees in particular, in their request of Jesus, then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.” (Mat. 12:38 NASB95) And Matthew records Jesus as calling them an adulterous generation, saying to them, no sign will be given but the sign of Jonah the prophet (Mat. 12:39b NASB95).

These Jewish men had Jesus the Son of God in their presence with all the magnificence of His speech and deeds, and still were asking for more, a sad tragedy indeed. It is no wonder that Jesus would answer them in this way. We know they weren’t looking for more evidence in order that they might believe. The text in Matthew and Luke doesn’t explain their motive explicitly, but we know Jesus calls them adulterous and wicked, noting their insincere request. Jesus could have given them more of the same, but nothing would change their attitude. In fact, the FATHER, at Jesus baptism, clearly stated Jesus’ origin to a number of John’s disciples (Mar. 1:10,11); so, when you couple that with the words and deeds of Jesus, their adulterous hearts are laid bare.

So, why does Jesus say, “no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah.” (v. 29) Matthew records that as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster” (NASB95, fish), “so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Mat. 12:40b) Therefore these Pharisees are receiving prophesy of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection as the reality of Jonah’s experience approximately 800 years prior. But notice that Luke records Jonah’s sign as faith and repentance (Luke 11:31,32).

The Queen of the South (Sheba) came from far away (believed to be from Yemen app. 1000 miles away), to hear the wisdom of Solomon. All, including Jesus’ audience, knew if Jesus is who He says He is, then they were witnesses to His words and deeds. If this Queen of the South believed Solomon based upon reports coming into the kingdom, why won’t these who are present with Jesus not believe in one who is greater than Solomon? Conclusion: they were faithless. Jesus gave Israel examples of those with faith that weren’t expected to have faith. A centurion believed in Jesus’ authority and thus His power (Mat. 8:5-13. Jesus in turn, did as this man asked and prophesied that “many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (v. 11,12 NASB95).

A Syro-Phoenician woman went to great lengths to have Jesus save her daughter (Mar. 7:24-30). She sought after Jesus and when she found Him, she kept asking Him to heal her daughter and Jesus finally said, “Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.” (v. 27 NASB95) But she replies, “Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the children’s crumbs.” (v. 28 NASB95) So Jesus gave her what she asked for because of this answer. Another time, Jesus was to be killed because He dared declare that Elijah and Elisha were well received by Gentiles because Israel was faithless (Luk. 4:22-29). Jesus’ hometown people rejected Him wholesale because they would not believe He was truly the Son of God, just as these Pharisees asking for a sign. So, the Queen of the South would “rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them” because she had faith and they didn’t.

Likewise, Jesus said the sign of Jonah was a demonstration of repentance. Though Jonah tried hard to prevent the forgiveness of the people of Nineveh, the people repented, and the Lord forgave like the merciful God He is. Just as the illustration of Solomon, someone greater than Jonah is here. Like Solomon, the sign of Jesus is more powerful and yet, Nineveh repented at the show of a lesser sign. A whole city, possibly 200,000 strong, repented in sackcloth and the king too, wore sackcloth and sat in ashes while he and the nobles made a decree that all man, beast, and flock, were not to eat or drink water

water during this mourning period (Jonah 3).

This my friend is a powerful testimony of the power of the call to repentance, and still Jesus wouldn't receive the faintest of penitence in the heart of these rulers. The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

(Luke 11:32 NASB95)

Therefore, we conclude that the signs of the Queen of the South and the Ninevites are sufficient to have a penitent belief, and yet the Lord has been even more gracious to us, as He was to Israel, in sending His Son. Are we going to look for another sign? Many have, just as the Pharisees. Will we believe the sign already given? I hope so, because if we don't, we'll receive the same condemnation as the Pharisees.