

Day 24

And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?" 8.11-21

Ironically, the one occasion on which Mark does use the term signs is when he vows "no sign will be given to this generation." What can this mean? Certainly not that his miracles are not signs, for he goes on to chide his disciples for not comprehending the feeding of the five, and then the four thousand.



Clearly there are signs and there are signs; or rather there are those to whom Jesus will give signs and those to whom he will not give signs, those for whom signs will inspire faith and those in whose hands signs will become weapons. Signs are of no use to the blind, and even those with partial sight may misread them. Jesus uses them sparingly and retains control over them. They must serve his purposes, not those of his opponents.

The problem with the Pharisees is that they have rejected every sign Jesus has given of his heavenly power, including the defeat of Satan, and are asking for something which accords with their own expectations - probably some dramatic upheaval of the planets, such as the darkening of the sun and the moon. They will reject the greatest signs too: the cross and the empty tomb.

The problem with the disciples is that they are thinking carnally rather than spiritually. When Jesus uses the term 'leaven' metaphorically, they take it literally and miss the spiritual truth he is conveying. They will do the same thing with Jesus' kingship and his kingdom, which will manifest themselves not in the ways they expect.

Spiritual sight is essential. Without it, one cannot see God's kingdom or recognise the King.

? How do you think of God's kingdom? Are your hopes and expectations more carnal or spiritual?

 Sovereign Lord, I praise you that your kingdom is coming on earth as it is in heaven. Help me to read aright the signs you do give, and not to seek for ones not of you. In your name I pray. Amen.