

Why Jesus Spoke Literally to His Friends but Not Always to Others

[Matthew 12:38-39](#) Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered, "Rabbi, **we want to see a sign from you.**" 39 But he {Yeshua} answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a **sign**, but no **sign** will be given to it but the **sign** of Jonah the prophet.

*In [Luke 11:30](#), Yeshua further clarifies => "For even as Jonah became a **sign** to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will also be {a **sign**} to this generation." In other words, just as the Ninevites who saw and listened to Jonah repented, so should have the Jews who saw and listened to Yeshua have repented. This seems to be the core of the message that Jesus was delivering Continuing now with Matthew's account =>*

[Matthew 12:40-42](#) For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the huge fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in **the heart of the earth**. 41 The men of Nineveh will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for they repented at the proclaiming of Jonah; and behold, **someone greater than Jonah is here**. 42 The Queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, **someone greater than Solomon is here**.

The rest of chapter 12 appears to all have happened on the same day, as well as at least the first part of the following chapter, as we see from verse 1 =>

[Matthew 13:1-9](#) **On that day** Yeshua went out of the house and sat by the seaside. 2 Great multitudes gathered to him, so that he entered into a boat and sat; and all the multitude stood on the beach. 3 He spoke to them many things in parables, saying, "Behold, a farmer went out to sow. 4 As he sowed, some seeds fell by the roadside, and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Others fell on rocky ground, where they didn't have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of earth. 6 When the sun had risen, they were scorched. Because they had no root, they withered away. 7 Others fell among thorns. The thorns grew up and choked them. 8 Others fell on good soil and yielded fruit: some one hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty. 9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

[Matthew 13:10-17](#) The disciples came, and said to him, "**Why do you speak to them in parables?**" 11 He {Yeshua} answered them, "**To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it is not given to them.**" 12 For whoever has, to him will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever doesn't have, from him will be taken away even that which he has. 13 Therefore **I speak to them in parables, because seeing they don't see, and hearing, they don't hear, neither do they understand.** 14 In them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says, 'By hearing you will hear, and will in no way understand; Seeing you will see, and will in no way perceive; 15 **for this people's heart has grown callous, their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes;** or else perhaps they might perceive with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and would turn again, and I would heal them.' 16 "**But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.**" 17 For most certainly I tell you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which you see, and didn't see them; and to hear the things which you hear, and didn't hear them.

From this, we now understand "Why Jesus Spoke Literally to His Friends but Not Always to Others". We also saw an example of this when Jesus would only give "the sign of Jonah" to the church leaders and also claiming that He would spend time in "the heart of the earth", which is obviously not literal([Mt12:38-42](#)).

I also find it interesting that Matthew records Jesus speaking of "the sign of Jonah" a second time, in chapter 16 =>

[Matthew 16:1-6](#) **The Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing him, asked him to show them a sign** from heaven. 2 But he answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' 3 In the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but you can't discern the signs of the times! 4 **An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and there will be no sign given to it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah.**" He left them and departed. 5 The disciples came to the other side and had forgotten to take bread. 6 Yeshua said to them, "**Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**"

The disciples were temporarily confused by "the yeast", but eventually understood clearly =>

[Matthew 16:12](#) Then they understood that he didn't tell them to beware of the **yeast** of bread, but of the **teaching** of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Here we saw Jesus using the word "**yeast**" in a figurative sense, rather than literal. This even confused the disciples, until Jesus explained further... Well, the conversation continued between Jesus and His disciples. Then, seemingly on the same day, notice verse 21 =>

[Matthew 16:21](#) From that time, **Yeshua began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.**

Here, we saw Jesus speaking to His disciples in literal language, **likely describing part of what He said figuratively to the church leaders** in [Mt12:39-40;16:2-4](#); specifically, Jesus said =>

"as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the huge fish, so will **the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**"

Not only did Jesus explain about His death and resurrection in verse 21, but Matthew records Jesus talking about this **two more times prior to His death** =>

[Matthew 17:22-23](#) While they were staying in Galilee, Yeshua said to them, "**The Son of Man is about to be delivered up into the hands of men, 23 and they will kill him, and the third day he will be raised up.**" They were exceedingly sorry.

[Matthew 20:17-19](#) As Yeshua was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them, 18 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and **the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, 19 and will hand him over to the Gentiles to mock, to scourge, and to crucify; and the third day he will be raised up.**"

But, even though Jesus explained His death and resurrection to His friends at least 3 times before His death, they still didn't understand. So, on the day of His resurrection, Luke records an angel explaining the same thing to the ladies again. That still wasn't enough, so Jesus explained it once more, later on the day of His resurrection, as recorded here =>

[Luke 24:2-48](#) They found the stone rolled away from the tomb. 3 They entered in, and didn't find the Lord Yeshua's body. 4 While they were greatly perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling clothing. 5 Becoming terrified, they bowed their faces down to the earth. The men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 **He isn't here, but is risen. Remember what he told you when he was still in Galilee, 7 saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise again?**" ... 43 He{Jesus} ... ate in front of them. 44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you, that all things which are written in the Torah of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning me must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds, that they might understand the Scriptures. 46 He{Jesus} said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.

For more information and a **timeline of Christ's trial, death, & resurrection**, see => <http://sidnash.org/docs/PassoverTimeline.html>

Now in John 6, we find another example of Jesus giving a literal explanation to His disciples of what seem absurd to the church leaders and others. In fact, because of what Jesus said, many followers left Him that day([Jn6:60,66](#)).

[John 6:54-68](#) **He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life;** and I will raise him up at the last day.{said to all the people} ... 63 It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life.**{said to His disciples} ... 68 Simon Peter answered him,... **thou hast the words of eternal life.**

So, what I see here is that, if we want "**eternal life**", we need to **eat** the **words** of Jesus.

You may recall when George H. W. Bush, the 41st US President, said, "**Read my lips!**". We understood his meaning was to be, "**listen to and understand** what I say!"

Likewise, when Jesus said "**Eat My Words!**", we understand that we need to **listen to and understand** what Jesus says. **By assimilating the teachings of Jesus into our mind, His teachings become part of who we are. There's no better way to have Christ in us, which gives us the hope of glory!** ([Colossians 1:27](#)). For more on John 6, see => <http://sidnash.org/docs/John6.html>