in the same spirit, without venturing (as  
indeed it would have been most unbecoming in them to do, see John ii. 3, 4) to suggest the working of a miracle.

**37.**] The basket here spoken of (*spyris*)  
was large enough to contain a man’s body,  
as Paul was let down in one from the wall  
of Damascus, Acts ix. 25. Greswell supposes that they may have been used to sleep  
in, during the stay in the desert.

**39.**] Of **Magadan** nothing is known.  
Lightfoot, shews *Magdala* to have been  
only a Sabbath-day’s journey from Chamnath Gadara on the Jordan, and on the  
east side of the lake: but probably he is  
mistaken, for most travellers place it about  
three miles from Tiberias, on the west side  
of the lake, where is now a village named  
Madschel. *Dalmanutha*, mentioned by St.  
Mark (viii. 10), seems to have been a village in the neighbourhood.

**CHAP. XVI. 1–4.**] REQUEST FOR A SIGN FROM HEAVEN. Mark viii. 11–13,  
but much abridged. See also Luke xii. 54  
and notes.

**1.**] See notes at ch. xii.  
38. There is no ground for supposing  
that this narrative refers to the same  
event as that. What can be more natural  
than that the adversaries of our Lord  
should have met His miracles again and  
again with this demand of a sign *from  
heaven?* For in the Jewish superstition  
it was held that dæmons and false gods  
could give signs *on earth*, but only the  
true God signs *from heaven*. In the  
apocryphal Epistle of Jeremiah, ver. 67,  
we read of the gods of the heathen,  
“*Neither can they shew signs in the  
heavens among the heathen...*.” And  
for such a notion they alleged the bread  
from heaven given by Moses (see John vi.  
31), the staying of the sun by Joshua  
(Josh. x. 12), the thunder and rain by  
Samuel (1 Sam. xii. 17, compare Jer. xiv.  
22), and Elijah (James v. 17, 18). And  
thus we find that immediately after the  
first miraculous feeding the same demand  
was made, John vi. 30, and answered by  
the declaration of our Lord that He was  
the true bread from heaven. And what  
more natural likewise, than that our Lord  
should have uniformly met the demand by  
the same answer,—the *sign of Jonas*, one  
so calculated to baffle His enemies and  
hereafter to fix the attention of His disciples? Here however that answer is accompanied by other rebukes sufficiently  
distinctive.

It was now probably the  
evening (see Mark viii. 10, “*straightway*”),  
and our Lord was looking on the glow in  
the west which suggested the remark in  
ver. 2, On the practice of the Jews to  
*demand a sign*, see 1 Cor. i. 22.

**2.**] Mark viii. 12 adds “*He sighed deeply  
in his spirit...,*” omitting however  
the sentences following. The Jews were  
much given to prognosticating the rains,  
&c. of the coming season in each year.

**3.**] **of the times**, generally. The Jews  
had been, and were, most blind to the  
signs of the times, at all the great crises  
of their history;—and also particularly to  
the times in which they were *then* living.  
The scepter had departed from Judah, the  
lawgiver no longer came forth from  
between his feet, the prophetic weeks of