Something Greater is Here
Matthew 12.22-50
Sunday August 16, 2026

22 Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. 23 And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" 24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." 25 Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. 30 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. 31 Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

- Healing should bring praise and to some extent it does:
    - And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?"
        - The title "Son of David" is attributed to the Messiah – warrior king who would liberate His people
- Healing also brings condemnation from those should believe
    - Instead, they accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan leading to sentence of death:
        - *Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God.* Lev.19.31
        - *You shall not permit a sorceress to live.* Ex.22.18
- Jesus' response:
    - He knows their thoughts – indicates His omniscience
    - Response reveals their irrationality and hypocrisy
        - Satan would be foolish to attack his strongholds
        - The disciples of the Pharisees would thus be acting under the power of Satan
    - Jesus is greater than Satan
        - Only one stronger than the strong man is able to bind him
        - *…and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.* Rev.20.10

The Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit:

- The Pharisees are attributing the works of God to Satan
    - *"It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons."*
        - This serious offense is unforgiveable

[33] "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. [34] You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. [35] The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. [36] I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, [37] for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

- Our words and actions will reveal the true condition of our heart:
    - *The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.* Lk.6.45
    - *But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.* Mt.15.18

[38] Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." [39] But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. [40] For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great 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 rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. [42] The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

- The scribes and Pharisees seek a sign! (An evil and adulterous generation)
    - They have just accused Jesus of being in league with Satan for His last sign!
- These are the signs Jesus has performed so far:
    - *So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.* Mt.4.24, 8.16
    - Jesus cleanses a leper Mt.8.3
    - Heals by command at a distance the centurion's servant Mt.8.13
    - Healed the paralytic Mt.9.6-7
    - Healed the woman with the blood issue Mt.9.22
    - Raised Jairus' daughter from the dead Mt.9.25
    - Restores sight to two blind men Mt.9.29-30
    - Freed a demon-oppressed man rendered mute Mt.9.33
    - Restores the withered arm of a man Mt.12.13
- Only sign given = sign of Jonah
    - 3 days in the great fish symbolizes the 3 days in the grave
    - The resurrection will be the greatest sign to unbelievers (and believers)!
        - Caution: *He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"* Lk.16.31
- The Ninevites responded to Jonah's preaching while the scribes and Pharisees ignore the call to repentance of One greater
- The Queen of the South responded to the wisdom of Solomon while the scribes and Pharisees showed disdain for the wisdom of One greater

43 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation."

- Simply getting rid of an evil spirit or a sinful habit is inadequate
- We need more than an empty room
    - *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.* Jn.16.13
    - *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.* Eph.1.13-14

46 While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. 48 But he replied to the man who told him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

- When approached by family, Jesus takes a teaching moment.
    - Those closest to the Lord are not so by genetics but by obedience to the will of the Father
- What is the will of the Father?
    - *For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.* Jn.6.40

3 Points to Consider:

- Faith in Jesus is rational and is defended rationally
    - Jesus does not appeal for a blind leap of faith
    - signs performed attest to Who He is
        - Demonstrate His power over body, nature, spirit
    - Using logic He debunks the accusation of being in league with Satan

- The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit involves a clear, intentional rejection of His work
    - The scribes and Pharisees deliberately attributed the work of the Spirit through Jesus to Satan
    - They refused to acknowledge what was clear to them
        - *For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.* Rm.1.19
    - We cannot accidently or unawares blaspheme the Holy Spirit
    - Essentially blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is continually rejecting the Holy Spirit's call to repentance

- Note: we can receive forgiveness for speaking against the Son because His purpose is to bring forgiveness:
    - *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.* Lk.19.10

- Something Greater has come
- Something greater than the temple (12.6)
    - He is the Reality to which the temple points
- Something greater than the prophet Jonah (12.41)
    - He is the fulfillment of prophecy
    - He is the reason the Ninevites were able to receive forgiveness!
- Something greater than the king, Solomon (12.42)
- He is the King of Kings, Who will reign forever!
    - *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*
      Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Is.9.6-7
    - *Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.* Rev.19.11-16
- He is greater because He is none other than *Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*