

Reading Matthew in Lent

Gospel of Matthew 12:38–50



The Sign of Jonah

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Jesus, 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.

Return of an Unclean Spirit

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.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

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.”

Prayer

God our Redeemer,
in Jesus, your promised Messiah,
you crushed the power of Satan.

Sustain your Church in the struggle against evil,
that, hearing your word and doing your will,
we may be fashioned into a household of true disciples who
share in the victory of the cross.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen.

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