

6/21/26

Sermon Title: Who Are Jesus' True Family?

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Matthew 12:38-50

The Sign of Jonah

³⁸ Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.”

³⁹ He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here.

⁴² The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.

⁴³ “When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it.

⁴⁴ Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order.

⁴⁵ Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

⁴⁶ While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him.

⁴⁷ Someone told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.”

⁴⁸ He replied to him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?”

⁴⁹ Pointing to 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.”

Jesus performed countless miracles—healing the sick and the weak, casting out demons from those who were possessed, and even raising the dead.

Yet despite witnessing all these miraculous signs, the teachers of the law and the Pharisees still refused to believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

Instead, they came to Jesus and demanded that He show them a sign proving that He was the Messiah.

Their request did not stem from a sincere desire to know the truth, but from unbelief.

No matter how many miracles they had already seen, they continued to seek additional proof, refusing to accept the clear evidence that stood before them.

³⁸ Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.”

Seeking a sign is not necessarily a bad thing.

It can be an expression of a sincere desire to find a firm foundation for faith.

When the risen Jesus appeared to His disciples, Thomas was not with them.

Afterward, the other disciples told Thomas that they had seen the Lord, but he replied that unless he saw the nail marks in Jesus' hands and put his hand into His side, he would not believe.

A week later, Jesus appeared to Thomas and invited him to touch His pierced hands and side, telling him not to be unbelieving but believing.

Upon seeing and touching the wounds of Christ, Thomas immediately made one of the greatest confessions of faith ever recorded: **“My Lord and my God!”**

In this way, Jesus willingly responds when people seek evidence or signs out of a genuine desire to believe.

The situation with the teachers of the law and the Pharisees, however, was entirely different.

They had already seen and heard about the many miracles Jesus performed to demonstrate that He was the Messiah, yet they still refused to believe.

More than that, they had even claimed that His miracles were performed by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons.

Jesus had just warned them that resisting and blaspheming the work of the Holy Spirit is a sin that will not be forgiven.

Yet now these same men came asking Him to perform another sign.

The sign they truly wanted was not one that would lead them to faith.

Rather, they wanted a sign that would fit their own preconceived image of the Messiah—a Messiah who would overthrow Rome and restore the powerful kingdom of Israel as it had been under King David.

Therefore, Jesus rebukes the teachers of the law and the Pharisees sharply.

He tells them that no sign will be given to them except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

Their problem was not a lack of evidence but a lack of willingness to believe.

No miracle, however spectacular, could convince hearts that had already decided to reject the truth.

The greatest sign God would give them would not be another display of miraculous power, but the death, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah Himself, foreshadowed in the experience of the prophet Jonah.

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⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus calls them “a wicked and adulterous generation” because they had been unfaithful to their covenant relationship with God.

The “sign of the prophet Jonah” that Jesus promises to give refers to the sign Jonah experienced through his prophetic ministry.

By referring to Jonah as a prophet, Jesus foreshadows the destiny of the Messiah, who would carry out a prophetic mission.

Just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and was then delivered, so Jesus would die on the cross, be laid in the tomb, and rise again on the third day.

The teachers of the law and the Pharisees were looking for a miracle that would fit their expectation of the Messiah—a Messiah who would overthrow Rome and restore the mighty kingdom of Israel as it had been in the days of King David.

But the sign Jesus would give was not political or military triumph; it was His death and resurrection.

Jesus then speaks of the tragic end that would come upon Israel because of its response to God's message.

He declares that at the final judgment, the people of Nineveh and the Queen of the South will rise up and condemn that generation.

The people of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, even though Jonah was merely a prophet.

Yet the people of Jesus' day refused to repent, even though One greater than Jonah was standing before them.

Likewise, the Queen of the South traveled a great distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon, yet the religious leaders of Israel rejected the wisdom of One greater than Solomon.

Therefore, their judgment would be severe.

The Gentiles who responded to the limited light they received would stand as witnesses against those who rejected the far greater revelation given to them in Jesus Christ.

The tragedy of that generation was not a lack of evidence, but a refusal to believe despite overwhelming evidence.

Before them stood the Messiah Himself, yet they remained hardened in unbelief.

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⁴² The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.

When the prophet Jonah proclaimed God's message of judgment, the people of Nineveh repented even though they were Gentiles.

Yet the people of Israel in Jesus' generation refused to repent, even after hearing the message of One who was greater than Jonah.

Therefore, Jesus declares that on the Day of Judgment, the people of Nineveh will rise up and condemn that generation.

Jesus also compares the response of the people of His day with that of the Queen of the South.

Having heard of Solomon's wisdom, she traveled from the ends of the earth to seek it.

Though she was a Gentile, she willingly undertook a long journey in pursuit of wisdom.

In contrast, the people of Israel failed to listen to and respond to Jesus, even though One greater than Solomon—the very source of all wisdom—was standing among them.

Therefore, Jesus says that on the Day of Judgment, the Queen of the South will rise up and condemn that generation.

Through these examples, Jesus exposes the spiritual corruption of Israel and foretells its future.

He then uses a parable to describe what will happen to those who refuse to accept His ministry and the coming of God's Kingdom.

⁴³ “When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it.

⁴⁴ Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order.

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Demons desire to dwell within human beings and bring them under their control. For that reason, when an unclean spirit leaves a person, it seeks another place to inhabit.

If it cannot find one, it continually looks for an opportunity to return to the place from which it came.

When it returns and finds the house unoccupied, swept clean, and put in order, it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself.

The number seven symbolizes completeness; therefore, the seven spirits represent the fullest and most intense manifestation of demonic evil.

Jesus teaches that the people of Israel in His generation seemed, for a time, to be freed from the bondage of evil spirits through His ministry of casting out demons.

Yet because they refused to repent and believe, they would ultimately come under the influence of even greater spiritual darkness than before.

As a result, their final condition would be far worse than their former one.

In fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy, Israel eventually experienced not only spiritual devastation but also national catastrophe when Jerusalem was completely destroyed by the Roman general Titus in A.D. 70.

In effect, Jesus pronounces upon unbelieving Israel the message of Lo-Ammi—"You are not My people, and I am not your God" (cf. Hosea 1:9).

His point is that belonging to the covenant people outwardly does not guarantee an individual's eternal standing before God.

Physical descent from Abraham is not enough.

Those who reject God's will exclude themselves from the blessings of His kingdom.

Jesus then redefines the meaning of family.

He declares that whoever does the will of His Father in heaven is His true family. Using the occasion of His mother and brothers coming to see Him, Jesus identifies who His genuine family members are.

This is not a rejection of His earthly family, nor does it indicate hostility toward them.

Rather, Jesus is revealing the nature of a new spiritual family—a covenant community whose members share a common relationship with God as their Father.

In the Kingdom of God, spiritual obedience takes precedence over biological relationships.

The deepest bond is not one of blood, ethnicity, or heritage, but a shared commitment to hear, believe, and obey the will of God.

Those who follow Christ and do the Father's will become brothers, sisters, and mothers in the household of faith, united together as the family of God.

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⁴⁷ Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."

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Becoming a member of Jesus' family means entering into a relationship with Him and coming under the care and protection of our Heavenly Father.

Jesus expands the meaning of "My Father" to include others.

He does not limit His family to the twelve disciples, but declares that everyone who does the will of His Father is a member of His family.

This does not mean that Jesus is denying the importance of biological family relationships.

Rather, He is teaching that a spiritual relationship with God—established through the new birth—is even more significant than earthly ties of blood.

Jesus was born into an earthly family and entered into human family relationships so that, through His death and resurrection, He might establish a far greater and everlasting spiritual family through the church.

Through faith in Christ, people from every nation, language, and background are brought into God's household.

They become brothers and sisters united not by blood, but by grace; not by human ancestry, but by a shared relationship with the Heavenly Father.

Thus, the family of God is the eternal family that Christ came to create—a family bound together by faith, sustained by His love, and destined to dwell with Him forever.

Beloved members of Church of Godly Dreams,

The teachers of the law and the Pharisees demanded yet another sign from Jesus, even after witnessing the many miracles He had already performed.

Their problem was not a lack of evidence; they did not believe because they did not want to believe.

Jesus responded by telling them that no sign would be given except the sign of Jonah.

In other words, His death on the cross and His resurrection would be the final and greatest sign.

He then rebuked that generation by comparing their response to that of the people of Nineveh, who repented at Jonah's warning, and the Queen of the South, who traveled a great distance to hear Solomon's wisdom.

Although One greater than Jonah and wiser than Solomon was standing among them, they neither repented nor listened to His words.

Jesus went on to foretell their tragic end.

He declared that they would be condemned on the Day of Judgment.

Because they had rejected Him, their final condition would be miserable.

We must remember that taking God's grace for granted and rejecting the invitation of the gospel ultimately leads to judgment.

In effect, Jesus pronounces Lo-Ammi upon them: *"You are not My people."*

He then teaches who His true family really is.

He says, "Whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

Biological relationships do not guarantee a place in the Kingdom of God.

Neither long years of church attendance nor a religious background can make us children of God.

The true family of God consists of those who believe in Jesus Christ, obey His Word, and live according to the will of their Heavenly Father.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have been called into this wonderful spiritual family.

Even today, the Lord continues to invite us into the family of God.

May we respond to that invitation with faith and live as His true sons and daughters by doing the Father's will.

May each of us enjoy the blessings of this spiritual family that have been given to us in Christ Jesus, and may we live under the love, care, and protection of our Heavenly Father. I pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.