

# POWER HOUR

11/24/2024

Lesson Text:  
Matthew 12:22-32, 38-40

Background Scripture:  
1 Kings 10:1-13, Matthew 16:1-4

Devotional Reading:  
Luke 11:14-23; 1 Corinthians 1:22-25

“JESUS POINTS TO JONAH”

NLT TRANSLATION

**Golden Text:** *Anyone who isn't with me opposes me, and anyone who isn't working with me is actually working against me. Matthew 12:30 NLT*

**Time:** A.D. 28

**Place:** Galilee

## Matthew 12:22-32, 38-40 NLT

**22** Then a demon-possessed man, who was blind and couldn't speak, was brought to Jesus. He healed the man so that he could both speak and see. **23** The crowd was amazed and asked, "Could it be that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah?" **24** But when the Pharisees heard about the miracle, they said, "No wonder he can cast out demons. He gets his power from Satan, the prince of demons." **25** Jesus knew their thoughts and replied, "Any kingdom divided by civil war is doomed. A town or family splintered by feuding will fall apart. **26** And if Satan is casting out Satan, he is divided and fighting against himself. His own kingdom will not survive. **27** And if I am empowered by Satan, what about your own exorcists? They cast out demons, too, so they will condemn you for what you have said. **28** But if I am casting out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you. **29** For who is powerful enough to enter the house of a strong man and plunder his goods? Only someone even stronger—someone who could tie him up and then plunder his house. **30** "Anyone who isn't with me opposes me, and anyone who isn't working with me is actually working against me. **31** "So I tell you, every sin and blasphemy can be forgiven—except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which will never be forgiven. **32** Anyone who speaks against the Son of Man can be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come

**38** One day some teachers of religious law and Pharisees came to Jesus and said,

“Teacher, we want you to show us a miraculous sign to prove your authority.” **39** But Jesus replied, “Only an evil, adulterous generation would demand a miraculous sign; but the only sign I will give them is the sign of the prophet Jonah. **40** For as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the Gospels, some of the most sustained human opposition to Jesus came from the Pharisees. These highly respected and influential Jewish scholars prided themselves on being more righteous than others. Jesus looked beyond their righteous appearance and saw them as frauds.

Rather than respond with repentance and obedience to Jesus, most Pharisees actively opposed Him. When Jesus performed miracles, proving that He was the Messiah, the Pharisees refused to accept the evidence. Instead, they charged Him with working by demonic power.

In response to this malicious, false charge, Jesus used logic to demonstrate the error of the Pharisees. When they demanded that Jesus perform a sign to prove Himself, He pointed them back to the prophet Jonah.

## **POINTS TO PONDER**

1. Those who reject Christ often go to great lengths to explain away that which is obviously true. (Matthew 12:22-24).
2. In order to dismiss Christ's claims, one must inevitably resort to arguments that are absurd and contradictory (Matthew 12:22-24).
3. If we are to overcome the power of Satan, we must walk in the power of the Spirit (Matthew 12:28-29).
4. There is no neutrality in spiritual matters; we are either servants of Christ or enemies of Christ (Matthew 12:30).
5. Failing to heed the convicting work of the Holy Spirit cuts us off from the only path to forgiveness (Matthew 12:31-32).
6. Those who demand signs from the Lord demonstrate a weak or, in some cases, non-existent faith. (Matthew 12:38-40).

## CONCLUSION

Jesus won a great victory over Satan when He delivered a demon-possessed man who was both blind and mute. Jesus' enemies accused Him of casting out demons through the power of Beelzebub, thus committing the unpardonable sin. Jesus' hard-hearted critics demanded a greater sign. Jesus declared that the only sign they would receive would be the sign of Jonah, that is His resurrection. Christians should realize that they will face opposition even when they are doing right. It comes with the territory when we follow Jesus.

## QUESTION(S)

- Why was the healing of the demon-possessed man a particularly impressive demonstration of Jesus' power?
- Why did the people ask whether Jesus was the Son of David?
- How did the Pharisees explain away the miracle?
- How did Jesus use logical reasoning to prove that the Pharisees were incorrect?
- Why did Jesus mention the exorcisms performed by some of the Pharisees' followers?
- Why did Jesus insist that the kingdom of God had come to them?
- Why was there no neutral ground when it came to believing Jesus?
- Why did Jesus say that the Pharisees had committed an unforgivable sin?
- Why did the scribes and Pharisees ask Jesus for a sign?
- What was the only sign that they would be given?

## ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is "*Comfort for God's People*"

Lesson Text: *Isaiah 40:1-5, 25-26, 29-31*

**Union Gospel Press**