

**INTERMEDIATE SUNDAY SCHOOL  
STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

**13 AUGUST 2023**

**Text: Matthew 12**

**Subject: A sobering Parable of a Returning Unclean Spirit**

*<sup>41</sup> The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.*

*<sup>42</sup> The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.*

*<sup>43</sup> "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none.*

*<sup>44</sup> Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order.*

*<sup>45</sup> Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."*

*Matthew 12:41-45*

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EMINENT PEOPLE**

1. Prophets were eminent people and well-regarded
2. Kings were also admired, especially Solomon because of his famed wisdom

**THE PROPHET JONAH**

1. He was a great preacher
2. The city of Nineveh repented when he preached there
3. But the Lord Jesus was far greater than Jonah
4. But He was rejected by the religious leaders and their followers

**KING SOLOMON THE WISE**

1. His fame reached far and wide
2. The Queen of the South came to hear Solomon speak
3. The Lord Jesus was far greater than Solomon

4. The Lord Jesus was shamefully ill-treated by the religious leaders

#### **THE PARABLE OF THE RETURNING UNCLEAN SPIRIT**

1. An Unclean Spirit once inhabited a man
2. He decided to leave the man for a season
3. The man was now free of influence from the Unclean Spirit
4. The Unclean Spirit was restless and decided to come back to the man
5. He found the life of the man
  - a) Empty
  - b) Swept
  - c) In order
6. He decided that he would search out seven of his spirit friends
  - a) They returned to the man
  - b) They decided that they would dwell there
7. The state of the man was now worse than before

#### **THE MEANING OF THIS PARABLE**

1. This was spoken with the religious leaders in mind
2. Their lives were:
  - a) Empty
  - b) Swept
  - c) In order
3. The Unclean Spirit and his evil friends attack and affect badly the victim
  - a) The man becomes even worse than he was
  - b) The religious leaders had become worse with the passing of time
    - i) Vindictive
    - ii) Vicious

iii) Vile

iv) Violently inclined