

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expositional Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew** 143- Jesus is Greater

Church October 19, 2025

Matthew 12:38-45

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;

40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

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

42 The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

43 "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.

44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

45 Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

This Passage is about the GREATNESS of Jesus. And this Passage is also about those who embrace that Greatness as opposed to those who reject it. Please look again at the End of verse 45- where Jesus said,

... the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it

will also be with this evil generation.

Now this verse uses the phrase, “**this evil Generation**”. And, over the last several weeks- I have been showing you how Jesus used very *similar* Language several Times; and what it meant when Jesus used it. For Example, in **Matthew 23:36**- Jesus promised,

Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

... which means that the Divine Judgment against the Pharisees- and ALL who agreed with them- that Jesus promised in verses 13-35 would happen BEFORE the Generation, that was alive on the earth at that Time- died out. And then, in **Matthew 24:34**, Jesus said,

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

... which means that the Divine Judgment that Jesus promised against faithless and unbelieving Israel- that is contained in **Matthew 24:4-33**; and in verses 35-51 would happen- BEFORE the Generation, that was alive on the earth at that Time- died out.

And, of course, that means that the “*Coming*” of the Lord in **Matthew 24** is NOT about the “*2nd Coming*”- but rather a “*Coming in Judgment*” against those Jews, who *rejected* their Messiah- Jesus, the Anointed One!

And to prove this is correct- Jesus said this in **Matthew 11:16-19**:

16 "But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children,

17 and say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.'

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon!'

19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

... and again, in **Matthew 12:39b&40**:

39 ... "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;

40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

... and again, in **Matthew 12:41:**

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

... and again, in **Matthew 12:42:**

The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

... and, finally, in **Matthew 12:43-45:**

43 "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.

44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

45 Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."

... and it keeps going:

Matthew 16:4

An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah." And He left them and went away.

Matthew 17:17

And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I put up with you?

In each of these cases- Jesus is condemning the Fact that, by and

large, the Jewish people, who were alive when Jesus was in His earthly Ministry- who had been schooled their entire Lives about the Coming of the Messiah- *refused* to embrace Him- even when He stood right in front of them!

Now look, lots of people reject Jesus. Every-day- all day long. But the kind of Rejection that the Jewish people had against Jesus- while He was standing in front of them- was NOT “normal”- *especially* when you consider how MANY unmistakable Signs; Wonders; Miracles; and Gifts of the Holy Spirit- Jesus brought forth! Those people *should have* believed in Jesus- simply because of the MANY physical Healings; the MANY demons cast out; the MANY breathtaking and supernatural Acts of Absolute Authority over Nature; over Sickness and Disease; over Demons; and over Sin and even Death itself- that Jesus performed in broad daylight- even when there was little or NO Faith present in the people!

We have to understand that the Rejection of Jesus by the Jews was NOT your average, run-of-the-mill Rejection of Jesus that ALL lost people engage in! This Rejection was purely *satanic*; it was *Evil itself*; it was *Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit*; and it was absolute *Wickedness*! In other words, *this* Rejection was very “*Unique*”- precisely because of the “*Uniqueness*” of Jesus and His Ministry.

For over 2,000 years now- many, many millions of people have heard real good Sermons preached by many, many dedicated Men of God. But those Jews didn’t merely hear Good Sermons. Those people heard *perfect* Sermons- using *perfect* Wisdom and *perfect* Logic- from a *perfectly* *sinless* Man, who had a *perfect* Understanding of the Scriptures!

The Jews of the 1st Century didn’t simply witness Signs; Wonders; and Miracles being performed in their midst. They actually witnessed the God/Man act out of *perfect* Love with His Father; as He demonstrated *perfect* Power- as He ONLY did what His Father instructed! So, those people saw a Man operate in *perfect* Submission to God the Father- as He was being *perfectly* led and empowered by God the Holy Spirit! And that had NEVER happened before- even with the Old Testament Prophets!

And that *unique* Demonstration of *absolute* Perfection ONLY occurred for about 3-1/2 years- one single Time- in one single Nation- in all of human History! NEVER before and NEVER since- has the world beheld the incarnate God demonstrating *perfect* Power; *perfect* Submission; *perfect* Empowerment; *perfect* Obedience; and *perfect* Wisdom; wrapped up in *perfect* Glory!

And so, because the Ministry of Jesus was so Unique- the Rejection against Him- was also *Unique*. And because that Rejection was Unique- the Judgment of God- *against* that “*unique Rejection*”- was also very *Unique*! In **Luke 12:48b**, the Bible says,

... From everyone who has been given much, much will be required ...

... and the Jews of the 1st Century were given MUCH! They were given total and complete Perfection in a human Body!

And because they were given MUCH- God required MUCH from them! So, when they *voluntarily* failed to embrace and believe in Jesus- the “*Divine Judgment*” against them was both horrific and frightening and far WORSE than the “normal Rejection” that Unbelievers carry out- all day long! But please let me try to say this another Way: JESUS IS GREATER! Please look at verse 38 again:

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

Now this might seem to be a genuine Request by those religious Hypocrites- so, they would have enough Information- so they could be comfortable in believing in Jesus. But that's NOT what was going on here, at all.

We need to remember that beginning in **Matthew 4:23**- all the Way to this very Passage in Chapter 12- Jesus has been doing NOTHING but displaying one breathtaking Sign; Wonder; and Miracle- after another- to prove His full Divinity! So, by the Time we get to Chapter 12- Jesus has healed many hundreds if not thousands of sick people; He has cast out numerous demons; He miraculously cleansed a Leper (**Matthew 8:1-4**); Healed a Centurion's Slave (**Matthew 8:5-13**); He has forgiven Sin and healed a Paralytic (**Matthew 9:1-8**); raised the Dead (**Matthew 9:18-26**); given blind men their Sight (**Matthew 9:27-31**); caused a mute man to speak (**Matthew 9:32&33**); and Jesus had just healed a man on the Sabbath in this very Chapter (**Matthew 12:9-14**); and He has taught them the Oracles of God- *perfectly*!

And yet- the Pharisees still asked for a Sign? How many Signs do they need- before they will *abandon* their abject Hatred of Jesus and fall down and worship Him?

The Reality is that by asking Jesus for a Sign- after He has given them Sign after Sign after Sign- is NOT a sincere Effort to help the Pharisees believe. It was a blatant Attempt at *dishonoring* Jesus! Because what they were saying by asking for a Sign was, “*Whatever You have already done- doesn't mean ANYTHING to us! You MUST prove yourself to us- right now!*” In other words, what the Pharisees were saying was, “*You have to “earn” our Worship and Belief! And as of this Moment- You haven't convinced us- because we are certain that You are simply operating under the Influence and Authority of Beelzebul, the Prince of the Demons!*” So, by asking Jesus to show them a Sign- after He has already shown

them *many* Signs- was yet another deliberate Insult! And so, Jesus responded to that Insult by saying,

**39 ... An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;
40 for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

... and from this Statement- we know several things:

- The Phrase, “**An evil and adulterous Generation**” as used in this verse- had to do with the Pharisees (and those Jews, who agreed with them)- who stood there that Day and actually listened to Jesus say those Words- and NOT some future Generation of unsaved people
- Jesus Refusal to give those evil men a Sign- was NOT for any other Reason other than to condemn them
- Jesus Himself said that the 3 days and Nights Jonah spent in the belly of the Sea Monster was an “*Allegorical Prophecy*” that *represented* His future Death and Him *remaining* literally and physically Dead for three Days until His Resurrection

... and then Jesus went about to display just how much GREATER He was; and how serious the Sin of rejecting Him was- when He said,

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

42 The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Now again, the correct Context here- is that the “**Generation**” to which Jesus refers in these two verses- is *specifically* the Pharisees. But it also includes ALL the Jews, who sided *with* the Pharisees and *against* Jesus. And so, Jesus went about to prove His own Greatness as well as condemn the Pharisees to their face- when He compared the Pharisees reaction to Jesus with that of a wicked pagan City as well as a pagan Gentile Queen! Look again at verse 41:

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

Nineveh was built about 8,000 years ago and was the final Capital City of the Assyrian Empire. And somewhere about 700 years before Jesus was born- God instructed the Prophet Jonah to...

Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.” (Jonah 1:2)

... but Jonah disobeyed and tried to “flee... from the Presence of the Lord” and so, he “**found a ship which was going to Tarshish**” (Jonah 1:3).

So, the Lord, “**hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up**” (Jonah 1:4). The sailors were scared; and as they were going through the ship- they found Jonah asleep. And they brought the Captain- who told Jonah to, “**Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish.**” (Jonah 1:6).

So, they “cast lots” and the lot fell on Jonah. And Jonah gave what I consider one of the most ridiculous Answers found anywhere in the Bible. After it was verified that Jonah was the Problem, this Prophet said, “**I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord God of heaven who made the sea and the dry land.**” (Jonah 1:9) And then Jonah told them that he was fleeing from the Presence of the Lord! Look at the sailor’s Response to what Jonah said,

Jonah 1:9

“How could you do this?”

“We’re Pagans. We don’t know or fear the Lord- but you do! And yet, you are trying to run away from the Presence of the God of Heaven- Who made the Sea and the dry Land!?”

Those pagan sailors were apoplectic at this “Prophet” running away from the Lord- while they were condemned because they never knew Him! In other words, they didn’t think Jonah’s Rebellion was funny. They thought he was terrible for acting the way he did.

So, they threw him overboard; God stilled the Storm; and a “great Fish” (Whale?) swallowed him; and took him right to the Region where God told Jonah to go in the first place!

And Jonah preached one single Sermon and look at the Reaction from the pagan Gentiles of Nineveh:

Jonah 3:5-9

5 Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them.

6 When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes.

7 He issued a proclamation and it said, “In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water.

8 “But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands.

9 “Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish.”

... and look at what God did next,

Jonah 3:10

When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

Now according to my research- the city of Nineveh- during the Time of Jonah the Prophet- was around 600,000 people. And a very *reluctant* man- a Prophet, who did NOT care about those pagans and who did NOT want God to save them- preached one single Message- and 600,000 people repented and were saved!

But the Pharisees and the Jewish people of the 1st Century had the incarnate God come down and walk among them for 33-1/2 years! They heard perfect Sermons; saw Display after Display of Absolute Authority over all things on the earth- as well as Sins being forgiven- and yet, for the most part- they categorically rejected Jesus; insulted Him; denounced Him; and called Him- “satan”!

Nineveh never experienced anything like that! Yet they repented! Yet they believed! They grieved over their own Sins so much- they fasted! And all of this from a single Sermon- from a man, who didn’t even care about them!

And so, while we might minimize this; or while we might equate the Rejection of Jesus by the Jews as being nothing more than the Rejection Jesus experiences in our day- by people all over the world- Jesus did NOT! And so, He said,

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

... where the phrase, “**this Generation**” had to do with the unbelieving Jews, who were alive during Jesus’ earthly Ministry!

So, Jesus is comparing His own “*Ministry of Love and Forgiveness*” as well as “*Seeking and Saving the Lost*”- a Man who actually loved God with ALL His Heart; Soul; Mind; and Strength; and Who actually loved His Neighbor as Himself- with that of the reluctant, sinful Prophet Jonah- who did NOT love the people of Nineveh; and who got angry with God for forgiving them! So, Jesus was saying that He is GREATER than Jonah! But if that wasn’t clear enough- Jesus went even further and said,

The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Now the phrase, “**Queen of the South**” (Gr. βασίλισσα νότου; Latin: *Regina austri*) refers to the Queen of Sheba. And this Queen probably was either the Ruler over the ancient “*Sabeans*”; or may have ruled over a Region that included parts of both Egypt and Ethiopia. The area called, “*Sheba*” was well-known in the classical world and was called, “*Arabia Felix*”.

Now I don’t know this for sure- but it is possible that this Queen stayed with Solomon for about 6 months- sitting at his feet- learning from his Wisdom. It is also possible that the Queen and Solomon developed a romantic Relationship and that she was the “prototype” of the “Woman” (Church) referred to in the **Song of Solomon**.

But the Point that Jesus was making was comparing Himself with Solomon and comparing the faithless and unbelieving Jews with the Queen. So, what was Jesus’ Point? Solomon was the “wisest Man” in the world at that Time. True. But Solomon was also a Sinner- who, IF he was saved at all- was saved by Grace through Faith!

But according to both the Bible as well as History- Solomon was a very wicked and sinful Man. Solomon was a “*first class- Idolater*” as well as a “*serial Adulterer*”- who married over 700 Wives, who were all mostly pagans! And those Wives were ALL from the Gentile Nations which God had *expressly* forbidden the Israelites to get entangled with!

And this Man, who built the first great Temple for the one, true, and living God- also built *many* Temples for the pagan gods- so his pagan Wives had somewhere to worship their false gods!

But in addition to having over 700 Wives- Solomon was also a “*blue-chip Fornicator*” because he also had over 300 “Concubines”- to service his breathtaking Lust! But Jesus was GREATER!

Jesus NEVER sinned! Jesus NEVER lusted; NEVER committed Idolatry; NEVER committed Adultery or Fornication! Jesus was *totally* Selfless; and He obeyed His Father- *perfectly*! And Jesus was *perfectly* led and empowered by God the Holy Spirit! The World had NEVER seen anything like it!

And yet, the Queen of the South “**came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon**”! And so, Jesus promised that she would **rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it!**” Why? Because

something greater than Solomon is here!

So, Jesus promised that both the people of the Gentile city of Nineveh as well as the “Queen of the South” would rise up against the Jewish people, who *rejected* Jesus- at the Day of Judgment! Why? Because Jesus is GREATER! Now please look again at verses 43-45:

43 "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it.

44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

45 Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."

Now I have heard many Sermons that are taken from this Passage. And MOST of them have to do with “demon-Possession” and/or with how we are to understand and deal with demons. So, please hear me when I tell you that this Passage has NOTHING to do with demon-Possession- *directly*. This Passage is Jesus explaining how the evil Pharisees as well as the Jews, who agreed with them- operate in conjunction with the “unclean Spirit”. In other words, Jesus is here explaining WHY the Judgment Jesus promised against the Jews of the 1st Century was so Severe!

First of all- as we have already seen- the “**evil Generation**” Jesus talks about at the End of this Passage- refers to the Unbelieving and Faithless Jews, who were alive back in the 1st Century; who were being led and deceived by the Pharisees;

and who categorically *rejected* Jesus! And because they witnessed Jesus- operating in a *uniquely* holy; perfect; and greater Ministry- their Rejection of Him was *uniquely* Evil. And because their Rejection was *uniquely* Evil- the Judgment Jesus promised them- was *uniquely* terrible; horrific; and severe!

This also illustrates how there was ALWAYS two DIFFERENT Jews as well as two DIFFERENT Israels. There was the *believing* Jews and *believing* Israel. That refers to those Jews, who were *genuinely* saved. They believed! And, even though they lived under the inferior Old Covenant- they truly loved God. And they truly and sincerely sought to obey what God the Holy Spirit had “moved” on Moses to write down.

But there were- AT THE SAME TIME- faithless and unbelieving Jews as well as Israel. And even though they were *physically* descended from Abraham- they were NOT chosen by God; they did NOT believe; they were NOT saved; and they did NOT “**do the Deeds of Abraham!**” Look what Jesus Himself said in **John 8:37-59:**

37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

38 I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.”

39 They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.

40 But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.

41 You are doing the deeds of your father.” They said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God.”

42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

43 Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.

44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

45 But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

47 He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

50 But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death."

52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.'

53 Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?"

54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God';

55 and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

57 So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

From this we know that "*Doing the Deeds of Abraham*" has to do with the Jews- "*rejoicing to see Jesus!*". In other words, what qualifies a Jew to be a real and genuine "*spiritual Jew*"- is that they BELIEVE IN JESUS! And so, "*believing in Jesus*"- IS "*rejoicing in Jesus*". And "*rejoicing in Jesus*" IS "*Doing the Deeds of Abraham*"- which is what qualifies them as being a chosen, genuine, spiritual Jew!

So, simply because a person has Jewish Parents and displays *some* of the "outward Marks" of being Jewish- does NOT qualify them as being a real, spiritual chosen "*Son of Abraham*". They MUST rejoice at; love; come to; believe in; and embrace Jesus as Lord; Master; and Savior- or they prove that they are NOT the chosen people of God! And that means they are NOT saved! But it also means they really don't love God the Father, either! Because Jesus said,

If God were your Father, you would love Me

So, because Jesus has already come; and lived; and died; and has risen again; and has brought the New Covenant into Existence by fulfilling the Old-

ANYONE (Jew, Muslim: Buddhist; Hindu; etc.), who lays Claim to love and obey God- MUST love and obey Jesus- or they are a Liar!

But what is true about the Jews is also true about the people of the Christian Church. In the New Covenant- there have ALWAYS been two *different* chosen people; or two *different* Churches. There is, what is called, the “*Visible Church*” and there is the “*Invisible Church*”.

The “*Visible Church*” consists of people who SAY they are saved. And *some* of them are- while others are NOT. But even the ones, who are NOT genuinely saved- bear *some* of the “*outward Marks*” (Fruit) of being truly born again. And those “*false Converts*”; those people, who are *deceived* about their Salvation- are called, “*Tares*”; while the genuine Believer is called, “*Wheat*” (Matthew 13:24-30).

So, even as Jesus said that the Tares (that satan planted) MUST grow *together* with the Wheat and will NOT be completely removed- until the Reapers (Angels) remove them from the earth- FIRST- So, too, the *false* Jew was right among the *genuine, spiritual* Jew- the *entire* Time the Old Covenant was in force!

This is why Dr. Luke wrote about godly and devout Jews like Simeon- who lived under the Old Covenant for the bulk of his Life. And yet, when Simeon came into contact with Jesus- he was *immediately* gifted by God the Holy Spirit- to believe! So, Simeon “*Did the Deeds of Abraham*” and he *rejoiced* at Jesus- even though the Savior had NOT yet performed a single Miracle; nor preached a single Sermon; nor had been Crucified; nor had risen from the Dead!

As soon as Simeon beheld the Son of God- Jesus the Christ- he took the eight-day old Jesus out of His Mother’s arms- lifted Him up and said,

Luke 2:29-32

**29 "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace,
According to Your word;**

30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation,

31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

**32 A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your
people Israel."**

... and this is truly amazing! Because before this Moment- Dr. Luke recorded that Simeon,

... was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. (Luke 2:25b&26)

So, BEFORE Jesus was born- God had saved Simeon- even though this man lived under the Old Covenant! The Point I'm making is that even though Simeon knew NOTHING about the Miracles; or the Sermons; or the Ministry; or the Crucifixion; or the Resurrection of Jesus- but because he was already a genuine, spiritual Jew- when his eyes beheld the "Glory of God in the Face (Person) of Jesus"- he *believed in* Jesus; he *rejoiced in* Jesus; and he called Jesus, "**Your [God's] Salvation!**"

And Dr. Luke included this in his Gospel Record- so that we would be able to see the correct Response that ALL genuine, chosen, spiritual Jews WILL have toward Jesus!

And so, if they DON'T have that Response- they prove they are NOT "God's people"; they are NOT "Sons of Abraham"; they have NOT been "chosen by God"; and they are NOT saved! Look what the Apostle Paul said about this in **Romans 2:28&29**

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

... and that is true today. And it is wonderful when natural Jewish people become genuine, spiritual Jews! But it is so tragic when they don't!

But during the Time Jesus was in His earthly Ministry- because it was so very Unique- the Judgment against the Jews, who literally saw Jesus do those Deeds; and perform those Miracles; and teach those perfect Sermons- and as they literally looked at the ONLY sinless Man, who ever lived- was very harsh and strict! And that's because Jesus is GREATER! And so, those Jews, who lived in THAT Generation- were held to a much *higher* Standard than people are today.

And so, that *unique* Rejection by the Pharisees and those Jews who agreed with them- against Jesus- *as the incarnate God stood before them in His absolute Perfection*- is what caused them to blaspheme the Holy Spirit! And it is WHY Jesus *promised* them the *harshes*t of all Judgments:

Matthew 23:33-36

33 "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

34 "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in

**your synagogues, and persecute from city to city,
35 so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth,
from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of
Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.
36 Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.**

And so, Jesus said, when those Jews rejected Him- after supposedly waiting for hundreds of years for the Messiah to come; after being schooled in the 39 Books of the Old Testament their entire Lives; after KNOWING that God had called them to be His people; AND after watching and hearing and seeing the perfect, sinless Lamb of God say what He said and do what He did- those Jews were *proving* that they were NOT being motivated by God the Father nor by God the Holy Spirit. Those unbelieving and evil Jews, who actually saw the incarnate God live and move among them- and yet blasphemed the Holy Spirit- were being led; and motivated; and possessed; by an “unclean Spirit”.

So, consider the Irony here. Those Jews of “THAT Generation”- continued to attempt to “keep God’s Law” and “be Holy” while *rejecting* Jesus- the true Messiah and their ONLY Hope of Salvation!

Now remember this Statement by Jesus in verses 43-45- could NOT ever be fulfilled by any other group of people- except the one, single Generation of Jews, who were alive during the earthly Ministry of Jesus; who literally saw the incarnate God in Action; and yet *rejected* Him! And please remember that the Reason *behind* the Rejection of Jesus by those deceived and unsaved Jews was NOT their Knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures- but was based on the Fact that they were being led and motivated and empowered and possessed by an “Unclean Spirit”- that hated Jesus and that blinded them to the Greatness of Jesus! And that unique Situation NEVER happened BEFORE this moment and has NEVER happened since!

Now even though they were dead wrong about How to become Righteous- but because they were still trying to keep the Law of Moses- the “unclean Spirit” that motivated and encouraged them to blaspheme the Holy Spirit by rejecting Jesus- had a hard time staying inside them. And so, Jesus said the evil spirit left those Jews and sought people, who were not even trying to keep God’s Law. Jesus said,

... the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

Now Jesus was NOT describing true Salvation here. The “house” that the “unclean Spirit” found unoccupied; swept; and “put in order” represented the false Jews, who were trying to be “Clean” without being saved! They were trying to be Godly and Holy- while rejecting Jesus- the ONLY Power that could make them Godly and Holy!

Yet they DID have a Form of “*Humanly engineered Cleanliness*”; a Type of “*Man-made Holiness*”; and an Outward “*false Righteousness*”. And, normally, that would be enough for most people. And many people would actually praise those Jews- for all the hard Work they were putting forth to try to *earn* God’s Favor!

But even though those Jews *genuinely* thought they were doing God’s Will- God wasn’t fooled at all. And the “unclean Spirit” wasn’t fooled, either. It saw a literal Goldmine! And it was determined to take advantage of this Situation. And so, Jesus said,

Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first...

... which is WHY the *longer* Jesus demonstrated His pristine Holiness- right in front of them-the MORE those men hated Him! In other words, the Pharisees and the Jews, who agreed with them- were fulfilling exactly what Jesus said here...

... the last state of that man becomes worse than the first...

Now it is true that this is what happens to ANYONE- even in our Day- who tries to be Holy and Godly- *without* Jesus; *without* the Holy Spirit; *without* the Word of God; *without* Repentance; and *without* a correct Relationship with God the Father! But we know the correct Context of this verse is connected to ONLY the 1st Century Jews, who refused to believe and embrace Jesus- because at the End of verse 45- our Lord said,

... That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.

... once again tying what He was saying here to those 1st Century Jews, who were led by the Pharisees.

So, the Issue here is the GREATNESS of Jesus. Those who reject Him- see NO Value; NO Importance; NO Glory; NO Beauty; and NO Greatness in Jesus. Satan has blinded their minds. Look what Paul said about it in **2Corinthians 4:3&4:**

**3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,
4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving
so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is
the image of God.**

... and they will suffer the Damnation of God.

But BY God's Grace and THROUGH the Gift of saving Faith- look what
God has done to and with and for us:

2Corinthians 4:6

**For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has
shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in
the face of Christ.**

... and that is what allows us to know; and see; and comprehend; that Jesus is
Greater!

Amen! Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your Pace! *Soli Deo Gloria*. For the
Glory of God ALONE!