

## The Strong Man Parable

by TJ Smith

This article appeared in the 2025 Winter issue of *Fulfilled!* Magazine

**W**ELCOME BACK, FRIEND! WE are continuing a journey into the parables of the Kingdom as taught by Yeshua found in the Gospel of Mark. I chose Mark because it is the shortest gospel account, and I'm kind of lazy like that. You know, I don't want to get too ambitious . . .

*“Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. When His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold of Him: for they said, ‘He is out of His mind.’ And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, ‘He has Beelzebub, and, by the prince of the demons He casts out demons.’ Then He called them to Him, and said to them in Parables, ‘How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand, and if Satan rise up against himself and be divided, he cannot stand but has an end. No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and plunder his goods, unless he will first bind the strong man; and then he will plunder his house. Truthfully, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may speak, but he that blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation,” because they said He has an unclean spirit” (Mark 3:20-29, Fulfilled Covenant Bible translation).*

This is the first recorded parable by Jesus, but let's get a quick rundown of the events that led up to this encounter with the Pharisees:

1. Yeshua began His ministry.
2. He chose His disciples.
3. He healed a man with an unclean spirit.
4. He healed Simon's wife.
5. He healed those with disease and demons.
6. He forgave sins.
7. He performed miracles...and they say men can't multi-task!

(These were the things that Jesus later instructed His disciples to do, and it's interesting that Mark 3:14 is the first instance of Yeshua transferring His Kingdom to believers.)

Yeshua would also be accused of breaking three laws from Torah, with confrontations following with the Scribes and Pharisees. No specific time frame was given, indicating that words were used to describe a

short period of time in which the Messiah performed all these actions: “Immediately,” “now in the morning,” “so he came,” “as soon as . . .,” and others. The point being, Jesus started His ministry and hit it hard! He started by Himself and never asked His disciples to do anything He wasn’t already doing. No board certified Him, prayed over Him, authorized Him, endorsed Him, handed Him a piece of paper, or shook His hand. He didn’t wait around and build His “team” first and then train them. Jesus was busy sowing seeds (Mark 2:18, 24; 3:2, 14-15, 21).

The Jewish leadership confrontations began immediately . . . and so did His parables. This “Strong Man” parable is the first felt board picture we get that Christ was setting up and bringing His kingdom to earth. It had relevance only in the first century. WHOA! What? Let me explain. The parable was fulfilled then, and the “strong man” was bound then, so obviously it doesn’t apply to us now as being something that we should look forward to as a future event. Jesus bound Satan 2000 years ago. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for ascribing His power to the work of Beelzebul. He told them that He had already bound the “strong man” and that the works He was performing were solely because of the binding. Yeshua then turned His attention to the allegation they made and defined it as blasphemy. Mark 3:30 reads: “. . . *because they had said, ‘He has an unclean spirit.’*” This was why they would not be forgiven. They were saying that the Spirit of God was evil.

Matthew 22:32 described that same event but with an added phrase: “*Whoever may speak a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven to him, but whoever may speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor in that which is coming*” (YLT).

If you don’t understand the last 10 words Jesus spoke, you will find it hard to interpret the parable. You will struggle with when this was supposed to happen, to which generation it would happen, and who would be the world leader at that future point in history, etc. First, let’s define the word “age,” these two “ages,” and when would or did one end and the other begin. The word in Matthew 12:32, whether translated “world” or “age” in English, is *aion* in the Greek. “This age” and “the age to come” have their roots in the ancient Hebrew expectation of when their Mosaic era (the age when the Law of Moses ruled) would be replaced by the coming of the Messiah (a.k.a. the Messianic age). The Jews of Yeshua’s day were living in the “this age” (Mosaic age), but they were looking forward to the day when the Messiah would come and transfer them into the “age to come” (the Messianic age). Sadly, many of them failed to see the “day of their visitation.”

Now, let’s back up to Matthew 12:32. “*Whoever may speak a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven to him, but whoever may speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor in that which is coming.*” Soooooooo . . .

1. If “this age” is our life on earth right now, and the “age which is coming” is only realized when we die and go to heaven, then why would Jesus even address the fact that blasphemy would not be forgiven in heaven? Who’s going to blaspheme in Heaven? As Spock from Star Trek would say, “Illogical, Captain.”

2. If the “age to come” was when Yeshua personally, physically came back and set up an earthly reign, why would anyone be blaspheming Yeshua then? His purpose was supposedly to set things right; bring heaven to earth; get rid of sin and defeat the devil; end wars, poverty, and hunger; and stop the Rolling Stones from recording another lame album. So once again, why would He say that even with heaven on literal earth, blasphemy would not be forgiven? Won’t everyone be a believer? It’s “Route 66” logic. After a while, you run out of highway.

The correct interpretation of this phrase is that blasphemy would not be forgiven during the closing age of the old Mosaic covenant, nor during the Messianic new covenant age that He was establishing.

The Strong Man parable is the first clue we get for Yeshua’s establishment of the Kingdom. To begin a Kingdom: 1. Bind the Strong Man. Overthrow the enemy. This is our first picture placed on the felt board; Yeshua bound Satan before His ministry even started. Exactly when this ‘binding’ took place is hard to pinpoint. Maybe it happened during or after His 40 days in the wilderness. Maybe it was right after Jesus rebuked Satan three times for tempting Him. But it seems apparent that the binding occurred before He started casting out demons, as the only way He could perform this act was to have first bound the strong man. The central truth here is that Jesus bound Satan and began fulfilling the characteristics of His kingdom.

In the next issue, I will talk about NT Wright and comments he has made about eschatological time statements. It was originally part of this chapter in my book, but it’s way too long to include here.

If you would like to read this book in its entirety, you can purchase “Kingdom Come: Messiah’s Methodical Manifesto Hidden in the Parables” at [www.tjsmithministries.com](http://www.tjsmithministries.com) – available in paperback and e-book formats.

I’m also excited to announce my new album of original music, which is now available on physical CD and via download at the website listed just above. My band is Stone Bruise, and the songs are a mix of modern and classic rock vibes, with lyrics of worship and about the journey through the eyes of finding Yahweh, serving Him, and understanding the new relationship with Him. Yeah, it sounds all hippy-dippy, but it’s just nine songs that have cool grooves and some rock influences like The Beatles, Cheap Trick, Black Crowes, Switchfoot, and others. All the songs support a fulfilled prophetic view, meaning that there is no mention of a future Second Coming, which says a lot these days. So, feel free to listen with no surprises! It was recorded in my studio, and I think it competes with major label releases, but that’s my opinion. All proceeds go to my charity, “Buy My Grandkids More Toys!”

If I see you at a conference in 2026, I will have books and my new CD available. ✝