

Jesus Warned of the Blasphemy of the Spirit

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that Jesus is the promised Son of David, the Christ. In this topic, we will see that the Pharisees did not want to admit this fact. We will see that the Pharisees made a choice and that choice showed that they were determined to reject the fact that Jesus is the Christ regardless of how much evidence they saw.

The multitudes had asked the question, “Could this be the Son of David?” We see that the Pharisees chose to reject that fact. Matthew 12:24-27 says, “Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, ‘This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’ But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges.’”

Here, we see that the Pharisees chose to reject this miracle and the other miracles of Jesus by saying that Jesus did those miracles by the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons. The name “Beelzebub” means *lord of the house*. It was originally the name of a Philistine god and was a part of their worship of idols. 1 Corinthians 10:20 explains, “Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.” As a result, the name Beelzebub came to be a name for Satan, since he is the lord of the demons.

Jesus knew what the Pharisees were thinking. As a result, He pointed out the fact that a kingdom that is divided will destroy itself. Luke 11:17 says, “But He, knowing their thoughts, said to them: ‘Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house *divided* against a house falls.’” By the very fact that Jesus knew their thoughts, He was proving in another way that He is God. Jesus went on to point out that every city or family that is divided cannot stand. By this statement, Jesus had shown that their thoughts made no sense. Jesus explained why their thoughts made no sense. Jesus said that if Satan casts out Satan, he will be fighting against himself. Jesus made it clear that Satan’s kingdom would not stand.

Jesus then gave a second illustration. Jesus asked by whom did their sons cast out demons if He had to depend on Beelzebub to cast out demons. Jesus had performed many miracles that showed that He had come from God and the Pharisees knew that He had demonstrated the power of God. By asking if that meant their sons were casting out demons by Beelzebub, the Pharisees knew in their hearts that He was from God. In Hebrews 6:13, we read, “For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself.” This verse shows that all followers of the Lord have One in them who is greater than the one in the world. We see that some Jews in the time of Jesus were also able to cast out demons. That is why Jesus told the

Pharisees that their sons would be their judges because they believed in God and did what they did through the power of God.

Jesus went on to make it clear that He cast out demons by the Spirit of God. Matthew 12:28-30 says, ““But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”” The Pharisees had just seen Jesus cast demons out of a man that was deaf and unable to talk. They had seen that the man could now hear and talk because Jesus had cast the demon out of the man.

Jesus caused the Pharisees to make a choice by what He said in these verses. It was clear that this man had his life greatly changed when the demon was cast out of him. The Pharisees now had to decide whether to believe that Jesus came from God or continue to deny that He came from God. Jesus said that if He had cast out the demons by the Spirit of God that the kingdom of God had come to them. 1 Timothy 6:14-16 says, “That you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom *be* honor and everlasting power. Amen.” The King was there that day and the Pharisees had to either recognize Him or deny Him. As we see, they made the choice to deny Him.

Jesus used a very clear illustration to force the Pharisees to think through their choice. Jesus said that a person cannot enter the house of a strong man and take his goods as plunder unless he first binds the strong man. Jesus had just defeated the power of Satan by casting a demon out of the man by the power of God. 1 John 4:4 says, “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” Jesus had shown that He is greater than the one who is in the world. Jesus had been able to do that because He is the One who has the power to bind Satan. John 16:11 says that the Holy Spirit convicts, ““Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”” Jesus showed that He had the power to bind the strong man. When Jesus said on the cross, “It is finished!” the judgment of Satan was completed, and he knows that his time is short before he will enter his eternal judgment.

The Pharisees showed that they were following Satan by what they said. That is why Jesus gave them a warning that whoever is not with Him is against Him. The Pharisees were doing the work of Satan and were not gathering people into the kingdom of heaven. The word translated “gather” means *to draw together or to collect*. In contrast to the Pharisees, Jesus had told His disciples in John 4:36, ““And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”” The disciples were learning how to work with Jesus so that their lives and their future ministry would be used by Jesus to gather people into the kingdom of God. As a result of the fact that the Pharisees were not gathering people into the kingdom of God, Jesus said that they were scattering abroad by doing everything they could to keep people from entering the kingdom of God.

Jesus then gave the Pharisees a warning about the danger of their actions. Matthew 12:31-32 says, “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.” It is very important to understand what is meant by the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit since these verses say that this is the one sin that will not be forgiven. John 15:26 says, “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” In this verse, we see that one of the key ministries of the Holy Spirit is to testify of Christ.

The Pharisees, in the time of Jesus, had a very unique opportunity. They had the privilege of seeing Jesus perform miracles like this miracle in which Jesus had just demonstrated His power over the power of Satan. The whole Sanhedrin later repeated this same type of denial after Jesus had returned to heaven. Acts 4:16-17 says, “Saying, ‘What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them *is* evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny *it*. But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name.’” They admitted that they could not deny the miracle. At the same time, they said here that it was done through the power of Satan, and in Acts, they decided to threaten the apostles to try and keep them quiet. In both situations, they knew that they had seen the power of God and at the same time, said it was done by the power of Satan.

The Pharisees and religious leaders who knew that they were denying the power of God were not committing sins of ignorance. Jesus was present with them at that very moment, and they chose to say that His works were being done by the power of Satan. The word translated “blasphemy” means *to slander or speak evil*. “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit” means *to speak evil against the work of the Holy Spirit and to knowingly reject the work of the Holy Spirit*. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:12-13, “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.” Paul was a blasphemer, but the Lord turned his life around and transformed him because he did it ignorantly while still in a state of unbelief.

Today, there are people who wonder if they have committed the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. A key ministry of the Holy Spirit is to testify of Christ. Christ is not now present on the earth, so, no one today can see Christ personally do miracles as He did when He was here on the earth and then claim that they have been done by the power of Satan. As a result, people may be like Paul and blaspheme ignorantly in their unbelief. However, the one sin that will cause them to experience eternal judgment is the sin of unbelief until they die because there is not a second chance after death. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand and explain to others that Jesus still continues to invite all who will to come to Him in repentance and faith. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children to share this message with others.