

40. Jesus Was Accused of Blasphemy

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that no one, including Satan, can take them out of the hands of Jesus and the Father. In addition, they cannot remove themselves from those hands but they can be disciplined by the Lord with physical sickness, or even death, so that they will not be condemned with the world. In our topic today, we are going to see that the religious leaders accused Jesus of blasphemy.

In our last topic, we saw that the religious leaders were very angry when Jesus said that He and the Father are One. John 10:31-33 says, “Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?’ The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.’” This is the third time that the Jewish religious leaders were ready to kill Jesus. John 5:18 says, “Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” Then, John 8:58-59 adds, “Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’ Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.” Each time Jesus made a clear claim that He is God the religious leaders were ready to kill Him.

This time, as Jesus saw the stones, He asked a question, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?” The word translated “good” means *that which is good in its character and beneficial in its effects*. Jesus had done many signs to show that He was from the Father. These miracles were very beneficial in the lives of the people who had been healed. Jesus said that these miracles had been accomplished through His Father. John 5:16-18 says, “For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.’ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” One thing that the religious leaders did not want to admit was the fact that Jesus was equal with the Father. That was the cause of their anger in John 10. Jesus just asked the leaders for which of those good works they were going to stone Him.

The religious leaders had to admit that they could not stone Jesus for any of the good works that He had done. As a result, they answered, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.” The Jews were forced to explain why they had picked up stones. They said that they were going to stone Jesus for blasphemy. Leviticus 24:16 says, “““And whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name *of the LORD*, he shall be put to death.””” The religious leader said that Jesus was committing blasphemy because He was just a man and was claiming to be God.

Jesus told the religious leaders to believe His works even if they did not believe Him. John 10:34-39 says, “Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, “I said, ‘You are gods’”? If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, “You are blaspheming,” because I said, “I am the Son of God”? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.’ Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.” Jesus began His answer by quoting Psalm 82:6 which says, “I said, ‘You *are* gods, and all of you *are* children of the Most High.’” In this Psalm, Asaph had used the word “gods” to speak of the judges (humans) that were ruling over Israel at that time.

Jesus made it clear that God, the Father, could choose to call human beings by the title of “gods.” Due to the fact that they were sons of God carrying out the governing of the land of Israel at that time, Jesus made it clear that the religious leaders should not be offended because Jesus called Himself, the Son of God. The Word of God had come to these people who were called “gods”. Then, Jesus gave a strong statement about the authority of the Word of God when he said, “And the Scripture cannot be broken.” In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, we read, “All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” Scripture cannot be broken because all Scripture has been given by the very breath of God.

Jesus then said, “Do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?” Here, Jesus again claimed that He came from the Father. He said that the Father had set Him apart and had sent Him into the world. However, Jesus asked how they could say that He was speaking blasphemy when the Father had also called others “gods” in the Scripture. The religious leaders had to pause for a moment before they threw any stones to think about what Jesus had just said. They had to think about the fact that Jesus had pointed out that in the Scriptures, men were called “gods”.

Then, Jesus gave evidence to show that He truly was the Son of God by pointing to His works. Jesus said that if He did not do the works of God, they should not believe in Him. In contrast, if Jesus did do the works of God, Jesus told them to believe the works even though they did not believe in Him. The religious leaders had just said, “For a good work we do not stone You.” As a result, they had already said that they could not deny the works (miracles) that Jesus had done. Many of these same religious leaders had to face this same problem in the early part of the book of Acts a short time later. 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.’” In both cases, they could not deny the miracle but neither would they admit that the miracle was from God.

Jesus also gave the religious leaders a reason why they should believe His works. Jesus wanted the religious leaders to know and recognize that the Father was in Him and that He was in the Father. The man formerly blind had told the religious leaders in John 9:31-33, “Now we know

that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” Instead of accepting the words of the man formerly blind, they cast him out of the synagogue because of their unbelief.

The religious leaders recognized that they had to make a choice. They had to choose whether they were going to accept or reject the fact that the works of Jesus came from the Father. They quickly made their choice. They had to choose whether they were going to try and hold on to their power and control over the people or they had to choose to believe Jesus and come to Him in repentance and faith. We see that the religious leaders again tried to seize Jesus. They had made their choice that they would do their best to destroy Jesus. However, this was not the time when Jesus would pay for the sins of all mankind. That time would come a few months later. As a result, they could not destroy Jesus and He escaped out of their hand.

Jesus then chose to leave the area of Jerusalem for a time. John 10:40-42 says, “And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. Then many came to Him and said, ‘John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true.’ And many believed in Him there.” Here, we see that Jesus left the city of Jerusalem and went to the other side of the Jordan River. This was the same area where John the Baptist had begun his ministry. Mark 1:4 says, “John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” Many people had heard John there and Matthew 3:5-6 says, “Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.” Here, we see that many people in that area, and even from other areas, had confessed their sins and been baptized by John. These people were very glad to hear the teaching of Jesus.

Those people recognized that John had not performed signs. In addition, they recognized that everything that John had said about Jesus was true. Here, we see that John had been a faithful witness as he prepared the way for the coming of Jesus. Many of these people had confessed their sins and been baptized by John. They had repented of their sin of unbelief. Now, they had the opportunity to hear directly from the One about whom John had spoken. They recognized that Jesus was the Christ and that the signs that Jesus did proved that He came from God. Here, we see a very different response from that of the religious leaders in Jerusalem. The result was that many people believed in Jesus in that area. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that there are many people who are searching for truth. The Lord has been preparing their hearts to receive the message of the Gospel. These people will believe as our children are faithful to share the Gospel with such individuals. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand how the Lord prepares people to come to Him for salvation.