

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

(Jerry Fite)

When Jesus was casting out demons, the Pharisees and scribes attributed such miraculous work to “*Beelzebub, the prince of demons*” (*Matthew 12:24*). Contributing the miraculous power to the prince of unclean spirits, they were thinking illogically, and speaking eternally soul damning words.

Jesus addresses their illogical thinking by pointing to logical conclusions. “*Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand*” (*Matthew 12:25-26*). It is universal. From the family, to the city even to the kingdom, no collectivity will endure if it is divided against itself. Our republic would not have survived if it remained divided over slavery in the middle 1800’s. No marriage will last if matters that divide husband and wife are not humbly addressed and solved.

The same is true regarding Satan, the prince of demons. “*If Satan casteth out Satan, he is divided against himself...*” (*Matthew 12:26*). When the seventy disciples returned from their message of the kingdom and repentance, with joy they said to Jesus,

“*Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in thy name.*” Jesus saw this as “*Satan fallen as lightening from heaven*”. As they cast out demons by the authoritative name of Jesus, they had authority over the “*power of the enemy*”, which included their prince, Satan himself (*Luke 10: 17-19*).

So it follows, if Satan casts out his demonic agents, the unclean spirits, he is casting out himself. Jesus concludes with a rhetorical question: “*...how then shall his kingdom stand*” (*Matthew 12:27*)?

If such is done by Satan, to whom should we attribute the power behind the Jewish exorcists who claimed to cast out demons? If Satan is casting out demons through Jesus, why should we not attribute the similar power working through the Jewish exorcists? What Pharisee or scribe would make this connection, but how could they honestly distinguish between the two as they viewed the same results? Jesus concludes, “*...therefore shall they be your judges*” (*Matthew 12:27*).

Knowing that Satan casting out Satan is illogical and self-defeating as far as Satan is concerned; Jesus drives home the on-

ly other possibility: Jesus cast out demons by the Holy Spirit. If so, then the kingdom or authority of God is upon you (*Matthew 12:28*). Demons possessed the body of a man, causing him to be blind and dumb. The man could now see and speak. Jesus first bound the strong man, Satan, and then spoiled his house (*Matthew 12:29*).

Saying Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub, or Satan, the Pharisees and scribes blasphemed or spoke against the Holy Spirit. Jesus says, “*Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin because they said, He hath an unclean spirit*” (*Mark 3:29-30*).

This sin stands out from other sins because if one repents of other sins, such as blasphemy against Jesus, the Son of man, forgiveness was possible (*Matthew 12:31-32*). But Jesus warns this is not so with this blasphemy. The miracles Jesus did confirmed Him to be the Son of God (*John 20:30-31*). When one attributed the miraculous power to Satan, when the miracle was God’s definitive way of proving that it was from His Spirit, he was committing the unpardonable sin.