

“Jesus versus Demons”

July 26, 2020

Luke 11:14-28

I. Introduction

Just before He left Galilee to make His final trip to Jerusalem, Jesus asked His disciples in [Luke 9:18](#), “Who do the crowds say I am?” For 2 ½ years the disciples and the crowds had followed Jesus. Among other things, they had seen Him raise Jairus’s daughter from the dead ([Luke 8:49-56](#)); they had watched Him calm a storm with just a word ([Luke 8:22-25](#)); they had been part of the 5000 men plus women and children Jesus fed with just 5 loaves and two fish ([Luke 9:10-17](#)). They had been there when Jesus healed many with diseases and drove out demons. They had listened to Him preach about the kingdom of God but in spite of all this, the disciples replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.” Then in [verse 20](#) Jesus asked the disciples, “But what about you? Who do you say I am?” This is the ultimate question: “Who is Jesus of Nazareth?” Answering for the disciples, Peter said, “You are “the Christ of God” ([Luke 9:20](#)).

In today’s Scripture Luke recorded one more attempt by Jesus to get the people and their leaders to recognize who He really was. All of Jesus’ miracles, including this one of healing the man with a demon, demanded some explanation for them. The Pharisees and the people couldn’t deny the existence of miracles—they watched them happen before their very own eyes. But by this time, the decision had largely been made; the leaders and the nation had decided to reject Jesus. In their pride and hard-heartedness, the leaders refused to admit what they saw and instead claimed that the miracles were done by the power of the Devil. Sadly, many of the people believed the leaders’ conclusion: Jesus was from hell, not heaven; He was sent by Satan, not God.

II. Jesus’ Miracle

It all began with a miracle when Jesus drove “out a demon.” This particular demon had made its victim mute, and [Mark 9:25](#) adds deaf as well. “When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke

and the crowd was amazed.” Jesus’ healing of the man was instantaneous. Jesus once again proved that He had control over the spirit world of demons as well as power over the physical world of disease. And once again the people were amazed beyond belief.

The Pharisees knew there were only 2 choices: either Jesus was the Messiah sent from God or He was sent from Satan. Because they refused to recognize His teachings and actions as being from God, the Pharisees had to conclude that Jesus must be from Satan. “**But some of them said, ‘By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons.’**” Beelzebub was one of the names of the Philistine god Baal (2 Kings 1:1-3). The Jews often used this name when referring to Satan. Their accusation was ridiculous, and in Matthew’s account in Matthew 12:22-32, Jesus warned that those who made it were guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

Caught up in the mocking and contempt, “**others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.**” They were taunting Him; they were demanding that He prove He wasn’t from the devil by performing a spectacular miracle in the heavens and not just a miracle on earth. Because the mighty works He had already done were conclusive proof that He was the Messiah and Son of God (John 10:25), Jesus refused. As He would say to them in Luke 11:29, “**This is a wicked generation. It asks for a sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.**”

III. Jesus’ Defense

As the Son of God, “**Jesus knew their thoughts,**” so He defended His actions giving 3 reasons why He couldn’t be from Satan.

A. First, it was illogical. Jesus said that it was illogical for Satan’s power to be used against Satan and his kingdom. Jesus asked, “*Why would Satan fight himself?*” “**Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined.**” As we see around us today, any kingdom engaged in a civil war would self-destruct. Jesus added that a “**house divided against itself will fall.**” Any division would lead to the fall of Satan’s kingdom and this wasn’t something Satan was going to let happen. It was totally illogical.

B. Other Jews cast out demons. Jesus' second reason was that other Jews cast out demons; **turn to Acts 19:13-16.** It seems that these 7 brothers had done successful exorcisms before—maybe even during the time Jesus was on the earth. This time, however, they tried to use a new “formula” for driving out demons and it backfired on them. Back in Luke, Jesus was asking by what power people like these 7 brothers were able to cast out demons. Obviously, these Jewish exorcists would claim that their power was from God and the Pharisees weren't going to condemn their own people. Therefore, if this were true, then how could they claim Jesus' power was from Satan?

But, actually, the Pharisees weren't rejecting Jesus for lack of evidence; they were rejecting Him because they didn't want to accept His teachings—His truths—the truth about how to be right before God; the truth that Jesus was the Messiah; the truth that the kingdom of God was at hand just as both John the Baptist and Jesus had taught.

C. Jesus' 3rd reason was that the kingdom of God had come. Many times, Jesus had demonstrated His power over Satan by healing sickness and disease which had been brought by sin—sin which had been promoted by Satan ever since the Garden of Eden. Jesus had raised people from the dead, driven out demons, and He had even forgiven sins. Jesus claimed that His miracles were demonstrations of the presence of God's victorious rule—**“the finger of God.”** Because of this, He said that **“The kingdom of God has come to you.”**

Jesus then gave an analogy to reinforce the truth that He was empowered by God, not Satan. The kingdom of God and the power of Jesus Christ are seen in His miracles, for He could not defeat Satan unless He were stronger than Satan. Jesus represented Satan as **“a strong man, fully armed”** guarding **“his own house and possessions.”** But Jesus had invaded Satan's territory, destroyed his armor and weapons, and claimed the spoils. Satan and his demons were and are powerless to keep the Lord Jesus Christ from rescuing souls from the kingdom of darkness. Jesus has clearly demonstrated His power over Satan by healing the sickness and disease, and by, ultimately, conquering death—as **Ephesians 4:8** says, **“When he**

ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.” 1 John 3:8 says, “The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.” Turn to Colossians 1:13-14.

IV. For or Against

A. A Warning Jesus then closed this teaching with a warning and a parable. The warning was “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” It is impossible to be neutral in this spiritual war. Everyone falls into one of two categories: either they are with Christ or they are against Him. Every person must make a choice, if he chooses to make no choice, he is choosing against Jesus—“whoever is not with me is against me.”

B. A Parable Jesus illustrated the danger of neutrality by telling the parable of a man and a demon. Before the change, this man’s life had been a comfortable place for a demon to live in but now things had changed. Perhaps the demon went out of the man because the man’s reformed moral behavior made the demon uncomfortable. Perhaps the demon left the man in response to the exorcism of the Jewish exorcists. Regardless, there was a change. On the surface, he seems to have become a very religious man, someone who, from all appearances, had cleaned up his life.

Having left the man, Jesus said that the demon passed “through arid places seeking rest.” Since they are spirit beings, demons do not wander in deserts in need of water. Jesus was just picturing the demon wandering aimlessly in the spirit realm. Demons do their work in this world through people, and not to have a person to work through is the equivalent for a demon of being in a barren situation.

After wandering for a time, but not finding any person to indwell, the demon decided, “I will return to the house I left.” The description of the man as the demon’s house indicates that this demon lived in him, not merely that the man was under its influence. When the demon returned, it found the man’s heart “swept clean and put in order.” Sadly, the man’s change was a legalistic effort at self-reformation. It wasn’t a change of heart—it was just a superficial change.

The man's outward condition had improved, but he did not invite God to come and dwell within. In other words, the man had remained neutral. He was under the delusion that his self-reform would keep him safe. But there was a spiritual vacuum in his heart. Not only did the original demon return, but it also brought with it "seven other spirits more wicked than itself." He is like those of whom Peter wrote in 2 Peter 2:20, "If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning." By trying to change by following the teachings of Jesus Christ in his own strength and not being filled with the Holy Spirit, the man's condition ended up worse than it was in the beginning.

Taking sides with Jesus means more than saying the right things and being sincere—like the woman who cried, "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you." The woman was sincere, her statement was correct, but incomplete. It is not enough merely to attempt to be moral—a good person. One must act on Jesus' words. Jesus said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it." We take sides with Jesus Christ when we hear His Word and obey it—we make Him our Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9). Turn to 1 John 3:23-24. James summarized what Jesus was saying in James 1:22, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

V. Conclusion

Two questions are asked in today's Scripture: First, Who is Jesus Christ? In his book *Mere Christianity* C.S. Lewis has a great answer. He wrote: "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his

feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. . . . Now it seems to me to be obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God.” Because of their pride, the Pharisees declared that He was of Satan. What is your answer—Who is Jesus Christ?

The second question is: Whose side are you on? In the war between God and Satan, between heaven and hell, between good and evil, and between truth and error, no one is neutral. Those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, receive Him as their Savior, follow Him with all their heart, and seek to advance His kingdom are as much in partnership with the devil as those who openly worship Satan. You can't be a “sort of” Christian; a “closet” Christian; a “lukewarm” Christian. It isn't necessary to oppose Christ in order to be against Him; it is only necessary not to be with Him. It isn't necessary to actively interfere with His work in order to be one who scatters; it is only necessary **“not to gather with”** Him (**Matt. 12:30**).

Turn to Revelation 3:14-21. There is no middle ground—the person who does not belong to God is an enemy of God. Whose side are you on?

Jesus' closing parable illustrates something we see happening around us today—legalizing moralism. Legalizing moralism is doomed to failure—**Romans 8:8** puts it this way, **“those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”** It is only through the transforming, regenerating power of the Holy Spirit that sinners can become new creatures—**2 Corinthians 5:17** says, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”** Without the Holy Spirit in one's heart, things will eventually go from bad to worse—just as the man in Jesus' parable.

Christians have the answer for the **“love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”** (**Galatians 5:22-23**) that the world is seeking. It's not in legalism; it is Jesus Christ. In **Romans 10:14** Paul wrote, **“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without**

someone preaching to them?” How about you, are you following the Great Commission and telling others how to be saved? How to have the fruit of the Spirit? Or are you just “spinning your wheels” as you support legalizing morality without changing the hearts of others? Who is Jesus Christ? Whose side are you on?