

(24) Jesus Accused of Blasphemy (Mt. 12:22–37; Mk. 3:20–30; Lk. 11:14–23)

Note: The Luke passage is a parallel passage here for doctrinal development and study, but it is also placed later in the Harmony for chronological study. [PM11] Accused Connection with Beelzebub.

1. This episode takes place in Capernaum—described as “home” (Mk. 3:20–21).
 - a. The demands of the gathered crowds were such that no personal time remained in any given day (Mk. 3:20).
 - b. Jesus’ earthly family thought that the entire ministry was out of control and that Jesus needed to come back to reality (Mk. 3:21).
2. Jesus heals a demoniac and the resultant criticism opens a door of opportunity for teaching angelic conflict principles (Mt. 12:22ff.; Mk. 3:22ff.; Lk. 11:14ff.).
 - a. Matthew: Jesus healed a blind and mute demoniac. Pres.mid.ptc. δαιμονίζομαι daimonizomai ^{#1139}_{13x}: *one possessed by a δαιμόνιον daimonion*.
 - b. Luke: Jesus cast out a mute demon. δαιμόνιον daimonion ^{#1140}_{63x}: *demon*. A “transcendent incorporeal being w. status between humans and deities” (BDAG). A δαιμόνιον daimonion was lower than any θεός theos, and included such creatures as nymphs, fauns & satyrs. See notes at [GM5] Demoniac Healed on a Sabbath Day.
3. The Lord’s authority in casting out demons prompted some to consider Him as being the Son of David (Matt. 12:23), but their question is a skeptical one, and some wanted more miracles as proof (Lk. 11:16).
4. The brood of vipers accuses the Lord of being possessed (Mk. 3:22a) and using Satanic power to cast out Satan (Matt. 12:24; Mk. 3:22b; Lk. 11:15).
5. Beelzebul.
 - a. Βεελζεβούλ Beelzeboul ^{#954}_{7x} (Matt. 10:25; 12:24,27; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15,18,19).
 - b. זְבוּב בַּעַל ba‘al z^ebuwb ^{#1176}_{4x}: Beelzebub, Lord of the Fly. 2nd Kgs. 1:2,3,6,16. בַּעַל ba‘al ^{#1168}_{76x}: *Baal, lord*; זְבוּב z^ebuwb ^{#2070}_{2x}: *fly*. Acc. to Ugaritic and other lit.: Lord of the air, heaven, temple. זְבוּב z^ebūl ^{#2073}_{5x}: *exalted residence, lofty abode*. 1st Kgs. 8:13; Isa. 63:15; Hab. 3:11.
 - c. The ruler (ἄρχων archōn ^{#758}_{37x}) of the demons (τὰ δαιμόνια ta daimonia). Jesus specifically identifies Beelzebub with Satan (Matt. 12:26; Mk. 3:23–26; Lk. 11:18).
6. Jesus answers His critics with three lines of thinking.
 - a. Kingdoms, cities and houses with internal divisions are doomed (Matt. 12:25–26; Mk. 3:23–26; Lk. 11:17–18).
 - b. Pharisaical exorcists might actually use such methods—consult them for their testimony (Matt. 12:27; Lk. 11:19).
 - c. If this is the Holy Spirit at work then Israel is presently beholding the “at hand” Kingdom of God (Matt. 12:28–30; Mk. 3:27; Lk. 11:20–23).
7. The attribution of Satanic power rather than the Holy Spirit’s power for the work of Jesus Christ constitutes “the Unpardonable Sin” (Matt. 12:31–32; Mk. 3:28–30; also Lk.12:10).
 - a. The use of “Spirit of God” (v.28), “the Spirit” (v.31), and the Holy Spirit (v.32) help to frame the context for this difficult passage.
 - b. With victory over diabolical forces the Kingdom of God is not only “at hand” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7) but literally “upon you” (Matt. 12:28).
 - c. Acceptance versus rejection of Christ is an absolute either/or decision. With versus against. Gather with Christ versus scattering (Matt. 12:30 cp. Isa. 2:10–21; Mic. 7:17; Lk. 23:30; Rev. 6:12–17).
 - d. Any sin—even blasphemy is forgivable (Matt. 12:31a,32a) for those who accept the Anointed Christ. (They are with Him and will be gathered to Him).
 - e. Although forgivable, sin is not forgiven (Matt. 12:31b, 32b) for those who reject the Anointed Christ. (They are against Him and will be scattered away from Him in judgment).
 - f. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit is a rejection of His Anointing of Jesus as the Christ (Matt. 12:22–29) and therefore a rejection of the Holy Spirit’s conviction ministry (Jn. 16:8–11).

8. The Lord concluded His message to the Pharisees with a repeat of a message He gave to conclude the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 12:33-37).
 - a. Trees and fruit emphasize being over doing (Matt. 12:33 cf. 7:16ff.).
 - b. “Making the tree” will have consequences in “making the fruit.” Aor.act.imper. ποιέω poieō ^{#4160}_{568x}: *to do, to make*. How would a Pharisee “make” a bad tree? Matt. 23:13,15
 - c. The brood of vipers by their intrinsic evil nature cannot produce any Divine good (Matt. 12:34; Isa. 64:6).
 - d. The Lord’s work of “casting out” a demon was an illustration for what each one of us “casts out” (v.35).
 - 1) The good man has a good treasury from which he “casts out” good things.
 ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ θησαυροῦ ἐκβάλλει ἀγαθὰ, καὶ
 ho agathos anthrōpos ek tou agathou thēsauroy ekballei agatha, kai
 - 2) The evil man has an evil treasury from which he “casts out” evil things.
 ὁ πονηρὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ θησαυροῦ ἐκβάλλει πονηρά.
 ho ponēros anthrōpos ek tou ponērou thēsauroy ekballei ponēra.
 - 3) The concept of treasures was previously taught in terms of “storing up” (Matt. 6:19-21).
 - a) In this teaching, the treasures are “cast out.” θησαυρίζω thēsaurizō ^{#2343}_{8x} & θησαυρός thēsauros ^{#2344}_{17x}.
 - b) The believer’s proper orientation to treasure is a feature of our Divine perspective in the Christian Way of Life (Matt. 2:11; 6:19-21; 12:35; 13:44,52; 19:21; Lk. 12:21; 2nd Cor. 4:7; Col. 2:3; Heb. 11:26).
 - e. Words mean things (Matt. 12:36-37).
 - 1) They externally manifest the internal reality.
 - 2) They will be called into account at the final judgment.
 - 3) They form a standard for temporal justification.