

# A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

# THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

† THE BOOK OF LUKE

WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

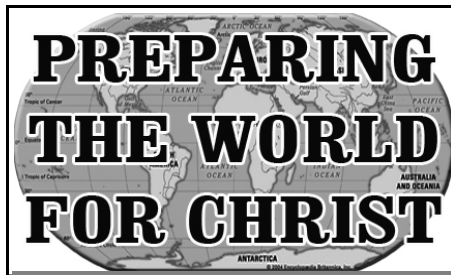
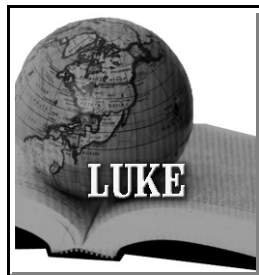
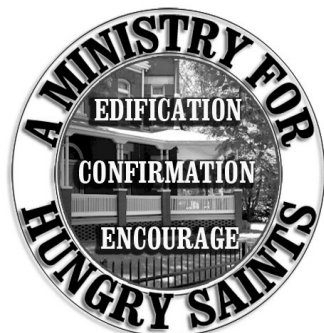
*An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely*

LESSON NUMBER 39

COMMENTARY ON: 11:14-28

## SOME RESPONSES OF JESUS

The scene begins with Jesus casting a "dumb" demon out of an oppressed person. When the demon *"was gone out, the dumb spake; and all the people wondered."* Some said that Jesus did this "through *Beelzebub the chief of demons.*" At that time others tempted Jesus seeking from Him *"a sign from heaven."* Knowing their thoughts, Jesus declared that a house divided against itself would fall. Therefore, Satan would not cast out demons. He then asked them if He really did cast out demons through Beelzebub, *"by whom do your sons cast them out?"* He then made some extensive remarks about the superior casting out the inferior, and what demons that were uprooted from their dwelling did. As He was speaking, a woman in the crowd burst forth, calling a blessing upon the woman who nursed Jesus, who was Mary, who had already been blessed. Jesus then announced who was really the people being blessed.



Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ





## The Book of Luke. 5/27/2016

### Lesson Number 39



#### 54 VERSIONS OF THE ENGLISH SCRIPTURES

ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETH=Etheridge Translation (1849); ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), NIRV=New Int'l Readers Version (1998); ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literat Translation of the Bible (1976), LEW=Lewis Translation (1896); LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MGI=Peshitta Translation (2006); MIT=Idiomatic Version; MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NOY=George Noyes Bible (1869); NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), ROT=Rotheram Bible (1999); RPTE=Revised Patriarchal Greek Orthodox New Testament; RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

#### GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

FRIBERG; LOUW-NIDA; LIDDELL SCOTT; THAYER; VGNT GREEK DICTIONARY; GINGRICH

A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE. ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

# SOME RESPONSES OF JESUS

LUKE 11:14 "And He was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. <sup>15</sup> But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. <sup>16</sup> And others, tempting Him, sought of Him a sign from heaven. <sup>17</sup> But He, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. <sup>18</sup> If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. <sup>19</sup> And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. <sup>20</sup> But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. <sup>21</sup> When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: <sup>22</sup> But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. <sup>23</sup> He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth. <sup>24</sup> When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. <sup>25</sup> And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. <sup>26</sup> Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. <sup>27</sup> And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked. <sup>28</sup> But He said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." ..... Luke 11:14-28

## INTRODUCTION

### A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

The scene begins with Jesus casting a "dumb" demon out of an oppressed person. When the demon "was gone out, the dumb spake; and all the people wondered." Some said that Jesus did this "through *Beelzebub the chief of*

*demons.*" At that time others tempted Jesus seeking from Him "a sign from heaven." Knowing their thoughts, Jesus declared that a house divided against itself would fall. Therefore, Satan would not cast out demons. He then asked them if He really did cast out demons through

Beelzebub, "by whom do your sons cast them out?" He then made some extensive remarks about the superior casting out the inferior, and what demons that were uprooted from their dwelling did. As He was speaking, a woman in the crowd burst forth, calling a blessing upon the

A certain lawyer asks Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus asks him what the Law said. The man answered, and Jesus spoke a parable – Given O. Blakely

## CONTENTS

- ▶ INTRODUCTION
- ▶ THE DEMON WAS DUMB (11:14A)
- ▶ THE PEOPLE WONDERED (11:14B)
- ▶ A FALSE CHARGE (11:15)
- ▶ TEMPTING JESUS TO SHOW A SIGN (11:16)
- ▶ THE KINGDOM THAT IS BROUGHT TO DESOLATION (11:17)
- ▶ HOW SHALL HIS KINGDOM STAND (11:18)
- ▶ BY WHOM DO YOUR SON CAST THEM OUT? (11:19)
- ▶ WITH THE FINGER OF GOD (11:20)
- ▶ SOMEONE STRONGER THAN THE STRONG MAN (11:21-22)
- ▶ NO NEUTRALITY (11:23)
- ▶ WHAT AN EXPELLED DEMON DOES (11:24)
- ▶ WHEN THE HOUSE IS EMPTY (11:25-26)
- ▶ A CERTAIN WOMAN SPEAKS (11:27-28)

woman who nursed Jesus, who was Mary, who had already been blessed. Jesus then announced who was really the people being blessed.

### JESUS SEEN IN DIFFERING CIRCUMSTANCES

Thus far in the Gospel according to Luke, we have seen Jesus in a variety of times and circumstances.

- ⇒ In His birth (Lk 2:5-20).
- ⇒ His circumcision (Lk 2:21).
- ⇒ His dedication (Lk 2:21-39)
- ⇒ PREFERENCE. When He was twelve years old (Lk 2:42-52).
- ⇒ OBEDIENCE. His baptism (Lk 3:21-22).
- ⇒ HOLINESS. His 40-day temptation (Lk 4:1-13).
- ⇒ APTITUDE. Returning in the power of the Spirit and teaching in the synagogues (Lk 4:14-15).
- ⇒ COMMUNICATION. Preaching in His

home town synagogue (Lk 4:16-30).

- ⇒ TEACHING. Teaching in Capernaum, and confronting a man with an unclean demon (Lk 4:31-37).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. Entering Simon's house and healing his Simon's mother-in-law (Lk4:38-39).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. In Capernaum in the evening healing those with divers diseases, and expelling demons from those possessed by them (Lk 4:40-41).
- ⇒ TEACHING. Going into a desert place where the people sought Him that He should not depart from them (Lk 4:42-43).
- ⇒ TEACHING. Preaching in the synagogues of Galilee (Lk 4:44).
- ⇒ TEACHING. Preaching from a boat belonging to Peter to a crowd of people (Lk 5:1-3).
- ⇒ REWARDER. Causing Peter to catch a great draught of fish (Lk 5:4-9).
- ⇒ DRAWING. Peter, Andrew, James and John begin following Him (Lk 5:10-11).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. Heals a man full of leprosy (Lk 5:13-14).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. Great multitudes follow Him to Hear Him and be healed of their infirmities (Lk 5:15).
- ⇒ PRAYER. Withdraws into the wilderness and prayed (Lk 5:16).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. He heals a paralytic let down through the ceiling by four men (Lk 5:17-26).
- ⇒ RESPONDER. He calls Levi (Matthew) to follow Him, and Matthew prepares a feast for Jesus, with many attending (Lk 5:27-35).
- ⇒ TEACHER. He delivers parables confirming that the old and the new cannot be joined (Lk 5:36-39).

- ⇒ CONFRONTING ENEMIES. Certain Pharisees confront Jesus, questioning why His disciples violated the Sabbath by plucking and eating some grain as they passed through he fields (Lk 6:1-5).
- ⇒ CONFRONTING ENEMIES. On another Sabbath He taught in the synagogue and healed a man with a withered hand (Lk 6:6-11).
- ⇒ PRAYER. He went up into a mountain and prayed all night (Lk 6:12).
- ⇒ CHOOSING. He chooses His twelve apostles (Lk 6:13-16).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. He stands in a plain with a great multitude of people and heals those with diseases, and those vexed with evil spirits (Lk 6:17-19).
- ⇒ TEACHER. He teaches His disciples in the sermon on the mount (Lk 6:20-38).
- ⇒ TEACHER. He delivers a parable concerning the blind leading the blind, with its implications (Lk 6:39-49).
- ⇒ PERCEPTION. He enters Capernaum, where He is confronted with a "certain centurion" whose dear servant was near death. Jesus heals the servant, marveling at his faith (Lk 7:1-10).
- ⇒ COMPASSION. He travels to Nain, where he raises the dead son of a widow from there (Lk 7:11-17).
- ⇒ MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN. Some of John's disciples come to Him, asking if He is the Christ. He responds by healing "many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits, and many who were blind." He then told the men to tell John what they had seen (Lk 7:20-23).
- ⇒ COMMENDS. He praised John to the people (Lk 7:24-28).
- ⇒ DISCERNERS. He describes the generation to whom He is speaking (Lk 7:31-35).

- ⇒ **COMPASSION.** He is invited to a Pharisee's house to eat, and there confronts a sinful woman (Lk 7:36-50).
- ⇒ **TEACHER.** He goes throughout every city preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, and the twelve were with Him, and certain women who ministered to them of their substance (Lk 8:1-3).
- ⇒ **TEACHER.** He speaks a parable to much people who came to Him out of every city. The disciples later ask Him to explain the parable to them (Lk 8:4-18).
- ⇒ **WHOLLY DEVOTED.** His mother and brothers come where He is teaching, asking to speak with Him – and He refuses (Lk 8:19-21).
- ⇒ **POWER AND ATTITUDE TOWARD FEAR.** He goes with His disciples into a ship, saying "Let us go over to the other side." While He is asleep, a life-threatening storm arises, which He calms (Lk 8:22-25).
- ⇒ **COMPASSION.** They arrive in the country of the Gadarenes where he heals a man who was dominated by a legion of demons (Lk 8:26-39).
- ⇒ **RECEPTIVITY.** Jesus returns to the other side of the lake, where the people gladly received Him (Lk 8:40).
- ⇒ **COMPASSION AND DISCERNMENT.** Jesus raises the dead daughter of Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue (Lk 8:41-42,49-56).
- ⇒ **COMPASSION.** On the way to Jairus'

house, He heals a woman with an issue of blood (Lk 8:43-48).

- ⇒ **EMPOWERING.** Jesus sends out the twelve, giving them power and authority over all demons, and to cure sicknesses, commissioning them to "preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick." When they returned, they told Him all they had done (9:1-6,10).
- ⇒ **COMPASSION.** He retires privately, with His disciples, to a desert, where the people follow Him. As the day drew to a close, He fed 5,000 men, besides women and children, with five loaves and two fishes (9:10-17).
- ⇒ **REQUIRES INVOLVEMENT.** After praying alone, He asks His disciples who the people were saying He was (9:18-27).
- ⇒ **POSSESSES GLORY.** Jesus goes up into a mountain with Peter, James, and John, and is transfigured while He prayed (9:28-36).
- ⇒ **COMPASSION.** Jesus is confronted by a man with a demon-possessed son, and heals the son (9:37-45).
- ⇒ **DISCERNMENT.** Jesus deals with His disciples disputing about who was going to be greatest among them (9:45-48).
- ⇒ **RESPONSE TO CONDUCT.** Jesus responds to John's report that they had seen a man casting out demons, and told him to stop, because he was not with them (9:49-50).
- ⇒ **COMMITMENT.** Jesus heads for

Jerusalem, sending messengers before to receive Him (9:51-62).

- ⇒ **COMMISSIONS.** Jesus sends out seventy, who go out, and return with a good report (10:1-24).
- ⇒ **RESPONSIVE.** Jesus answers the question of a lawyer (10:25-37).
- ⇒ **RESPONSIVE.** Jesus goes to Martha's house, where Mary sits at His feet and listens (10:38-42).
- ⇒ **TEACHER.** Jesus teaches His disciples concerning prayer (11:1-13).
- ⇒ **AUTHORITY.** Jesus expels a demon from a dumb man, and some unbelievers respond (11:14-26).
- ⇒ **RESPONSIVE.** A woman shouts out a blessing on the mother of Jesus, and He responds (11:27-28).

#### THE NATURE OF JESUS REVEALED

With the exception of the first three incidents (birth, circumcision, and dedication) – all occurring in His infancy – **the nature of Jesus was revealed, His priorities were made known, and His wisdom was demonstrated.** This was a revelation of Divine life in the environment of an "evil world" (Gal 1:4). **He proved His superiority to the world, thus confirming He could deliver men from it.** We behold how He interfaces with men, observing their conduct, answering their questions, and discerning their thoughts. Jesus is a Savior of involvement as well as power. **When He becomes involved with any individual, inserting His Person and life into their life, there is always improvement, and that without exception.**

## THE DEMON WAS DUMB

LUKE 11:14A **"And He was casting out a devil, and it was dumb."**

Other versions read, "and it [the demon] was mute," <sup>NKJV</sup> "a demon that was mute," <sup>NIV</sup> "a demon that was dumb," <sup>RSV</sup> "an evil spirit out of a man

who was without the power of talking," <sup>BBE</sup> "a demon that causes muteness," <sup>CEB</sup> "a devil, and the same was dumb," <sup>DOUAY</sup> "a mute demon," <sup>MIT</sup> "the demon could not speak," <sup>NIVR</sup> "a demon that was dumb," <sup>ROT</sup> and "a dumb demon." <sup>WEYMOUTH/WILLIAMS/MONTGOMERY</sup>

The phrasing of this sentence is arresting. It literally reads, "a demon, and itself, or the same, was dumb," or "and it was a mute one." <sup>INTERLINEAR</sup> This demon was apparently the spiritual composite of dumbness. It was the personal characterization of that trait,

A certain lawyer asks Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus asks him what the Law said. The man answered, and Jesus spoke a parable – Given O. Blakely

like Satan is the spiritual embodiment of evil, and Jesus is the embodiment of Divinity, or He in whom *“the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily”* (Col 2:9). Demons, of course, do not have a *“body.”* However, they do have an evil nature – a particular nature. When this particular demon moved into a man, he became dumb, and unable to speak.

There are two other accounts in the Gospels that some feel may contain this same nature. Both are in Matthew. In both of those accounts the people *“marveled,”* as in this account they *“wondered.”* And afterward the Pharisees heard of it and said He did this by *“the prince of demons.”*

**MATTHEW 9:32-24.** This followed the raising of Jairus’ daughter, and the healing of two blind men. That event is reported by Luke after Jesus had healed the Gadarene demoniac (Lk 8:27-39).

**MATTHEW 12:22.** The man in this text was both blind and dumb. This took place after Jesus healed the man with a withered hand, an event occurring considerably before Luke’s account the healing in our text (Lk 6:6-8).

You may recall that Jesus said of Judas, *“one of you IS a devil”* (John 6:70). Here, the word *“devil”* is not translated from the word *“daimon,”* or

*“demon.”* Rather, it is from the Greek word *“diabolos,”* which is an ascription given to the devil himself. This Greek word is used forty times in Scripture, and always refers to *“Satan”* himself, or *“the devil”* (Matt 4:1,4,5,8,11; 13:39; 25:41; Lk 4:23,5,6,13; John 6:70; 8:12,44; Acts 10:38; 13:10; Eph 4:27; 6:11, etc).

**The point is that Satan himself, or his demons, can possess a man.** No man can do anything about this condition. The individual in whom the demon dwells takes on the characteristics of the demon – in this case, it was dumbness, or being mute. These demons – all of them – as well as Satan himself, are subject to Jesus, and they know it.

In our text Jesus is in the process of *“casting out a demon.”* No details are provided, but it becomes apparent that this was a public event. That, of course, is the evidence of genuine power from God. **It can be employed in the presence of others, and when it is, the devil himself, and all of the demons aligned with him must yield to the Lord Jesus.** For those who can see it, there are certain evidences of the overthrow of he devil.

⇒ For all who are in Christ Jesus, Satan can be resisted to such an

exist that he will flee from the one he is seeking to influence (James 4:7).

⇒ The shield of faith will successfully quench all of his fiery darts (Eph 6:16).

⇒ The *“whole armor of God,”* when it is put on, enables a person to stand against the wiles of the devil, and in the evil day (Eph 6:11,13).

⇒ Our spiritual weaponry can successfully throw down imaginations and every high thought that exalts itself against God (2 Cor 10:3-5).

⇒ Every temptation comes with a Divinely supplied way of escape (1 Cor 10:13).

**All of this, and more, was lived out by Jesus when He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil** (Acts 1:-:39). If anyone will expose their hearts and mind to the record of the life of Jesus when He dwelt among men, and think upon it, a proper concept and a deep appreciation of the Son of God will be developed. Life will be lived more fully, and in a God-glorifying manner. The believer will also, experience a deep and empowering satisfaction within.

## THE PEOPLE WONDERED

***“<sup>14B</sup> And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.”***

Other versions read *“the multitude marveled,”* <sup>NKJV</sup> *“the crowd was amazed,”* <sup>NIV</sup> *“the people were astounded,”* <sup>CJB</sup> *“the crowds wondered,”* <sup>DARBY</sup> *“were in admiration at it,”* <sup>DOUAY</sup> *“The crowd was excited and enthusiastic,”* <sup>LIVING</sup> and *“taking the crowd by complete surprise.”* <sup>MESSAGE</sup>

**The people had never seen a man like Jesus of Nazareth.** They had seen

John the Baptist, which in all the history of the world was not preceded by anyone greater. However, he himself confessed he was not worthy to loose the shoes on Jesus’ feet. Also, he *“did no miracle”* (John 10:41), while Jesus did numerous miracles of great variety and scope every day.

Things like those recorded in our text did not take place through the scribes and Pharisees. **They were self-appointed leaders, but they had no spiritual power.** The people did not *“wonder”* at what they did. However,

they did *“wonder”* when they saw what Jesus did. There had never been a wonder-worker like Jesus. The nature and frequency of His works were unparalleled. He could command diseases, and nature as well. He could change substance from water to wine, and multiply food exponentially. Evil spirits obeyed Him, as well as the winds and the waves.

In our day, there have been extensive efforts to humanize Jesus beyond that which is revealed. The Word was *“made flesh”*(John 1:14), but

His manner of life and prodigious ministry bore little likeness to those He came to save. He did not live in such a manner as left Him sympathetic with

the slothful and indolent. He did not reach out to the disinterested, the haughty, and the bigoted. Finally, the vast difference between Him and

ordinary men became the very reason for men turning against Him. He claimed things they could not receive, and they set out to kill Him because of it.

## A FALSE CHARGE

<sup>15</sup> *But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.*

### SOME OF THEM

*“But some of them said . . .”*

Other versions read, *“certain of them,”* <sup>YLT</sup> *“some people,”* <sup>CEV</sup> and *“But some from the crowd were cynical.”* <sup>MESSAGE</sup>

At this point in Christ’s ministry, the majority of the people had not yet rejected Him. There were, however, *“some”* among them that were his outspoken enemies, and they began to make false, and even foolish, charges against the Lord. At this point, this was *“a little leaven,”* but it would not be long until it would leaven the whole lump (1 Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9).

### HE CASTS OUT DEMONS BY THE PRINCE OF DEMONS

*“ . . . He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.”*

Other versions read, *“by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons,”* <sup>NKJV</sup> *“He gets his power from Satan, the prince of demons,”* <sup>NLT</sup> *“Satan, the king of demons,”* <sup>LIVING</sup> and *“He is in league with and] by Beelzebub, the prince of demons.”* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

This is a reference to the devil, and is used exclusively in the New Covenant writings (Matt 10:25; 12:24,27; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15,18,19). The word means *“LORD OF THE HOUSE,”* <sup>STRONG’S</sup> OR *“PRINCE OF HOSTILE SPIRITS.”* <sup>DANK</sup> THERE WAS A PHILISTINE DEITY WITH THIS NAME, WHICH MEANT *“LORD OF THE FLIES.”* <sup>FRIBERG</sup>

The charge leveled against Jesus is that He cast out demons by the

power of Beelzebub, who is *“the chief of devils.”*

### REFERENCES TO SATAN

Because this is our arch foe, we should have some acquaintance with him, for he is our *“adversary,”* and we are not to be *“ignorant of his devices,”* or *“schemes”* <sup>NASB</sup> (2 Cor 2:11). Here is how he is identified by the Holy Spirit.

- ⇒ *“The god of this world”* (2 Cor 4:4)
- ⇒ *“The prince of the power of the air”* (Eph 2:2)
- ⇒ *“The accuser of the brethren”* (Rev 12:10)
- ⇒ *“Your adversary”* (1 Pet 5:8)
- ⇒ *“The angel of the bottomless pit”* (Rev 9:11)
- ⇒ *“Abaddon” and “Apollyon”* – [destroying angel] (Rev 9:11)
- ⇒ *“Belial”* [worthless one] (2 Cor 6:15)
- ⇒ *“The devil”* [slanderer] (Matt 4:1)
- ⇒ *“The enemy”* (Matt 13:39)
- ⇒ *“Great red dragon”* (Rev 12:3)
- ⇒ *“A liar”* (John 8:44)
- ⇒ *“A murderer”* (John 8:44)
- ⇒ *“That old serpent”* (Rev 12:9; 20:2)
- ⇒ *“Prince of the world”* (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
- ⇒ *“Prince of devils”* (Matt 12:24)
- ⇒ *“Satan”* [the accuser] (1 Chron 21:1; Job 1:6; John 13:27; Acts 5:3;

26:18; Rom 16:20).

- ⇒ *“The spirit that works in the children of disobedience”* (Eph 2:2)
- ⇒ *“The tempter”* (Matt 4:3; 1 Thess 3:5)
- ⇒ *“The wicked one”* (Matt 13:19,38; 1 John 2:13).

Wicked personalities aligned with Satan, and arrayed against us, include:

- ⇒ Principalities and powers in heavenly places (Eph 6:12).
- ⇒ Devils [Demons] (Lev 17:7; Deut 32:17; Matt 8:1; 1 Cor 10:20-21; 1 Tim 4:1; James 2:19; Rev 16:14; 18:2).
- ⇒ Evil spirits (Lk 7:21; 8:2; Acts 19:12-13).
- ⇒ His children (Matt 13:38).

As you can see, Satan rules over a vast empire – but in all of that empire, there is not infighting or a quest for power. Jesus will confirm this truth. All of the spirits working with him promote his interests and vigorously oppose the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

It is my persuasion that a significant number of professing Christians have wholly underestimated the power and influence of the devil. It should not require extensive reasoning to figure out that if only Jesus could *“destroy the devil”* (Heb 2:14), and free men from enslavement to Him (Eph 2:1-3), men ought to zealously maintain a closeness to Him. If God, through Christ, has provided us with resources to overcome the devil, then the warfare in which we are engaged, and the good

fight of faith, is to be taken seriously.

## TEMPTING JESUS TO SHOW A SIGN

*“<sup>16</sup> And others, tempting Him, sought of Him a sign from heaven.”*

### TEMPTING HIM

*“And others, tempting Him . . .”*

Other versions read, *“testing Him,”* <sup>NKJV</sup> *‘to test Him,”* <sup>NRSV</sup> *“trying him,”* <sup>ASV</sup> *“trying to trap him,”* <sup>CJB</sup> *“endeavoring to put pressure on him,”* <sup>MIT</sup> *“to make trial of him,”* <sup>NOY</sup> *“asked for something to happen in the sky to prove his claim,”* <sup>LIVING</sup> *“trying to make Jesus prove that he came from God,”* <sup>IE</sup> *“wanted to trap Jesus,”* <sup>GNB</sup> *“Others were skeptical, waiting around for him to prove Himself,”* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> *“to try and test and tempt Him.”* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

I do not accept the [postulate that these people were trying to determine or establish whether Jesus was really doing the works of God or not. They had already rejected Him, and were not seeking for a reason to believe on Him. It was similar to when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness (Lk 4:1-2). Satan was not trying to determine whether or not Jesus was really the Son

of God. Both him and his demon hosts know the true identity of Jesus of Nazareth (Mk 1:24; 3:11; Lk 4:34). Satan knew this when Jesus was born, and therefore provoked Herod to kill all of the children in the region of Bethlehem that were under two years of age (Matt 2:16) – and Satan was the one motivating these Jews.

### SOUGHT A SIGN FROM HEAVEN

*“ . . . sought of Him a sign from heaven.”*

These very people had already seen miraculous signs: He had healed those who had “need of healing” (Lk 9:14). He had miraculously fed five thousand men beside women and children (Lk 9:14-17). Many of them had probably witnessed the healing of a certain demon-possessed child (Lk 9:38-43). **This request, therefore, was not an honest one, in which they were seeking to clarify whether or not Jesus had really come down from heaven.**

Like Satan’s wilderness temptation, this was the attempt of the

wicked one to get Jesus to do something outside of God’s will. Satan knew by experience how God responds to disobedience, and a failure to be what He intends.

**Therefore, in my understanding, and from the higher point of view, this was a temptation for Jesus to do something on His own, without a commission from God, and in contradiction of His mission.** He had proclaimed publically, *“The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise”* (John 5:19). And again, *“I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me”* (John 5:30).

The people had charged Jesus with casting out demons through the power of Beelzebub. Now, the Lord will unveil their foolishness, and announce how absolutely unreasonable their sin had made them.

## THE KINGDOM THAT IS BROUGHT TO DESOLATION

*“<sup>17</sup> But He, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.”*

### HE KNEW THEIR THOUGHTS

*“ . . . But He, knowing their thoughts . . .”*

The people had asked Jesus a question, but **He will answer their thoughts.** It is still true of man, *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he”* (Prov 23:7). If what a man says does not reflect what is in his heart, Jesus will

answer according to what is in his heart, **not** what he said. How often the Lord’s knowledge of men’s thoughts is mentioned. *“Jesus knowing their thoughts . . . Jesus knew their thoughts . . . He knew their thoughts . . . But He, knowing their thoughts”* (Matt 9:4; 12:35; Lk 5:22; 6:8; Lk 11:17).

Jesus said of the heart of men, particularly unregenerate men, *“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man . . .”* (Matt 15:19-20). Men may manage to

keep from speaking such iniquity, but Jesus will diagnose what is in their hearts, and judge accordingly. This is one reason why every individual must give heed to this admonition: *“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life”* (Prov 4:23). No person can afford to ignore that word.

### EVERY DIVIDED KINGDOM

*“ . . . said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation . . .”*

Other versions read, *“is laid waste,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“will be ruined,”* <sup>NIV</sup>



*"becomes a desert,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"laid waste,"*  
<sup>RSV</sup> *"Every kingdom involved in civil war becomes a wasteland,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"Every kingdom split into opposing factions will self-destruct,"* <sup>MIT</sup> *"Any kingdom that fights against itself will be destroyed,"*  
<sup>NIRV</sup> and *"Every kingdom split up against itself is doomed and brought to desolation."* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

This truth has been demonstrated in history. The greatest kingdoms of the world have divided and fallen. Historians have given their views of the greatest kingdoms.

1. Ottoman Empire (1299–1923)
2. British Empire (1660–1837)
3. Mughal Empire (1526–1858)
4. Mongol Empire (1206–1368)
5. Russian Empire (1721–1917)
6. Qing Dynasty (1890–1912)
7. Umayyad Caliphate (661–750)
8. Roman Empire ( 27 BC–AD 476/1453)
9. Achaemenid Empire (550 BC–330 BC)
10. Akkadian Empire (2300 BC–2200 BC)

The five most powerful kingdoms are viewed as follows:

1. Persian
2. Roman
3. The Caliphate
4. The Mongol
5. The British

According to Scripture, there have really been only four **global** empires. These were revealed to Daniel in God's interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan 2:31-45). Other kingdoms were not total in their reign as these.

1. Babylonian, or Chaldean.
2. Medio-Persian
3. Grecian
4. Roman

These kingdoms tended to deteriorate, with the kingdom following it being less valuable. Finally, all of them were crushed by a single Kingdom – a superior Kingdom, which was the Kingdom of God.

It is not by coincidence that these global kingdoms came into prominence and dominated during the inter-testamental period – between Malachi

and ther ministry of John the Baptist. The Roman Empire that was in place at the time of John, began to deteriorate, finally concluding around 500 A.D. In all of these kingdoms and competition started the erosion process.

Actually, the same thing happened to the professed church. When divisions arose and began to dominate, its power and effectiveness was lost, and, like the fallen kingdoms of the world, only a remnant remains until this day.

#### A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF

*" . . . and a house divided against a house falleth. "*

The same principle applies to a house, or household: *"a divided household falls."* <sup>RSV</sup> This judgment cannot be avoided. It is such a firm and settled principle, that Jesus will reason with it in mind. Where division exists, Divine judgment has been imposed on the situation. It is not possible for a divided society to avoid collapse.

## HOW SHALL HIS KINGDOM STAND?

*"<sup>18</sup> If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub."*

Ordinarily, men tend to think that Satan is the lone who causes division. Actually, **God is depicted as causing division.** Satan enters into the matter by leading men to think and conduct themselves in a selfish and bigoted manner – but God is the One who divides. Here are some of the premier examples.

⇒ At the tower of Babel, God confounded their speech and scattered the people (Gen 11:7-8).

⇒ Because of their unfaithfulness, the

Lord divided and scattered Israel (Duet 30:3; Psa 44:11; 60:1; Jer 30:11; Dan 5:28).

It is my opinion that this same type of scattering has taken place in the professed church. It became divided, and then it was scattered – and no man can put together what God has scattered!

#### HOW SHALL SATAN'S KINGDOM STAND?

Jesus now poses an arresting question: *"If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?"* Other versions read, *"How can his kingdom stand?"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"How will his kingdom stand?"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"how will he keep his kingdom?"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"how will his*

*kingdom endure?"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"how can his kingdom last?"* <sup>NJB</sup> *"how can his kingdom survive?"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"How could his kingdom stay together?"* <sup>IE</sup>

If the charge they have made is true – *"He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils"* (Luke 11:15) – then would this, of necessity, not mandate the collapse of Satan's kingdom – something caused by his own work? Satan is not wise after the Spirit, but neither is he foolish as men count foolishness.

Satan is one that opposes, but he does not oppose himself. His cohorts are not divided, but are perfectly united in their opposition to God and Christ. It is a shame for the church to be divided.

## BY WHOM DO YOUR SONS CAST THEM OUT

*"<sup>19</sup> And if I by Beelzebul cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges."*

Unlike many of our day, the Jews did not doubt that demons could be expelled. One of the disciples once told Jesus of one who was casting out demons, yet was not traveling with them (Mk 9:38-40; Lk 9:49-50). Later, during the ministration of Paul, some Jews attempted to cast out a demon in the name of Jesus, whom Paul

preached (Acts 19:13-17). They failed miserably.

### BY WHOM DO YOUR SONS CAST THEM OUT?

This is a most arresting question! Jesus could not have been speaking about something pretentious, but rather an effective, act. His words confirm there are times when Divine power is granted to those of pure hearts who do not appear to be associated with the right people. The Lord is not looking for people willing to associate with a

certain sect, but for those who have received the love of the truth, and are willing to abandon self-interests to please the Lord. Sometimes such people are found in unexpected places.

Wherever an effective work for God is being done, men should not ask about the group with which they are affiliated. If anyone should be asked that question, it ought to be those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof (2 Tim 3:1-5).

## WITH THE FINGER OF GOD

*"<sup>20</sup> But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."*

### WITH THE FINGER OF GOD

*"But if I with the finger of God cast out devils . . ."*

Other versions read, *"If I cast out demons with the finger of God,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"Drive out demons,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"throw out demons by the power of God,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"force out demons with the help of God's power,"* <sup>GWN</sup> *"casting out demons because of power from God,"* <sup>LIVING</sup>

There are three other references to *"the finger of God."*

⇒ *"And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, **This is the finger of God:** and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said." (Ex 8:18-19).*

⇒ *"And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, **written with the finger of God**" (Ex 31:18).*

⇒ *"And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with **the finger of God**; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly" (Deut 9:10).*

This, of course, is an anthropomorphism – a human likeness attributed to God in order that we might better understand Him. God does not have a *"finger"* like men, for He is a *"Spirit,"* and does not have a body, or corporeal form (John 4:24).

This same event, as described by Matthew, reads, *"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God" (Matt 12:28)*. Luke uses the expression *"finger of God"* to confirm, this was something that was seen with the eyes of men.

Also, this accents that the expulsion of this demon did not require a lot of Divine effort – only a finger, so to speak–i.e. point out the direction in which the demon was to flee.

### NO DOUBT, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS COME

*" . . . no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."*

Other versions read, *"Surely the kingdom of God has come upon you,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"the kingdom of God has overtaken you,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"God's kingdom has already overtaken you,"* <sup>CEB</sup> and *"the Kingdom of God has arrived among you."* <sup>NLT</sup>

**This is an expression that denotes the superiority of the kingdom of God.** That us, when God inserts His will into a circumstance, all opposition is at once dissipated, becoming powerless. When God works, nothing can interfere with that work. This is true of ultimate opposition, which is not that of men.

Take the work that has been achieved in this very assembly. Who can deny that it has been of God. Something has been done that cannot be achieved through a human institution. To oppose such a work is nothing but an exercise of vanity.

The way to ensure that such work continues is to ,live by faith (Heb 10:38), walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), draw near to God (Heb 7:19), resist the devil (James 4:7), and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1). **No force of any sort from the realm of darkness can subdue what God is doing!**

Also, where the revealed work of God is being done, **He is the One doing**

it! Men cannot possibly replicate what | God does. Faith must take hold of this, | and live in a lively awareness of it.

## SOMEONE STRONGER THAN THE STRONG MAN

*"<sup>21</sup> When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: <sup>22</sup> But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."*

In Israel, Jerusalem, and the man Jesus had dispossessed of a demon, Satan had been ruling. Now, one more powerful than he had arrived.

### WHEN AN ARMED MAN KEEPS HIS PALACE

*"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace . . ."*

Under the auspices of the devil, the people of God were being held captive. The traditions of men could not produce someone who was "stronger" than the devil.

So, men like the scribes and Pharisees, and Sadducees dominated the people. Men like the rulers of the synagogue, the chief priests, and corrupt high priests had the precedence. The people were being held captive – just like many of us once were.

Today, many of God's people are

languishing under the tyranny of dead religion, lifeless teachers, and impotent leaders.

### BUT WHEN A STRONGER COMES

*". . . But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him . . ."*

Other versions read, "But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him,"<sup>NIV</sup> "he assails him and overcomes him,"<sup>RSV</sup> "makes an attack on him and overcomes him,"<sup>BBE</sup> "he will conquer him,"<sup>MGI</sup> "come upon and vanquish him."<sup>ROT</sup>

Jesus is aggressive – an unparalleled Fighter. He attacks Satan, and throws down His citadels. Satan is not able to do anything about it, because the Lord Jesus is "stronger than he." God's people must learn to bank on this, and keep close to Jesus.

### HE TAKES AND DIVIDES

*". . . He taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."*

For the wicked, and especially the wicked one, Jesus is a Robber. This is why apostolic doctrine affirms, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day

*of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thess 5:2-4). And again, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pet 3:10).*

Jesus warns backsliding people, "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Rev 3:3). He cries out to all churches, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev 16:15).

**Trust in Him defeating, plundering, and taking away from the devil, not from you! Jesus is not only aggressive to save, but also to thwart Satanic initiatives.**

## NO NEUTRALITY

*"<sup>23</sup> He that is not with Me is against Me: and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth."*

With men and their institutions there is often compromise, tolerance of wrong, a lack of involvement, and patience with indifference. But it is not so with the Lord Jesus Christ. There are no categories of "absentees,"

"emeritus," "inactive," "disinterested," and "indifferent" in His Kingdom. Divine resources are not doled out to such people.

The following statements are most arresting. They are the affirmation of very real conditions. They speak of Divine assessment and the effect of that assessment.

### HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME

*"He that is not with Me is against Me . . ."*

Matthew's account reads the same way (Matt 12:30).

Other versions read, "Anyone who is not with Me,"<sup>CSB</sup> "Whoever is not in partnership with Me,"<sup>WILLIAMS</sup> "If you are

A certain lawyer asks Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus asks him what the Law said. The man answered, and Jesus spoke a parable – Given O. Blakely

*not on My side, you are against Me,*”<sup>CEV</sup>  
“*This is war, and there is no neutral ground. If you're not on My side,*”  
MESSAGE and “*He who is not with Me [siding and believing with Me].*”<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

What does it mean to be “with” Jesus? The word “with” is translated from a word {met-ah'} that has the following lexical meaning: “AMID, AMONG; OF ASSOCIATION AND COMPANIONSHIP; THE PERSON TO WHOM ONE JOINS HIMSELF AS A COMPANION,”<sup>THAYER</sup> “OF ACCOMPANIMENT TOGETHER WITH, IN COMPANY WITH, ACCOMPANIED BY,”<sup>FRIBERG</sup> “THE IMPLICATION OF BEING IN THE COMPANY OF - WITH, IN THE COMPANY OF, TOGETHER WITH,”<sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup> and “OF RELATIVELY CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH AN ENTITY: OF PERS., WITH, IN THE COMPANY.”<sup>GINGRICH</sup>

At the time of this text, when Jesus was going about “*doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil*” (Acts 10:38), this spoke of those who were aligned with what Christ was doing. They were heartily in agreement with what he was doing, were traveling with Him, and devoted to Him. This was a deeper association than merely being curious about what Jesus was doing. These were people who did not resist Him, were not confused by Him, and were grateful for what He was doing.

This side of the cross, this speaks of being “*in Christ*” (2 Cor 5:17), being seated together “*with Christ*” in heavenly places (Eph 2:5), being “*dead with Christ*” (Col 2:20), and “*risen with Christ*” (Col 3:1), those whose life is “*hid with Christ in God*” (Col 3:3). These are the people who are in

“*fellowship with*” God’s dear Son (1 Cor 1:9).

Whether we are speaking of Jesus’ ministry prior to His death, or what He is doing now that He has been exalted, **there really is no neutral position.** Men are either for Him or against Him – alive (Rom 6:11) or dead (Eph 2:1), accepted (Eph 1:6) or rejected (Heb 6:8), saved (Acts 2:21) or condemned (John 3:18), with hope (1 Pet 1:3), or without hope (Eph 2:12).

Those who are not with Jesus in fellowship, living for Him, and working with Him, are actually **against** Him. Their influence is against Him. They are at war with Him – which is a hopeless state in which to be found. Jesus means what He says, and this word is to be taken seriously by all, who hear it.

**HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME**  
“ . . . and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth.”

Matthew reads, “*He that is not with me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad*” (a wasteful manner) (Matt 12:30).

Other versions read, “*does not gather with Me,*”<sup>NKJV</sup> “*give me help in getting people together,*”<sup>BBE</sup> “*does not collect with Me,*”<sup>ETH</sup> “*does not gather sheep with Me,*”<sup>NIRV</sup> “*isn't working with Me,*”<sup>NLT</sup> “*isn't helping Me,*”<sup>LIVING</sup> “*does not gather in partnership with Me,*”<sup>WILLIAMS</sup> “*don't gather in the crop with*

*Me,*”<sup>CEV</sup> and “*he who does not gather with Me [engage in My interest].*”<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

This is a very poignant word! Actually, there is only one work that has the support and blessing of God – **the work that Jesus is doing!** In summation, it is bringing many sons to glory (Heb 2:10). It involves giving the saints spiritual advantage through His intercession (Heb 7:25). It requires convicting sinners, leading them to repentance, and making them acceptable to God. **The Lord Jesus, through various ordained means, is disseminating light and exposing deeds of darkness.** Who is with Him in the work? Who is not with Him in His work. Such a person is scattering abroad – wasting his life.

#### A GRATEFUL CONCLUSION

I am personally grateful to the Lord for making these things clear, and for providing a salvation that enables us to be “*workers together with Him*” (2 Cor 6:1). In our time, I do not believe the professing church has made the Master’s words known, much less expounded them. These words were spoken to a religious crowd, not a group of heathen. These people had been exposed to the person of Jesus, His words, and His works. They were responsible to God for properly assessing what they had seen and heard, and deliberately and willingly aligning themselves with Him. They could not escape that responsibility. That same sort of responsibility still exists.

## WHAT AN EXPELLED DEMON DOES

“<sup>24</sup> *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.*”

Jesus now gives some rare teaching, informing us of the unseen activity of demons – especially those who have been driven out of a man – like the work Jesus has just done.

Unclean spirits, or demons, are thinking spirits. They seek things, and make determinations – all of which are intrinsically evil. They can have no good thoughts or acceptable ambitions. There are things they can do, and assessments they can make. In such matters, they are more powerful than men, although they are subject to Christ Jesus. It is only as men are “*in Christ*” that they are guaranteed protection

from the domain of Satan and evil spirits. Those who foolishly affirm there are no such personalities, have put themselves at an unspeakable disadvantage.

#### WHEN THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT IS GONE OUT OF A MAN

“*When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man . . .*”

Other versions read, "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it." <sup>NIV</sup> and "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person." <sup>NRSV</sup>

There is evidence that some demons **periodically** dominant their victims: "ofttimes" (Matt 17:15; Lk 8:28); "caught him," and "driven" (Lk 8:28). In this text, however, Jesus is speaking of a demon that has been driven out of a person involuntarily. This is confirmed by the representation of him seeking another place.

#### HE WALKS THROUGH DRY PLACES

" . . . he walketh through dry places, seeking rest

Other versions read, "it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place," <sup>NRSV</sup> "it travels through dry country seeking rest," <sup>CJB</sup> "it goeth wandering straightway in waterless places, that it may find rest," <sup>LEW</sup> "it

goes into the desert, searching for rest," <sup>NLT</sup> and "it roams through waterless places in search [of a place] of rest (release, refreshment, ease)." <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

This is language depicting the fact that there are places demons desire, and places where they do not feel free to operate. In the interim between the time Israel was driven out of Canaan, and the time Jesus was ministering, demons apparently flooded the land. The means through which this was accomplished was the occupation of Canaan by heathen peoples (2 Kgs 17:24).

#### AND FINDING NONE, HE DETERMINES TO RETURN

" . . . and finding none, he saith, I will return unto **my house** whence I came out."

Other versions read, "Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.'" <sup>NIV</sup> ,

but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to **my house** from which I came.'" <sup>NRSV</sup> "my habitation," <sup>MRD</sup> "my home," <sup>NAB</sup> "I will go back to the home I came from," <sup>NJB</sup> and "the person I came from." <sup>NLT</sup>

**Note, the demon refers to the person he once inhabited as his home.** There was a sense in which he owned the person, dominating him. Sometimes this was evidenced in a particular infirmity like lameness, blindness, deafness, paralyzation, inward bleeding, crippled. These were very real circumstances upon which Jesus could impose His will, resulting in bonafide effects, activities, and even the discontent and frustrating purposing of wicked spirits.

Now the demon determines to return to the person from whom he was driven. Once again it determines to occupy and dominate that very same person. The demon has things, wills, and determines,

## WHEN THE HOUSE IS EMPTY

" <sup>25</sup> And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. <sup>26</sup> Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

#### SWEPT AND GARNISHED

"And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished . . ."

Other versions read, "swept and put in order," <sup>NKJV</sup> "swept clean and put in order," <sup>NIV</sup> "cleaned up and decorated," <sup>CEB</sup> "swept and adorned," <sup>DARBY</sup> "swept and furnished," <sup>MGI</sup> and "swept and ready for use." <sup>WILLIAMS</sup>

The house was ready for occupancy, but no one was living there. The purpose for the demon being driven out, was that another, even the Lord, might occupy and dominate the dwelling. But now, after a period of time, the house was empty.

The Lord is here describing what has taken place when a person backslides, or reverts to his old manners.

#### SEVEN OTHER SPIRITS

" . . . Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there . . ."

Now the condition worsens, being even more serious than it was in the beginning. The original condition is not merely duplicated. Once a single demon dwelt in the person, now eight of them dwell there! Exponential decrease!

#### THE LAST STATE IS WORSE THAN THE FIRST

" . . . and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

It is a condition Peter described in remarkably similar words: "While they promise them liberty, they themselves

are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, **the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them**" (2 Pet 2:19-21).

This is a very real condition, introduced parabolically by the Lord Jesus, and doctrinally by Peter, and by Paul as well (Heb 6:1-6). **I do not believe the church has done well in proclaiming and expounding this circumstance.** Jesus did not fail to do so, and neither did the apostles.

**This circumstance of being delivered from sin, yet Jesus not**

A certain lawyer asks Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus asks him what the Law said. The man answered, and Jesus spoke a parable – Given O. Blakely

dwelling within, is so common today it causes me to fear and quake. Like demons invaded the promised land when Israel was expelled from it, so Satan's spirits have invaded the modern church because Jesus is not dwelling within it. The church – the real church – is being prepared to be "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph 2:22). So far as Divine intention is concerned, the church is "the Temple of God," and "the temple of God is holy" (1 Cor 3:17). God has made this pledge, and He will keep it: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor 3:17). Anyone that admits an unholy person into the church, or allows the church to be a mixture of holy and unholy people, will be destroyed by God!

Now a condition is created that is worse. That is why a person who is overtaken by sin when once they were delivered from it and its power, is in a worse state than he was in the

beginning. Jesus personified the condition by speaking of a demon that was expelled, and could find no resting place. When that demon returned to the individual out of whom he was cast, the Lord was not living there. The life had been cleaned up, but no truly spiritual life was evident.

**This is how the devil and his demons are. They want a place to dwell where they can express themselves, and not be inhibited.** When they are driven out, they will try and find another dwelling place. If one cannot be found, they will return to the one they once occupied. They will not look to see if the person has a reasonably pure life. Rather, they will look, to see **who is living in that person**, and whose will they are doing. If it is not the Lord, the demon will reoccupy the residence. However, this time he will not come alone. Rather he will bring other wicked spirits with him.

**I am going to wax bold here and**

**say that all recovery ministries are only sweeping and garnishing.** Jesus does not dwell in a place that has simply been swept and garnished. He must be received by faith, and through the holy Spirit be brought to dwell in one's heart by faith. That is a condition that no man or plan of men, can cause to take place. The true preparation is spelled out in Paul's letter to the Ephesians: "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; **That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.**" (Eph 3:16-19). That is a condition with which Satan and all of his demons cannot successfully contend. God be praised for that reality! Let none take it for granted!

## A CERTAIN WOMAN SPEAKS

*"<sup>27</sup> And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked. <sup>28</sup> But He said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."*

### AS HE SPAKE THESE THINGS

*"And it came to pass, as He spake these things . . ."*

I can only imagine how it must have been to hear the Lord Jesus speak. No one had ever heard speaking like that! It is written, "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt 7:29). He did not teach as the scribes did, in a purely academic manner. He was the full embodiment of the word spoken by Isaiah: "The Lord GOD hath given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is

weary" (Isa 50:4). Certain officers that were sent to trap Jesus in His words, returned to tell their senders, "Never man spake like this Man" (John 7:46). Some observers of Jesus who knew certain were plotting to kill Him said, "Is not this He, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" (John 7:26). Again, it is said of those who heard Him, "And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:22). Again, it is said of those who heard Him, "And they were astonished at His doctrine: for his word was with power" (Luke 4:32).

### A CERTAIN WOMAN LIFTED UP HER VOICE

*" . . . a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice . . ."*

Here is woman who is listening to Jesus, and she cannot keep silence. She has to speak.

### BLESSED IF THE WOMB THAT BARE THEE

*" . . . and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked . . ."*

**Here is the first undue exaltation of Mary – something that Roman Catholicism has taken to staggering measures.** This woman does not pronounce a blessing upon Jesus Himself, but on the one who gave birth to Him and nurtured Him in infancy. Indeed, Mary was blessed – "among women" (Lk 1:28,42). But this woman pronounced the greater blessing upon Mary, and the Lord Jesus will correct her. He will not speak of "among women," but of all who hear and keep His words.

**BUT HE SAID “YEA RATHER”**

*“ . . . But He said, Yea rather . . . ”*

Other versions read, “*More than that,*” <sup>NKJV</sup> “*On the contrary,*” <sup>NASB</sup> “*More happy are they,*” <sup>BBE</sup> “*Far more,*” <sup>CSB</sup> and “*Instead.*” <sup>NIRV</sup>

What the woman said was not false, but it was on a more elemental level. Jesus Himself demonstrated in His teaching and manners that He majored on the better thing – the more higher and more foundational matters. This is confirmed throughout the Gospel record. **Jesus never became embroiled in incidentals.**

We believers should master the art of maintaining the “*one thing*” perspective (Psa 27:4; Lk 10:42; Phil 3:13). This means that everything is filtered through, and compared with, the “*one thing,*” or the main thing. Once a person learns to live with this perspective, life is greatly simplified.

**THOSE WHO ARE REALLY BLESSED**

*“ . . . blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. ”*

These are the people who are really “*blessed*” – those who hear the

Word of God and keep, or maintain, it. These are the people in whom “*the word of Christ*” dwells “*richly*” (Col 3:16). It “*sinks down into*” their “*ears*” (Lk 9:44). Ponder what Jesus has said about His words.

⇒ “*My words shall not pass away*” (Matt 24:35).

⇒ “*Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.*” (Mark 8:38)

⇒ “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*” (John 5:24)

⇒ “*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*” (John 8:31-32)

⇒ “*And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*” (John 12:47-48).

⇒ “*If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.*” (John 14:23)

⇒ “*If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*” (John 15:7)

It is no wonder we are admonished, “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*” (Col 3:16). Our singing is effected when Christ’s word has found a resting place in our hearts. It tunes our hearts to the heavenly chord, and enables us to harmonize with Truth.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/10/16. In our next lesson, we will continue our series in the Gospel of Luke. The FORTIETH lesson will cover verses 29 thru 44 of chapter 11: “THE SUPERIORITY OF JESUS.” Jesus speaks of the superiority of light, and upbraids the Pharisees. Our meeting will begin at 6:30 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.