

It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Isaiah 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Mark 3:20-23 And He came home [to Capernaum], and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. ²¹ When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, “He has lost His senses.”

- His own people - οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ - literally “those from Him” – a reference to His family
- Lost His senses - ἐξίστημι – EXSISTEMI – “To be astounded, to lose one’s mind”

What’s interesting is that during this phase of the ministry everyone thinks the Lord’s out of His mind, but they are actually out of their minds.

ATTACK:

²² The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.” ²³ And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, “**How can Satan cast out Satan?**”

Matthew 12:22 -

Few things to note about Capernaum:

1. Personal attacks were being waged by the religious leaders against the Lord.
2. Purpose was to suppress His popularity and the momentum of the ministry.

Matthew 11:28 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and **YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.** ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

- Many had taken up His yoke and burden as opposed to the religious leaders.
 - He was teaching them kingdom principles, many found in the Sermon on the Mount.
 - The Pharisees are losing their influence with the people.
3. His family (Mary & His brothers) thinks he’s lost His mind – so they are going to intervene.
Family testing?

Mary and His brothers:

- He has already had to set Mary in her place two times.
- 1st occasion was when He stayed behind in Jerusalem as a young lad instead of taking the caravan with His parents; they had no idea where He was.
- When they found Him in Jerusalem - She said, “Why have you treated us this way?” in **Luke 2:48** and He said, “**Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?**”

- 2nd occasion is found in **John 2:3-4** where she is worried about running out of wine at the wedding of Cana, and He says, “**Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come.**”
 - Mary did not always understand what He was doing.
 - The brothers were actually worse – they dished out a lot of guff to Him **John 7:1-5**.
4. Great momentum to the point where He and the disciples are unable to eat – crowds are great.
5. All this is located in Capernaum – Peter’s home.

Matthew 12:22-37 Then a demon-possessed man *who was* blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw.

- **Definition of Miracle:** An exercise of sovereign omnipotence in grace to validate who the Savior was and what He taught.
- **Demon Possession** – One or more demons take up residence in a body. The body possessed can be a person or an animal (**Matt 8:28-32**).

²³ All the crowds were amazed,

- **Amazed** - ἐξίστημι – “*To be astounded; to be driven out of one’s senses; to lose one’s mind*”

Remember - the opposition is present and there is no way of denying what the Lord just accomplished.

... and were saying, “This man **cannot** be the Son of David, can he?”

- μήτι – ΜΕΤΙ – *An expression of doubt by the one asking this question*
- They really don’t believe He’s the Messiah yet, but they are starting to consider it.

The miracle validated who He was.

The people are beginning to consider that Jesus might actually be the Son of David - the descendent of David who was prophesied to rule an eternal kingdom on earth.

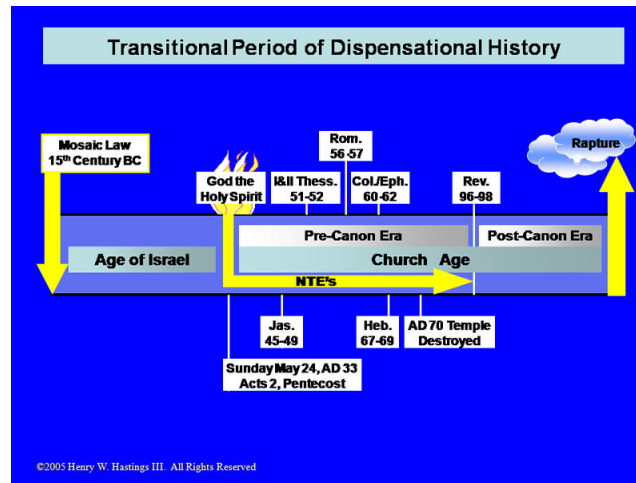
²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard,

When they heard the people considering that He might be the Son of David in light of the miracle – even though they stopped short of personal faith in Him as Messiah - . . .

... they said, “This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.”

- The Pharisees cannot deny the miracle happened - - so they attribute the miracle to Satan.
- This is actually blasphemy, because they are attributing the work of God the Holy Spirit to Satan.
 - Sin - - blaspheming God the Holy Spirit
 - This is one sin that provision was not made for on the Cross.

Matthew 12:29, 31-32 “**But if [1st class condition] I cast out demons by the Spirit of God [and I do], then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ³¹ Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. ³² Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.**”



- The age to come is a reference to the Church Age – specifically the Pre-canon Era of the Church Age when miracles were operational.
- This sin cannot be committed today.
- The only unpardonable sin that can be committed today is rejection of Christ.

²⁴ But when the Pharisees heard,

They heard people saying, “This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?”

... they said, “This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.”

- Not only is this flat out rejection of Christ, it is blaspheming God the Holy Spirit for which there is no forgiveness.
- We already know that the Pharisees are headed for the Great White Throne Judgment and the Lake of Fire.
- The statement they make also puts Jesus on the same team as Satan - - a direct attack in order to suppress the Lord’s ministry.

²⁵ And knowing their thoughts. . .

- **Knowing** - οἶδα – OIDA – “To know, to understand, to experience”
- **Thoughts** - ἐνθύμησις – ENTHUMESIS – “ideas, thoughts, reflections”

This is a testimony to us that Jesus Christ is undiminished deity and true humanity united in one Person for all eternity.

Our thoughts are laid bare before the light of His countenance.

1st Argument against the Religious leaders:

... Jesus said to them, “Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand. ²⁶ If [1st class condition] Satan casts out Satan [assumed true for the sake of argument], he is divided. . .

... against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?”

The point is - - Satan’s kingdom will not stand if he casts demons out of the demon possessed.
Satan’s kingdom - domain of rule - is expanded via demon possession.

If Satan casts out demons, his kingdom is diminished and it will fall.

Where he once had control, he no longer does.

2nd Argument:

²⁷ “If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast *them* out?”

- 1st class condition - - He actually *assumes for the sake of argument* that the Pharisees are correct.
- The *sons* of the Pharisees are a reference to their exorcists.

The Pharisees had a group of exorcists who believed in the spirit world composed of angelic beings.

They relied on the dark side – fallen angels - to reveal to them a special saying to cast out demons.

What the Lord is saying here is *if I’m casting out demons by the ruler of demons, who are your exorcists casting out demons by?*

It was according to the Pharisees’ own teaching that their exorcists relied on fallen angels to reveal the oath required to cast out demons.

... For this reason they [*your sons*] will be your judges.

3rd Argument:

²⁸ “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God [*and I do*], then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

- The rule, dominion, or authority of God is present in your midst.

4th Argument:

²⁹ “Or how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong *man*? And then he will plunder his house.

- Parable explanation -
 - Strong man = Satan
 - House = human body he or his demons occupy
 - There is no way to cast out a demon or Satan unless one has the power to bind the strong man – Satan.
 - The only one who has the power to do that is God.
 - Jesus just did that by healing the demon possessed man; therefore, He is God and the power of God has come upon them.

The Lord facilitates people to make a decision for Him - -

³⁰ “He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. ³¹ Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.

³² Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.

If you made a decision to be with the Lord, you’re a good tree, and if you’ve rejected Him you’re a bad tree!

³³ “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit.

Jesus issues a scathing rebuke for the Pharisees - -

³⁴ “You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. ³⁵ The good man brings out of *his* good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of *his* evil treasure what is evil.

³⁶ “But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the Day of Judgment.

- Day of reckoning
- Everything anyone has ever said has been recorded by God; He knows every thought.
- The Pharisees’ words have been recorded and they are headed for a day of reckoning.
- That day of reckoning is the Great White Throne Judgment – **Rev. 20:11-15.**

³⁷ “For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

- The words are recorded and they will either condemn or they will justify!
- Words that expressed faith in Jesus Christ and words that rejected Him are all known by God.

What think ye of Christ?

If you haven’t made a decision for Christ, don’t wait until it’s too late and you find yourself giving an account of your rejection of Him who bore your sin.

John 14:6 “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

1 John 4:4b “. . . greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.”

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.