

Clash of the Kingdoms (Luke 11:14-28)



A. The demonstration of the Kingdom of God

1. Jesus just gave the extraordinary teaching on prayer. The Lord's prayer begins with addressing the heavenly Father and ends with asking for deliverance from evil. Jesus completed his teaching on prayer by introducing the Holy Spirit (C.f. Luke 24:49; John 14-16) We are to keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking - for the Holy Spirit! And know that our heavenly Father will never give us something evil when we ask for the Holy Spirit.
2. Immediately following this teaching, Jesus cast the unclean spirit out of a mute man by the power of the Holy Spirit. The mute man spoke freely after he was delivered from the mute spirit (11:14). Notice Jesus did not speak to the person, but to 'it the mute spirit. This power encounter was so significant that all three synoptic gospels record this event. (C.f. Mark 3:20ff; Matt 12:22ff) Matthew adds that this man was blind as well as mute, and after he was set free from the demon, he could both 'see' and 'speak'.

B. Why was this so significant?

1. Casting the deaf and mute spirit out of this man was a direct answer to the prayer Jesus just taught the disciples: "Your kingdom come," and "deliver us from the evil one." (11:2a,4b). The demonstration of the Spirit's power delivering this man from demonic oppression was the answer to this very prayer. When we pray according to the Lord's teaching, we can expect Him to answer not only for our individual needs but also for the needs of others. Remember, we are to pray 'deliver US from evil'. Perhaps this poor man cried out to God for deliverance.
2. Jesus had just taught the disciples to ask the Father for the Holy Spirit. He then demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is Heaven's answer and power to destroy the evil one's work on earth. Jesus states in Luke, "If I cast out demons with the finger of God," (Luke 11:20) and in Matthew, "If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God," (Matt 12:28) "...surely the kingdom of God has come upon you."

The Holy Spirit is the 'finger of God' that pointed at the spirit in the mute man and released God's power to deliver him of it. When we ask God to move His mighty hand, we are asking for the move of His Holy Spirit.

3. Jesus brought out into the open the stark reality of the two opposing kingdoms. All the miracles recorded in the New Testament were not new, they also took place in the Old Testament, including raising the dead. But with the coming of Jesus something unprecedented takes place – demons were being cast out! When Jesus arrived on the scene, the kingdom of God came with Him, leading to direct clash with the kingdom of Satan.

The battles and conflicts in life in essence are not due to the maneuvers and strivings of three or four kingdoms, but two. Two invisible kingdoms - the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. And there is no neutral ground. It is total warfare. You are either on God's side or on the devil's side. This is the key to spiritual warfare. It simplifies life's conflict. And Jesus openly demonstrated the total and absolute supremacy of the kingdom of God over Satan's kingdom; and the power of the Holy Spirit over the power of the devil and demons.

4. Satan's strategy is always to operate in the dark, 'hidden' from sight. Why? Satan is 'the god of this age' (2 Cor 4:4). He knows this age is passing away, and his kingdom is going with it. Then will come his eternal punishment. So he desperately needs this age to continue. But Jesus exposed Satan's hidden kingdom and shattered his power. Now the only way Satan can continue holding on to this age is through deception.

So how does Satan fight back?

C. Satan's Counterattack

1. We do not fight against 'flesh and blood', i.e. human beings or people, but against the wicked spirits. However, the wicked spirits use 'flesh and blood' that are available to them to fight God's purposes. Who were this 'flesh and blood' in Jesus' days? The Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem (Matt 12:24; Mark 3:22). What was their

motivation? 'Envy and jealousy' because the crowds were saying, "Could this be the Son of David?" (Matt 12:23).

Their accusations against Jesus were not brought to Him directly but indirectly to the crowd, to discredit Jesus and His work. Satan still uses the same strategy. He always tries to discredit a man and his work by bringing accusations. The Pharisees' allegations were extremely serious. They were accusing Jesus of using the occult and witchcraft power to heal the mute man.

2. Jesus knew their thoughts and faced their accusers head-on:

a. Any kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. In other words, 'You do not know Satan and his kingdom works. Although the kingdom of Satan doesn't operate out of mutual respect and cooperation as God's kingdom does, nevertheless Satan maintains order in his kingdom by using fear, threat, and manipulation. Satan's kingdom will totally collapse one day, but that is not today. His kingdom stands for now. And if you think Satan lets go of his victims so easily, you are mistaken. He fights to retain his victim tooth and nail until he is soundly defeated at every level.'

This is why every deliverance is a fight. We have an invisible enemy of our soul with assignments against us. They seek to destroy us and make us ineffective in doing the will of God for our lives.

b. By what power do your own sons cast out demons? Remember the Jewish man who was casting out demons in Jesus' name, though he was not in close association with Jesus or His disciples? The power of Jesus' name even worked for him and others like him! (C.f. Luke 9:49) The Pharisees had no answer.

c. he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness. There is grave danger in saying blasphemous things about the Holy Spirit. (C.f. Matt 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-29): "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation."

One Hebrew title for the devil was 'Beelzebub - the lord of the flies' (2 Kings 1:2, 3, 6, 16), or 'Beelzebul - the lord of dung'. This is how Satan and the demons operate. Wherever there is sin and moral decay they will buzz in by the droves, like flies to putrid smell and excrement. And God will not tolerate the blasphemous insults against the Holy Spirit, referring to Him and His holy works as Satan and his foul and filthy activities. Jesus too will take insults against Himself, but not against the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One who convicts us of sin, righteousness, and judgment (Jn 16:8). If He withdraws Himself from someone for good, then there is no possibility ever of repentance for the person, therefore also of forgiveness and salvation.

D. Rules of engagement: 'a strong man' vs 'The Stronger Man'

1. Satan is a 'strong man' far stronger and smarter than any one of us can withstand. There is only one person stronger than Satan, who can overpower him and bind him. The 'Stronger Man' is Jesus Christ. He stripped Satan of all his weapons and delivered him the final defeat once and for all. "Having disarmed principalities and powers, Jesus made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross." (Col 2:15)
2. We need to remember that Jesus is the 'Stronger Man', we are not. While we have complete confidence in the Lord's protection and His total victory, we must not be flippant about engaging in spiritual battles of our own choosing or directly challenging Satan in our own strength. Throwing insults directly at Satan is a very foolish thing to do. 'Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!' (Jude 9; c.f. 'Needless Casualties of War' by John Paul Jackson)
3. Jesus' teaching on demons is found only in Luke. (11:24-26)
 - a. How demons operate (1) 'Unclean spirits' – everything about them is gross and defiling, like flies and dung; (2) 'Restless spirits seeking a home to rest in' – they seek human bodies to inhabit; (3) 'I will return to my house' – they claim ownership of the human body once they come in; (4) Several of them can occupy one person's body, and they tend to move as a group. E.g. The spirits of envy, jealousy, slander, anger, lie, manipulation and threat, etc. often operate together. Remember, the man in Gadarene was delivered from 'Legion', i.e. possibly 6000 demons.

A simple summation of demonology might be, *'Demons are unclean disembodied spirits desperately seeking to inhabit a human body, on which to lay their illegal claim of ownership, so they can express through the body they occupy their degrading passions and desires.'*

- b. Dangers of half-hearted Christianity – To be cleansed of demons and THEN to remain empty is an accident waiting to happen. We are designed as a vessel to be filled with something. Being cleaned up without being filled with God is extremely dangerous. All sorts of evil things can come in unless we are filled with God's Word and His Spirit.

That is why Paul said, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

- c. How demons gain entry - How did the mute spirit gain entry into this poor man? The Scripture doesn't tell us. But we are responsible for the condition of our hearts and whom we let in – the Holy Spirit or the evil spirits. We hold the key. How do we open the door to demons? Like flies are attracted to filth and rotting carcass, demons can smell sin and sinful life. Eg. Unforgiveness and bitterness give off a putrid smell. Fear, rage, and uncontrolled anger also reek and attract demons.

- d. Involvement in the occult – this is another major entryway for demons.

"When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord; because of these same detestable practices, the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the Lord your God. (NIV Deut 18:9-13)

There are three major forms of the occult we are specifically warned against in the Scriptures.

- Divination – getting revelation on the past, present, and future from spiritual sources other than the Holy Spirit, including ESP - extrasensory perception, the third eye, etc. Note, receiving words from a fortune teller or medium, etc. is to accept Satan's plan and destiny.
- Witchcraft – using spells, curses, hypnosis, etc. to control other people. God doesn't want anyone to be 'controlled or dominated' by another person, including by 'spiritual' persons.
- Sorcery – operates through objects like charms, amulets, talisman, including writings or drawings, drugs, etc. Do not take in or keep ANYTHING that was dedicated to other gods.

E. Steps for deliverance:

1. Confess: If you have been involved in anything that tapped into the supernatural, other than by the Holy Spirit in the Lord Jesus Christ, confess it as sin and involvement with an unclean spirit.
2. Renounce: By deliberate choice, dissociate yourself completely from it. "I hate them with a perfect hatred and count them my enemies." God will not deliver you from your friend.
3. Break every contact: Burn or break and remove every object associated with it, whatever they are! House cleansing is needed for a lot of Christians. God knows, and the devil knows when you really mean it.
4. Prayer for healing and deliverance

Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are the Son of God, the Christ who came in the flesh. You died on the cross for my sins and you rose again from the dead. I now confess all my sins. I repent of all my sins. In particular, I confess seeking Satan the help that should only come from God. I confess as a sin... [name the thing] ... Lord, I now renounce it. I renounce Satan and all his works. I hate his demons. I count them my enemies. In the name of Jesus, I loosen myself now from every evil influence, from every satanic bondage, from any spirit in me that is not the Spirit of God. And I command all such spirits to leave me now in the name of Jesus."

(from Derek Prince – They shall expel demons)