

If Satan Cast Out Satan

Matthew 12:3 – 13:2

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~ It seems as if every time I think we have gotten rid of Satan in this safari, he shows right back up again; like magic or something – and always at exactly the wrong time, too. Our safari report last concluded with the disciples getting a bite to eat on the Sabbath. It seems they had to work this Sabbath day to eat. Likely the offerings being given by the multitudes of healed people weren't getting the groceries bought. Well, the Pharisees are so cold and pious that they would have these men go hungry. Let's be real, they didn't really care who was doing what on the Sabbath - except that THESE men were doing something that they could be accused of. The Pharisees had actually been friendly to Jesus in the beginning of His ministry, you will recall. Maybe they didn't take Him seriously in the beginning? Well, either way, they now break totally with Him over the question of the Sabbath day. This is the issue and argument that drives the religious rulers to contemplate murdering Jesus. As we begin, the disciples are still in the field pulling grain and finally getting a halfway decent meal. How great can raw corn and barley or oats really be? They were hungry so they ate. The Pharisees then rebuked the disciples and asked Jesus to explain why He permitted this....

XII

3 Jesus said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple.

~ The account of this is found in First Samuel and it happens during the rejection of David by King Saul. David was being rejected as king of Israel at that time and at THIS time in which we are studying Jesus is being....rejected as King! David took care of his own when those men were hungry, and Christ is taking care of His own here because they are hungry. The law permitted this to be done, at any rate, under certain circumstances. Some of the Pharisees are genuinely ignorant of and others are willfully ignoring the provisions made for the poor and hungry on the Sabbath Day. To me this is all intensely interesting because the Lord Jesus claims His superiority over the very center of their religious life. To the Pharisee, this is a broken Sabbath AND blasphemy. So, Jesus states another part of the law when He says, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice...." as He defends these apostles and says they did not break the Sabbath....

7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.

~ That statement engendered the hatred and deep, relentless bitterness of the Pharisees because Jesus could make no claim more heretical and blasphemous than this one. This brings about absolute contempt by the Pharisees towards everyone associated with this Jesus person. So, it makes sense that Jesus leaves the fields and heads into THEIR synagogue to teach. We're going to see in John that Jesus called the temple His in the beginning; but by the time He's through dealing with the Pharisees He is saying to them, "your house is left unto you desolate...."

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

10 And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

~ The Pharisees planted this hurting man purposely in Jesus path as a pawn and, by doing so, they paid Jesus the finest compliment they possibly could have. They inadvertently admit here that Jesus has the power to heal people. The Pharisees couldn't question the miracles of Jesus – because those miracles were being done in the presence of and for multitudes. Only a stuffy theology professor two thousand years removed from the miracles of Christ could ever deny them. If you're sitting in a high-tech comfortable library writing a C level thesis for your doctorate degree it is easy to conclude the miracles didn't happen. Really, all you have to do is close your eyes and pretend, so it seems. If you were walking the streets in the days the Lord Jesus was walking the streets of Jerusalem, however, you would not have been denying that He performed miracles. These Pharisees knew He had the power to heal the sick. They also proved, unwittingly, that Jesus was moved to compassion to heal hurting people even on His Sabbath day! That was quite a religious blunder the Pharisees made. Of course, this plan was only designed to trap Jesus. Jesus summarily turns it around and traps the Pharisees by forcing them to admit that even a sheep would be rescued on the Sabbath. The Mosaic Law made allowance for sheep rescue, also, you may remember? ~

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days.

~ This is the crux of the matter, friends: should good be done on the Sabbath? – That is ALL this is about with these Pharisees. It's not about God; it's not about Jesus; it's not about helping others – this is about them holding their office in power and prominence, position and prideful arrogance. Their religion was as dead and meaningless as the carcass of a jackass lying dead on a hillside in the wilderness. So, is a man better than a sheep? What is your answer: did Jesus break the Sabbath? ~

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;

~ Quite frankly, the Pharisees wanted to attach their wagon to His star until He wouldn't cooperate with them. That's when they became His devout enemy; and from this point on it will be an open and festering conflict in which these bloodhounds of hate won't let up on until they have Jesus on the cross and they can fold their arms in pride under it! Jesus didn't have a congregation of fifty people that seemed to be healed again and again every Sunday. No, this was REAL and there were thousands of people each day that converged upon Him. All were healed, too, by the way! I don't think you and I can quite grasp the impression that Jesus is making on these people in His day. The miracles were absolutely astounding. When the people saw what He did they were immediately forced to either accept or reject Him.

The enemy is still employing this same controversy today; and Jesus is still extremely controversial after all these centuries. We have absolute filth in our literature, movies and other media that do nothing but blaspheme Jesus today. Well, you are going to make a decision in this life concerning Him; you will be forced to make a choice one way or the other. You are either going to be His friend - or His enemy, friends. Christ will be your Savior – or – He will be your judge! He won't be both. The Pharisees couldn't get rid of Him and YOU aren't going to just forget about God and stop thinking about Him, either – it's just not going to happen – because God hath set eternity in man's heart. So, with that spiritual illness realized, Jesus heals these people....

16 And charged them that they should not make him known:

~ Jesus didn't come to this earth as a thauamaturgist, friends. Jesus came to this earth as the King; and to assert His claim as our Messiah and Savior of the world. When that was rejected, He just continued on to the cross

where He will still be the Savior of the world. The crowds came around and it made it difficult to carry on His ministry as He wanted to. They actually hindered Him; which is why He was telling them not to tell anyone....

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

~ Alright, the bruised reed will be bound up by the Lord if you'll allow Him to. Those who will continue to reject Him will have the smoking flax burst into flames of judgment. God isn't going to stop His plan and program just because man has a free will and opposes Him. Till He send forth judgment in His name the Gentiles shall trust in that Name! There is a very definite moving out today of Bible teaching; more than ever - not only in the realm of prophecy but concerning fulfilled prophecy in which Gentiles are to be saved. I am not saying prophecy is being fulfilled – I am saying the stage is being set for it to be fulfilled properly, correctly and completely....

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a demon, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?

~ This is a frightening miracle for a Pharisee to witness – one they didn't want to deal with. I have said before that I believe the casting out of

demons is the greatest miracle He performed; but, frankly, I think it's par with raising the dead, not greater. We're going to wait and dissect demon-possession in all of its gory, gruesome detail in the Gospel of Luke - because we just aren't ready for it here in our safari – at this point in setting forth Holy Writ. Luke is a medical doctor in his day, of course; and we should consider his way of presenting it for the most meaningful, effective and concisely articulately conveyed insight....

24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

~ Jesus was saying He is God. We have here the matter of the 'unpardonable sin.' The Pharisees would never say they were casting out demons by Beelzebub. The Kingdom of God is among you in the presence of the Messiah. Christ says He is there with them and the things He is doing among them are His credentials to them. They literally came unglued at that realization....

29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and steal his stuff, except he first overcome the strong man? and then he will steal his stuff.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

~ It's important to remember there is no sin that we can commit that Christ did not die for. What we have here is the Lord Jesus saying if miracles are done and Satan is attributed the power then THAT would amount to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Jesus died for ALL sins. The Holy Spirit has come into the world to make real the salvation of Christ; but we can resist that working of the Spirit in our lives when He speaks to our heart and we choose to willfully ignore Him. God has no remedy for that! When you reject the forgiveness Christ offers that can only be made real to you by the Spirit of God there is no plan for God to save you from that. THAT part IS up to you to act, respond and accept. Only the Spirit of God can regenerate you and bring you life from death.

We will learn very definitely in another Gospel that Jesus is warning these people at this time that if they attribute these miracles that He is doing to the devil then they are committing the unpardonable sin. These Pharisees are rejecting the witness of Himself – which was right before their eyes - AND that of the Holy Spirit. This particular sin could ONLY have been committed while Christ was on earth performing miracles. So, there is no act of sin or disobedience that you will not receive forgiveness for when you trust Christ. However, to resist the Holy Spirit has no forgiveness – so – let's just be super-duper careful about not following the leading of the Holy Spirit when He calls for us to move and act. James said, "....to him who knows to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin." Christ is the One Who is bringing forgiveness in the first place. Let's remember that.

A man is dying of disease. A doctor offers the dying man the cure. The man refuses the cure and dies. Did the man die of the disease? – No, the man died because he refused to take the remedy! There WAS a remedy for his

disease. Today, we have a remedy for the death that will certainly come from sin. That hope is that Christ died on the cross for our sins and was raised from the dead for our Justification. Only the Holy Spirit can apply this to our lives, use us for His glory and provide the power to live a genuine "Christian life." If we reject Christ as the sacrifice for our sins, there is nothing ahead but judgment....

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

~ That which is in the well of the heart will come out through the bucket of the mouth, eventually – sooner or later. "Idle words" in verse thirty-six means blasphemy; and we are condemned by those words because we are speaking the things that are in our hearts. That's precisely where the

Pharisees are not being sincere when they ask for a sign. Jonah was dead in that fish, friends. We've been over that in our first safari – DEAD! God brought Jonah OUT of death and into life. That was the sign given to Nineveh. Remember, in Nineveh the ENTIRE city turned to God? Well, they're rejecting Christ here in our study, and Jesus is calling them out on it....

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

~ Personally, I believe the Queen of Sheba was saved when she came from the ends of the earth to Solomon's Temple to witness the ceremonial worship of God and to hear about salvation. Here, Jesus has come to them and dropped His Words right in their laps and they do nothing but resist, fight Him and, ultimately, reject Him! They sure don't turn to Him. Jesus knows this so He begins to tell this parable of an unclean spirit going out of some man. Our Spiritual Safari has already recently witnessed the casting out of the demons from the men living amongst the tombs in Gad. Here, in Matthew, spiritually speaking, this represents the man today who thinks he is all cleaned up because of his good works, charitable giving and law-based living....

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

~ Reformation is an altogether losing proposition. You can quit doing or start doing a whole lot of things - but they won't make you anymore of a Christian than buying a church and living there. If every single person in the

world stopped sinning today there would not be ONE additional Christian tomorrow. Quitting your sin doesn't make you a Christian. It doesn't impress other people. Reformation is not what we need, my safari travelers. What we need is to recognize that we are nothing more than a bunch of completely empty vessels - period. The most difficult people to save today are unsaved church members. They think they are okay and secure because they have been swept clean and garnished a little. They don't realize they are an empty, vacant house – maybe an abandoned asylum. The evil spirits can move in anytime they're ready. We saw this in the pig story. The devil owns them, but they cannot recognize him as their possessor....

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself 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. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

~ The strongest relationship we can have in life is our relationship with Christ. It's a new kind of relationship; utterly apart from anything we know on earth. Supernatural. If you have an unsaved mother or father or friend; or if you know anyone that is not saved: you are closer to a fellow-believer in China that you have never met than you are to that unsaved biological family member, friend, any unsaved person - even the mother that bore you if she does not trust Christ as her Redeemer. Our relationship to God in Christ as a family of believers means EVERYTHING in our lives – or we are

not saved! Jesus asked, "...who are My mother and My brother?" This is a tremendous spiritual lesson for us today....

50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

XIII

1 The same day went Jesus out of the house of Israel, and sat by the sea side.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

~ What, exactly, is the will of our Father in Heaven? – It is that we glorify His Son by turning to and trusting Him - the Lord Jesus Christ - as our Savior! As we end this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, we come to another great chapter in the Bible - the thirteenth chapter of Matthew - and I think I have said that about ninety-eight percent of the chapters so far that we have come to! This chapter will mark the second major discourse in this Gospel – the Mystery Parables. Like me, chapter thirteen has been completely misunderstood by most theologians today. The parable's of the Kingdom of Heaven show the direction of the Kingdom that had been offered to Israel AFTER the Kingdom was rejected by them! That may be a little confusing, but it's time to get unconfused and learn some difficult stuff today. This set of parables disclose what Jesus will be doing between now and the time He returns to the earth to set up His Millennial Kingdom physically and literally.

Our next few reports will take us across a critical leg in our mission. The Sermon on the Mount looked back at the law of the land from a time in the future; but this discourse reveals the present state of the King and His function right now – whereas the Olivet Discourse looks on to the future. Jesus is now speaking of what happens in this world until He returns to establish His Kingdom. Jesus spoke many things to them in parables. These parables are simply remarkable in meaning to us. We're going to spend a whole bunch of time taking these parables apart and examining them in our

Spiritual Safari. The next parable is the key to the entire Bible, "...behold, a sower went forth to sow." We will examine those seeds under our spiritual microscopes also in our next report ~

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