

## Episode #803 Matthew 12 Part 4-The Unforgivable Sin

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. In Matthew 12, the Lord faces off with the wicked Pharisees.

III. Power of God; Power of Satan. Matthew 12:22-30.

- A. Verse 22. Demon-possessed is Greek *daimonizomai*, demonized. His affliction was caused by this demon; when it was cast out, he was healed, Greek *therapeuo*. Notice the structure: A blind and B dumb – B spoke and A saw.
- B. Verse 23. They were astonished, astounded, out of their minds. They seem to reason: “If this is not the Son of David, then who is?”
- C. Verse 24. Note: Pharisees here too. The jealous Pharisees must say something, so they say this. Again Beelzeboul, Lord of the Dunghill, is a play on Beelzebub, Lord of the Flies. Ruler is Greek *archonti*, meaning first one, chief, or prince.
- D. Verse 25. He was God, and knew thoughts. When a force is dividing it cancels itself out. Any government divided against itself will come to civil war and desolation.
- E. Verse 26. The Lord reveals that by Beelzeboul these Pharisees meant Satan. Yet if Satan cast himself out, how then could Satan ever rule or govern or control anything?
- F. Verse 27. Exorcism of demons was practiced in Israel. By the grace of God it seems certain priests and others were given power in this. Their own representatives who did this would judge them and their foolish words.
- G. Verse 28. “But if I cast out demons by the spirit of God then you have a foretaste of the kingdom of God.” “Come” is Greek *phthano*, means to take a step in advance or to precede. Luke 11:20 is appropriate here, and uses the same word. The kingdom of God has taken a step in advance toward you.
- H. Verse 29. “Can” is *dunatai*, having the inherent power to. The Lord was obviously binding Satan, or else He could never have done what He did to spoil his house.
- I. Verse 30. This certainly applied to the Lord and Satan. Satan is against the Lord, and scatters those whom the Lord would gather.

IV. The Unforgivable Sin. Matthew 12:31-32.

- A. Verse 31. “Forgiven” here means to loose what binds. This deals with what is commonly called the “unpardonable sin.” This is not a Scriptural term, though it is not totally inaccurate, as this speaks of the unforgivable sin.
  - 1. In the history of religion there were those who felt that the way to get people to join the church and to come to the front is to scare them to death. Eternal conscious torment was wearing out, so they went to the unpardonable sin, later replaced by the second coming of Christ or the battle of Armageddon.
  - 2. Part of using it as a scare tactic was never defining what the sin is.
  - 3. The difficulty in understanding this is a result of failing to understand the true character of the three years of the Lord Jesus’ ministry on earth and of the Acts period that followed.
  - 4. This sin could be committed under certain circumstances and could not under other circumstances. (Like adultery, which takes two people.)

5. The context is verses 22-24. Blindness and dumbness are obvious, and their healing was also obvious. This caused speculation that the Lord is Christ. The Pharisees could not deny the healing, so came up with this explanation of it.
  6. During the Lord's ministry and Acts, God was communicating through the Lord and then through His apostles, not just through the written Word. When God speaks He always succeeds at communicating, though some reject.
  7. Those who witnessed the Lord's miracle had a message from God through that miracle and understood what it meant. Yet the work of the Spirit through Christ they attributed to the devil. That was the unforgivable sin.
  8. If the Lord was on earth today speaking and doing miracles, then people could commit the unpardonable sin. Yet He is not, so no one can today.
  9. If you know of someone who thinks he has committed this, the Word of God says that in the dispensation of grace there is complete and total forgiveness of sin, Ephesians 1:7. No one can commit the unpardonable sin today.
- B. Verse 32. "The Holy Spirit" is in Greek "the Spirit the Holy," meaning the Person. The Pharisees did this when they ascribed His works to Satan. "Age" is the Greek *aion* or "eon," meaning a flow of things. The impending eon is the kingdom of God. Then it was "at hand," but it has been suspended and its completion delayed.

V. Conclusion: Christ cast out demons in an obvious way, but the Pharisees brushed it off as using the power of Satan. The Lord showed how foolish this is, as Satan would never win if he opposed himself. He revealed that men will be forgiven every sin except the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This is often a source of fright to people, yet we suggest this is a sin that cannot be committed today, as we do not see God's obvious healing miracles in order to ascribe them to Satan. Whatever sins you have committed, I would point you to the Savior Who can forgive you every sin.