

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

99- Jesus' Authority Over Disease; Disabilities; Demons; and Death- Part 10

Church June 02, 2024

Matthew 9:32-38

32 As they were going out, a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Him.

33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

34 But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

35 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

36 Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

38 "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Now we need to remember that the Reason Jesus performed all those amazing Acts was to *verify* to those present with Him as well as those who would come to know and love Him through reading what Matthew and the other 39 writers infallibly penned down- that Jesus was fully and truly God Almighty in human Flesh.

That is the *primary* Reason why Jesus healed the sick; cured the Disabilities; and raised the Dead. Neither Jesus nor the Prophets *before* Him nor the Apostles after Him did what they did- to give us some kind of "Formula" or "Pattern" that we could follow so that we could do the same. That is NOT what those mighty Acts were for. They were to give Divine Credibility to what the Prophets of the

Old Covenant as well as what Jesus and the Apostle in the New Covenant- were teaching.

For example, animal Sacrifices were *commanded* by God through Moses under the Old Covenant. And, as long as that original Covenant was in force- whoever *refused* to sacrifice an animal was sinning and would be severely punished- even cut off from the people of God!

But in His first “Advent” (Coming)- Jesus came as

... the Lamb who has been offered in sacrifice ever since the creation of the world. (The Revelation 13:8b)

Now this strange verse has to do with the Fact that Jesus- being the FINAL and ONLY Sacrifice- was ALWAYS true in the Mind of God. And so, the use of animals in Sacrifice under the *inferior* Old Covenant was NEVER going to be permanent- precisely because it did NOT have the Power to forgive a single Sin or save a single Soul (**Hebrews 10:1&11**). And that is *why* when Jesus appeared- John the Baptist said,

... Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29b)

... and it is also *why* neither Jesus nor His Disciples ever sacrificed a single animal the entire Time during His earthly Ministry!

The Point I am making is that with the Birth; Life; Ministry; Death; Resurrection; and Ascension of Jesus into Heaven- our Lord- the Darling of the Trinity- God the Son- *fulfilled* the Law that God gave to Moses. And with that Fulfillment came a radical Transformation as to *why* and *how* genuinely saved people *could, would, and should* worship God.

So, since Jesus has done all that He has done- if *anyone*- for *any* Reason- sacrifices an animal today- even with the *best* of Intentions- they are sinning before God; they are NOT worshipping God; they are NOT pleasing God; and God does NOT receive their Sacrifice! With the Act of sacrificing an animal- that individual is saying that the “once- for-all” Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross- was NOT sufficient.

Let me say this another way. God the Father loves Jesus with a Love that we cannot even imagine. And God the Father *values* all that Jesus said and did while He was here on the earth- so much so- that as soon as Jesus came; and lived; and died; and rose again- the ONLY Way to worship God; and the ONLY Way to give God the praise and Glory that He deserves- is for us to bow before Jesus and to

exalt His great Name. Listen to what the Apostle Paul infallibly wrote down in **Philippians 2:9-11**:

**9 For this reason also, God [the Father] highly exalted Him [Jesus], and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Look at several Key parts of this Passage:

- **God [the Father] highly exalted Him [Jesus] (verse 9)**
- **God [the Father]... bestowed on Him [Jesus] the name [Reputation] which is above every name (verse 9)**

... so, God the Father so *loved* Jesus; and so *valued* all that Jesus said and did while He was here among us- that God the Father highly exalted Jesus; and bestowed on Jesus a “Reputation” (Name) that symbolizes WHO He is! Now WHY did God the Father do this? To what End did God the Father do all this for God the Son?

- **so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW**
- **so that ... every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord**

So, we did NOT (and we will NOT) crown Jesus as “Lord”- God the Father did! And we did NOT (and we will NOT) give Jesus ALL Authority- in Heaven and on the earth- God the Father did! And God the Father did all of this- BEFORE Jesus ascended into Heaven (**Matthew 28:18b**)! And at the End of **Philippians 2:11** the Apostle *infallibly* wrote that God the Father did ALL of this for one Reason:

... to the glory of God the Father.

So, today- now that Jesus has come and lived and died and risen again- NOBODY can glorify God the Father without *exalting*; and without *bowing before*; and without *worshipping*- Jesus! NOBODY can worship God the Father unless they worship God the Son- Jesus, the Christ. NOBODY can please God the Father or honor Him or love Him or obey Him- unless they also honor love and strive to obey Jesus! There is no such thing as ANYONE loving God unless there is sincere and genuine Love for Jesus.

Jesus' Birth; Life; Ministry; Death; Resurrection; and Ascension radically changed EVERYTHING! And the people who could go on and "abandon" the "elementary Teaching about the Christ" (in the Old Covenant) and "press on" into the final, full, and completed Revelation of God in the New Covenant *proved beyond any Doubt*- that they had already been genuinely given "new, spiritual, Life" in the Miracle of the New Birth (**Hebrews 6:1**).

But those who *refused* to abandon the inferior Covenant; and who, in spite of ALL that Jesus said and did- continued to embrace and hold on to what God gave to Moses- *proved beyond any Doubt*- that they had been deceived into thinking they had already been saved.

Now this Theology was very radical. And it was very difficult for the overwhelming *majority* of Jews, who lived in the 1st Century- to accept it. So, that is why the Apostle wrote this in **1Corinthians 1:22**:

For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks [Gentiles] search for wisdom;

... and so, in His great Love- Jesus gave the Jews of the 1st Century Sign after Sign after Sign after Sign to believe and accept that Jesus was, in fact, God in human Flesh; Immanuel; and the Messiah! And *many* of those Signs had to do with the Miracle of *instantaneous* physical Healing; the total *elimination* of physical Disabilities; *literally* raising the Dead back to Life; as well as the "casting out" of Demons.

And yet, *most* of the Jews *refused* to believe. And that Refusal was astounding and breathtaking- because if ANYONE *should* have believed and embraced and loved Jesus- it was the Jew. So, it should be obvious to us all that the "Hardness" that was on the Jew then- that stopped them from believing- and the "Hardness" that is on them today- is much MORE than simply a lack of Information or a lack of Effort on their part. No, this Hardness is from God Himself. And this Hardness is Judgment.

And that is so very grievous. But this *supernatural* "Hardening" that resides with the Jew even to this very Day- should NEVER cause us to boast against them. Because the "Hardening" that stops them from embracing and loving the ONLY one Who can forgive their Sins and save their Souls- is also a great Warning for us; and a Cause for us to tremble before God. Look what the Apostle was "moved" to write in **Romans 11: 17-21**:

17 ... if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree,

18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.

19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.

This should be the Cause behind *why* we should pray earnestly for the Salvation of the Jew. But it should also be the Catalyst as to *why* we also seek to preach the Gospel to the Jew; *why* we should demonstrate to the Jew the great Love that we have for Jesus and for each Believer. Our part in this great Drama is to live our Lives- in such a Way- that we provoke the Jew to Jealousy (**Romans 11:14**).

So, we are to *constantly* model the deep and passionate and real and lasting Relationship we have with God the Father through God the Son in the Power of God the Holy Spirit. We must *demonstrate* the Ability that we have- in Jesus Christ- to forgive and love our Enemies; the Power that we have to keep our Vows; the Grace of God that has been- *obviously*- given to us that *empowers* us to pursue both Holiness as well as Humility. And we must allow the unsaved Jew to behold the staggering Growth that we have about both the Grace of God as well as the Knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

So, the Miracles; the Signs and Wonders; and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit were given so that *primarily* the Jew- but also the Gentiles- would understand that the radical Theology based on the Birth; Life; Ministry; Death; Resurrection; and Ascension of Jesus- was OF God! That it was true; and reliable; and trustworthy; and something that ALL genuine Believers should strive to embrace; and hope in; and obey! And those Signs and Wonders and Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Spirit were given- so that ALL of God's elect would be gathered out from every Nation; Tongue; and Tribe!

And all of these supernatural Signs were given so that each individual Jew would know- without any Doubt- that this was the END of the Old Covenant; and the "bringing in" of an infinitely *superior* Covenant; based on infinitely *superior* Promises; brought about by an infinitely *superior* High Priest; offering an infinitely *superior* Sacrifice! So, as each one of these breathtaking Miracles were done- in public- in full sight of both the Jewish people and the Jewish religious elite- they were crying out that- NOW was the dawning of the "Church Age"- the "Last Days" – that would *culminate* first- in a *frightening* "Coming" of Jesus in Judgment against unbelieving Israel- *before* that Generation died out- as well as a more

distant glorious and physical “Coming” of Jesus back to this earth- to rule the world with a rod of iron!

Now I said that that was the *primary* Reason behind all those fantastic Deeds. But there was a *secondary* Reason behind all of them. And that *secondary* Reason why the Prophets and the Apostles as well as Jesus Himself did what they did. And that is because God wants all of us to always know that our one, true, and living God is a GOOD God! God is Kind; and Merciful; and Love; and God *genuinely* cares about people. So, God is moved by the cries and the plight of human beings- living in a world that He has cursed. And so, in His Mercy- God moves through two different Ways to relieve Suffering and to help people live a *longer* and *better* Life. So, God moves in two Ways:

1. Miracles and Acts of Providence
2. Common Grace

We have been talking quite extensively on the Miracles. And those of you who “journeyed” with me through the **Epistle to the Hebrews** several years ago- understand what “*Acts of Providence*” are. And if you weren’t here then or you have forgotten what we talked about back then- you may want to go over the Sermons that I preached on that Issue- *especially* from **Hebrews 11**. But what is “*Common Grace*”?

Common Grace is the Grace of God that God has extended to all of Humanity- *saved or Lost*- that combines the “Goodness of God” with the “Mind of Man”. So, Common Grace is that type of Grace whereby God uses people through Medicines; Surgeries; Procedures; Manufacturing; Technology; and other Disciplines to either *invent*; or *find*; or *discover*; or *make*; or *create* various “Helps” that are used to make Life on earth *easier* and *better* for people.

It is the Common Grace of God as to *why* we have Prosthetics; and Vitamins; and Treatments; and Medicine; and Surgeries; and other Inventions that allow for people, who are blind or cripple or mentally impaired or deaf or maim to live *better* and *longer* Lives. The Common Grace of God gives us central air-conditioning; hearing aids; anti-biotics; bifocals; automatic transmission; microwave ovens; cars; jet airplanes; computers; smart-phones; and the internet.

We need to remember that before Dr. J.W. Carhart invented a steam-powered vehicle in 1871- we could only travel as fast as our horse could run. So, every person, who preached the Gospel before then- in addition to having to know God’s Word- had to also become familiar with things like wagons and hitches and saddles. And, we have seen a literal explosion of faster and faster Transportation over the last 153 years that people who lived in other epochs would

not have been able to even imagine. And both the supernatural Acts as well as the Acts of Common Grace- help us.

But there is yet another Act that Jesus did while He was here which has to do with the biblical Truth that some lost people become possessed of demons and Jesus- as well as the Apostles cast them out. And we need to explore that Issue- biblically. So, please read verses 32-34 with me again.

32 As they were going out, a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Him.

33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

34 But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

Now even though this is NOT the *first* time that Jesus cast out demons- I thought it wise to use this Passage as the “spring board” to give to you all a short History from the Bible- concerning satan and the fallen hordes of Angels called, “Demons”. And I told you then that I will teach you that:

- Demons are real
- They are “fallen” Angels
- They dwell on the earth
- They are purely “spiritual beings”
- They can literally *possess* unsaved human beings
- They fight against the Church
- They know and understand God’s Word
- They CANNOT love God
- They CANNOT repent
- They know there is a Day coming when they will be judged by God
- They are terrified of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit
- They can ONLY do what God *allows* them to do
- God uses them for His own Glory
- They are Liars
- They are NOT Invincible- even though they are mightier than Humans
- Their Power lies in their Craftiness and their Deceivableness
- They CANNOT *force* anyone to sin
- They will spend all of Eternity in the Lake of Fire

... and last time we found out that satan was an Arch-Angel in Heaven named, “Lucifer”. And Lucifer was beautiful and musical and powerful- but evidently, when God made him- God gave Lucifer and even other Angels the ability to rebel against God. And so, he did. And Lucifer also deceived 1/3 of all the Angels of Heaven and they waged a War against God for Supremacy.

Now I don’t think we can hardly call what Lucifer did- a “War” because God solved the Problem in a very brief Instant. In **Luke 10:18**, Jesus said,

I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

... and that is when Lucifer BECAME, “*satan*” and when the Angels Lucifer deceived BECAMED, “*demons*”. And so, Lucifer as well as 1/3 of all the Angels were cast out of Heaven and **The Revelation 12:8** says,

... they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

... so, I personally do NOT believe that satan nor the Demons can enter into Heaven again.

Now last time- I was going over this Issue and I introduced you to **The Revelation 12**. And since that time- I have come to understand that I was not as clear about this as I *should* have been. And that “cloudiness” caused some Confusion. So, let me begin by repenting that I was not as clear as I should have been. I’m sorry. I’ll do better. But let me also say that I was NOT expositing **The Revelation 12**. All that I was doing was to show you what the Bible teaches about satan and the demons. So, my focus was on that- NOT a full exposition of this inspired Chapter. But please allow me to try to clarify where I was unclear.

Now I told you last time that **The Book of the Revelation** is THE *most* symbolic Book in the Bible. I stand by that Statement. So, we have Images that the Apostle John gave us in this Book that *represent* something else. So, the Key to understanding this Book lies in correctly and fully *interpreting* the Symbols. And that is *why* some of the most godly, born- again, Blood-bought saints of God who ever lived- *disagree* about what John was meaning in this Book. And that Disagreement has gone on for over 2,000 years.

But *some* Symbols are relatively easy to figure out. For example, obviously, the “**dragon**” here is satan. But I hope each of you knows that satan is neither the color “red” nor does he have a tail. So, both his color and the fact that John says he has a tail and has many heads and is wearing crowns- is symbolic of something else. I told you last time that the heads and horns and diadems of verse 3 are symbolic of the Authority that satan has been allowed to exercise on the earth by God. And this is very important to understand.

Because satan does NOT do everything he *desires* to do in the earth. The **Book of Job** tells us that satan MUST go to God and get Permission from Him BEFORE he can do *anything* in the earth. And even though there are Times when God sovereignly *allows* satan and the demons to do certain things- God always *governs* them and *restricts* the Damage. And so, in one sense- satan is “free” to roam over the whole earth and attack people. But in another sense- satan is a “slave” and a “tool” of God- so that ONLY a certain amount of Evil can come forth from him.

I also told you last time that the “Woman” in **The Revelation 12** *symbolizes* the Church. My main Statement that I wanted to get across to you was that what the Roman religious System teaches about this “Woman” is wrong. They teach this Woman was Mary- the Mother of Jesus. I wanted to make sure you did NOT embrace that. But then what I *should* have said was that the Woman represents ALL of the elect of God throughout all of redemptive History- beginning with the Prophecy in **Genesis 3:15** all the Way to now. So, as each phase of Redemptive History was played out- the “Woman” in this Vision was there. And that *includes* the *second* Dream of Joseph in **Genesis 37:9**. And then, with the Advent of the Old Covenant- the Woman *would* have represented Israel.

But then I think another clarification is warranted. Because it was NEVER true that every single Jew in Israel was saved. It was NEVER 100% of the Jews that were saved- NEVER! Not in the Wilderness; NOT when they got to the Promised Land; and NOT now. What is true is that under the Old Covenant- God was dealing almost *exclusively* (but NOT *totally*) with one people (the Jews) and one Nation (Israel). So, when the Bible speaks about “Israel” being His people- it is talking about the “saved” Jews *within* Israel. But NOT every single Jew!

And that is true today with the “Church”. Today, under the *superior* New Covenant- God is dealing exclusively with “His people” who are now the “Church”. Yet we know that not everyone who is physically IN the Church is saved. So, back then you had two “Israels”- the genuine Jew (saved) and the false Jew (lost). And that is true today. You have two Churches: the genuine Believer (saved) and the Hypocrite (lost). So, there is both a “Visible” and an “Invisible” Church even as there was a “Visible” and “Invisible” Israel.

The “man-child” in **The Revelation 12** is Jesus, of course- but NOT *just* Jesus. It also includes His Body- which is the Church. The Symbol of the Woman and her Seed is then the “*Totality of Redemption through the Ages*”.

Now I do NOT personally believe that the Reference in verse 6 of 3-1/2 years (1,260 days) is literal- even though it might be. I believe it simply is referencing a “long period of time”. But NONE of that is what I am focusing on in this Series- which is why I tried to not get too deep into any of this last time. I am trying to focus ONLY on the origin of satan and his demon hordes.

So, I believe- as far as this Series is concerned- that it is important for us to believe what the End of verse 8 says,

... there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

... which is the Best News in the world!

But then I also want you all to think about verse 10 that says,

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

... and last time- my Question was, "*Why is it when satan has been cast down to the earth- having great wrath- that we are then suppose to say, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come"*? The Moment when God cast an angry satan down to the earth- was THE single WORST day of our Lives- in the sense that now we will have to engage with satan every day! So, WHY the rejoicing? And the Answer is two-fold. John gives us one Answer at the end of verse 10:

For [because] the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down...

Now why is that Truth a Cause for our rejoicing? Because of what John said at the very end of the verse:

... he who accuses them before our God day and night.

... so, in one sense- satan has ALREADY been defeated!

He was not only "cast out" he was also "cast down". So, because satan CANNOT ever go back into Heaven- we MUST rejoice! Now satan can ONLY do damage down here on the earth. So, his Time is *limited*; his Authority is *limited*; and his Power is *limited*! And that is something to rejoice about!

But look what John wrote again at the Beginning of verse 10:

"Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come"

So, it wasn't until satan was cast down to the earth- after his *decisive* Defeat in Heaven- that four things are now able to come forth:

1. The Salvation of ALL of God's elect
2. The Power to overcome ALL of satan's Actions
3. The Kingdom of our God
4. The Authority of His Christ

These four amazing things could NOT happen until satan was cast down into the earth. But now that satan has been defeated in Heaven- these four things can come to pass!

We must remember, dear friends, that our Love for God is weak, shallow, and vacillating- until it is made both pure and strong. Talk is cheap and so, anyone can say they love God. But the ONLY Way our Love for God can become pure and holy and godly and strong is through the Fires of Testing and Proving.

And that is what God does by allowing satan to fight against the "*seed of the Woman*" or the saved. And so, when we think about the many Ways that satan fights against us- we must think *biblically*. What is it that *offends* God and that *hinders* His Church? Is it external Persecution from those on the Outside who are filled with Evil? 21st Century American Christians might answer, "Yes!" to that Question, but History proves that when the Church is attacked *externally*- it is actually *strengthened*! So, when satan instigates Persecution against the Church- God's people pray MORE; they fast MORE; they gather together MORE; and they are LESS worldly and LESS sinful. So, *external* Persecution normally *strengthens* the Church.

So, what is it, that satan instigates, that actually hurts and wounds the Church? Two main things:

1. Worldliness
2. False Teaching

... and we all know what false Teaching is: it is Teaching that brings the Lost as well as God's people under Deception- so that Sin becomes attractive.

Worldliness is when God's people are caught up in the "Affairs of this Life"- to the extent- that we forget about what Jesus warned us of. And so, that is where satan spends the *majority* of his Time- helping to bring somebody from *inside* the Church into Deception so they can deceive others. So, that is where we need to be on our guard and always be able to call Sin as being "Sin" and NEVER a Good thing.

And NOTHING has taken the souls of people, who lay claim to be saved, captive- like the Abomination of the, "*Health and Wealth Movement*". So, let us examine ourselves to see if this false Teaching has gained a foothold in our hearts.

So, how does satan move in the earth today? Let me answer that by asking a Question, “*Do you love Money?*” Most everyone in the modern Church says, “*No, I don’t love money!*” But that’s just talk. In fact, after almost 53 years of being in the Church- I have met very few people who would *voluntarily* say, “*Yes, I love Money! I know it’s wrong- but my heart is fixed on all the Things that Money can give to me; and the Security it provides for me! Please pray for me that I could escape this Evil and set my Love on Jesus Christ!*”

So, if you listen to the Way people talk today- it’s as though this Sin no longer applies to anyone- WHO LIVES IN THE RICHEST AND MOST PROSPEROUS NATION IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD! A NATION, WHOSE ENTIRE EXISTENCE IS BASED ON THE ACCUMULATION OF MONEY!

And I simply don’t buy that. So, I ask people all the Time- raise your hand- if you would like a cut in pay. Pastors, how much would you slack off on your Duties; and the Time you spend in Studying; and the Time you spend in Prayer- if your Church cut your pay 55%?

In my Opinion, the ONLY reason people don’t think they love Money is because they are so *surrounded* with it; and because they live every single day so “neck deep” in it- they can’t see the forest for the trees!

But the biggest Reason I believe that the sinful Love for Money is common and prevalent among 21st Century American Christians is because of which religious books are the most popular in our day. So, which spiritual Teachers draw the largest Crowds today? And what Theology has the most followers in our Day? It is NOT those who preach the Word of God without fear or fail. And it is NOT those who preach that Worldliness and loving Money is the ROOT of all sorts of Evil! It is the Health and Wealth pied- pipers- who teach that we can have it all in this Life- and go to Heaven, too! That kind of Teaching sells *more* books; *more* tapes; has *more* Conferences; and has *more* followers than anything else! And it’s NOT even close! But look at what the unknown writer penned down in **Hebrews 10:32-34**:

32 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,

33 partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.

34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.

Now look closely at verse 34:

... you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.

What? Notice that these people did NOT merely “endure” the Injustice heaped upon them when they had ALL their earthly Goods taken from them- probably illegally. And also notice that there is no Insurance mentioned here where State Farm *re-imburses* them for their Loss. And also notice that the Government is NOT involved in helping them get their Possessions back or even punishing the people who stole it from them!

Beloved, this is an example of real, sure-nuff biblical Christianity! And this is an Example of what it means to NOT love Money! What does it say?

[You] **accepted joyfully the seizure of your property...**

They ACCEPTED the unjust and illegal Seizure of their Property! Now that would be amazing all on its own! But this goes *further* than merely “Accepting” that Seizure. This says they accepted it- WITH JOY! JOYFULLY! Now THAT is an Example of the POWER of the Holy Spirit at work in people’s Lives!

But let’s press on further. WHY were these people able to accept the *unjust* and probably *illegal* Seizure of their Property- with Joy? Were they simply brave? Were they stoic? Were they merely disciplined? NO! Look what it says was the Reason they could accept the Seizure of their Property with Joy!

... knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.

These people knew something that, evidently, 21st Century American Christians, for the most part, DON’T seem to know. Because this says that it was the KNOWLEDGE that they had a “BETTER” Possession and a “LASTING” Possession in Heaven that allowed them to *escape* the Curse of loving Money (and Possessions); and to *escape* the Sin of Covetousness; and to *escape* the Sin of Bitterness (why me, Lord?); and to *escape* the Sin of Vengeance (I’m going to get them for this) and to lose ALL they had- with JOY!

Yet today- we don’t know five people on this earth that can say this! And so, I say again,

We are so neck-deep in loving Money that we can’t see the forest for the trees!”

Now what does this have to do with satan and demons? EVERYTHING! Because the thing that satan does on the earth- the MOST; the thing demons spend the *majority* of their time engaged in- is in the creation of and the propagation of false Teaching. And THE single WORST Teaching in America today; THE single most *DAMNING* Theology; THE single MOST *evil* Doctrine in our Day- comes from the Hay, Wood, and Stubble TV programs; books; tapes; conferences and Teachers, who fill stadiums with their wicked and sinful Teaching that actually promotes the Sin of Covetousness as being a Blessing; and who says that loving Money is a Virtue! So, if Jesus was telling the Truth when He said,

... it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Luke 18:25b)

... and when He said,

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24)

... and if the Apostle Paul was telling the Truth when he said,

**10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.
11 But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. (1Timothy 6:10&11)**

... and if the unknown writer was telling the Truth when he said,

**5 Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"
6 so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?" (Hebrews 13:5&6)**

... then the largest and most popular Teaching that has *captivated* the minds and hearts of God's people today and *dominates* their Thinking and their Prayers- is a LIE! And it is the Work of satan in the earth and it is *damning* to the very soul of the Church!

Now as soon as I bring these inspired, inerrant and infallible verses up- people come back to me and say, “*Well, what do you want us to do, Brother Blair- just live in Poverty? God doesn't mind if we have nice things!*” And that kind of Response simply proves what I am saying.

No, I don't want you to live in either Poverty or Prosperity- because I'm NOT the one who said these things- God is! But I will ask you this- “*IF God DID want you to live in Poverty- would that be okay with you? IF God DID allow evil men to seize EVERYTHING you own- would you go through that- with Joy?*” And, one final Question, “*Since Jesus and the other biblical writers condemned it so much- do you think loving Money may be a Sign that whoever does love Money- without Repentance- may NOT be saved?*”

If these biblical writers gave us God's Truth- then the Sin of loving Money; the Sin of Covetousness; and the Sin of Greed is alive and well in the United States of America today. And it has *deeply* penetrated the American Church; and it has *profoundly* indoctrinated the average American Christian. And so, based on that, I will tell you straight up- that satan is having a field-day in our Land concerning one of the most- *deadly*; and one of the most- *wicked*; one of the most- *sinful*; one of the most- *common*; and one of the *oldest* Sins that exist on planet earth. And satan has done this- in spite of the many, many, many Warnings that God the Holy Spirit put into the Holy Bible. And that would be the classic definition of Deception!

So, while the Focus of the American Church is on who sits in the White House- satan and hordes of demons have gone to and fro throughout this earth- placing the Temptation of loving Money and the false Teaching that says the more stuff we have- the better Life we have- before the eyes of God's people. And for the most part- we have bitten into this forbidden fruit because of three things being true:

1. We saw this Sin as being “Good”
2. It was a Delight to our eyes
3. And it was desired to give us all things

... and this is an Example of what John meant when he wrote this in **The Revelation 12:17:**

So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

John was illustrating here the 6,000 year old Struggle between satan and God's people- the saved Jew under the Old Covenant and the genuine Christian under the New. So, casting out demons is a good thing- right? Well, it is when Jesus did it. But please look at how the Jewish religious Leaders *responded* to Jesus casting out demons:

Matthew 9:34

But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

Now demons are *demonstrably* Evil. Demons hurt people. So, why in the world would religious people- who supposedly represented God to the people- attack Jesus as He cast out demons? The Pharisees were trapped by Jesus. Because if Jesus was OF God- then why did they NOT follow Him? And if Jesus was NOT OF God- then how did He cast out demons?

Now they couldn't deny what was obvious to the people. Jesus healed sick bodies- *publicly*. He performed Miracles- *publicly*. And He raised the Dead- *publicly*- in the sight of many, many Witnesses. So, the Pharisees could NOT deny what He had done. And so, they never did. But they also couldn't agree that Jesus was OF God- because that would mean they would have to bow before Him and follow Him. So, what could they do? They had to assign *demonic* Power to Jesus. They had to say He was the "Prince of devils" (Beelzebul); and they had to say, "**He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.**"- which, of course is Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit!

So, Jesus casting out demons actually *caused* the religious Hypocrites to sin even *more* against God. And that's because they were OF the devil themselves. And, Lord willing, we will get into this more next time.

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.