



Daily Reflections

October 9, 2020

Scripture

Luke 11:15-26

When Jesus had driven out a demon, some of the crowd said:

“By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons,
he drives out demons.”

Others, to test him, asked him for a sign from heaven.

But he knew their thoughts and said to them,
“Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste
and house will fall against house.

And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?

For you say that it is by Beelzebul that I drive out demons.

If I, then, drive out demons by Beelzebul,
by whom do your own people drive them out?

Therefore they will be your judges.

But if it is by the finger of God that I drive out demons,
then the Kingdom of God has come upon you.

When a strong man fully armed guards his palace,
his possessions are safe.

But when one stronger than he attacks and overcomes him,
he takes away the armor on which he relied
and distributes the spoils.

Whoever is not with me is against me,
and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

“When an unclean spirit goes out of someone,
it roams through arid regions searching for rest
but, finding none, it says,

‘I shall return to my home from which I came.’

But upon returning, it finds it swept clean and put in order.
Then it goes and brings back seven other spirits
more wicked than itself who move in and dwell there,
and the last condition of that man is worse than the first.”

Our Scripture Reflection

The conflict with the unbelieving Pharisees began in the context of Jesus' everyday ministry of preaching the Word, healing the sick, and casting out demons where necessary. On this occasion Jesus heals a man who is mute, that is, he is unable to speak.

Jesus discerns that the root of these physical symptoms is spiritual, not physical. and so He expels from the sufferer the demon that has caused his affliction, and for the most part the crowd is amazed.

Unwilling to see God's hand in these healings and exorcisms, the Pharisees present an alternate theory. They accuse Jesus of being an agent of Beelzebub, the prince of demons, and therefore, able to command his minions where to go.

Jesus appeals to His hearers' reasoning by demonstrating how the accusation is ludicrous. He first states the universal principle that an internally divided kingdom will crumble from within. Then He extends this to the specific accusation. If Satan goes about scattering his own forces, he can't survive. The charge is foolish.

Jesus says to His critics, "Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges". In other words, He is arguing, If I am casting out demons by Beelzebub, the same could be said of your own disciples (who attempted to perform exorcisms). First, Jesus displays His critics' flimsy logic and then turns their charge against exorcists of their own religious sect. But then He goes a step further.

Jesus is saying, If you're wrong, and God, not Beelzebub, is empowering me, then the kingdom of God has come to you and you are too blind to see it.

The term "finger of God" is a powerful term. The expression "finger of God," has a similar meaning to the term "hand of God.”

In conclusion, He warns His listeners to keep their “houses” clean. Holiness is the only spiritual medicine to combat Satan.

Food for your Journey

If a king wanted to take possession of his enemy's city, he would begin by cutting off the water and the food so his enemies, dying of hunger, would submit to him. It is the same with the passions of the flesh; if a man goes about fasting and hungry, the enemies of his soul grow weak.

—Abba John the Short (ancient Church Father).

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Please keep me close to Your heart. Through my fasting, prayer and works of mercy may I be protected from the Evil One. Amen