

THE DEMAND FOR AN EXPLANATION!

When Jesus cast a demon out of a mute man, and he began to speak, the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!” (Mt. 9:32-33) Jesus' miraculous power could not be denied, and so it demanded an explanation!

The Pharisees refused to acknowledge this as being the power of God on display, and instead came up with this explanation.

Matthew 9:34 (NKJV)

34 But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.”

The Pharisees knew that biblically there are only two sources of spiritual power. There is the God-side of supernatural power, and there is the dark side ruled over by Satan.

But a KEY point here is that Christ's worst critics (the Pharisees) did not deny His power over demons. They couldn't deny it, so they came up with a diabolical explanation – namely, they said He does it by the power of Satan, the ruler of demons.

It is true that Satan is the ruler over the demons (cf. Mt. 10:25; 12:22-37). The Bible speaks of ***“the devil and his angels”*** (Mt. 24:41; Rev. 12:9). It is clear from passages like Ephesians 6:12 that there is a whole hierarchy of demons that are organized under Satan. Satan is called ***“the ruler of this world”*** (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and ***“the god of this age”*** (2 Cor. 4:4).

However, a careful study of the Bible reveals that while Satan also has supernatural power, the way it is used is completely different from that of God. Satan uses his power for destructive purposes -not beneficial or benevolent purposes. He binds people instead of freeing them.

Revelation 9:11 (NKJV)

11 And they had as king over them [**Satan**] the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon [**Destroyer**], but in Greek he has the name Apollyon [**Destroyer**].

Everywhere you look in Scripture, Satan is a DESTROYER. He does not come to help people. He never has a benevolent ministry. In contrast, Christ's ministry was GOOD and BENEVOLENT on a massive scale! It was completely contrary to the character of Satan.

Acts 10:38 (NKJV)

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Christ went about doing good, but in contrast the devil oppresses people. To claim that Christ's power to FREE people from demons was by the power of Satan is completely contrary to the nature and function of Satan.

Satan sometimes is allowed to do deceptive miracles, such as through the magicians in Pharaoh's court (cf. Ex. 7-9) or such as he will do through the Antichrist.

2 Thessalonians 2:9 (NKJV)

9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

Satan has power but it is consistently DECEPTIVE and not for the true GOOD of people. It isn't good and it doesn't align with truth (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

John 5:43 (NKJV)

43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

When Jesus says He came in His Father's name, this means He comes in accordance with what the Bible reveals about the character and nature of God. He comes in accordance with what God says in the OT. He came in perfect harmony with glorious wholesome kingdom standards, presenting the truth that He is the King presenting the kingdom. Jesus' life and ministry aligned perfectly with God and His Word through and through.

In contrast, the Antichrist (empowered by Satan) comes doing powerful things in a vacuum – just drawing attention to Himself. He is not fulfilling Messianic prophecy – just doing deceptive signs and wonders that are totally self-oriented. His life will not align with the character or the Word of God in terms of being the true Messiah.

Thus, ascribing Jesus' power over demons to the ruler of demons was completely and totally inconsistent with Scripture. They completely butchered and slandered the nature of Christ's ministry. And that too is consistent because the name devil means "slanderer" (cf. 1 Pet. 4:12-14;

5:8-9). And as Jesus said of the religious leaders in John 8:44, “***You are your father the devil...***”.

“This verse should serve as a reminder that all the ‘proofs’ offered cannot convince the wicked in his heart. The problem the unregenerate have in not accepting Christ is not so much a matter of not having proof of Jesus’ power, authority, and truth but having a darkened heart that is unwilling to believe.” – ***Ed Glasscock***

There is the fundamental problem! They have a heart that is not willing to believe!