

Luke 11:14-21a, Debate: Christ vs. the Pharisees

Luke 11:14 - And Christ was casting out [ekballo: to cast out; not horkizo: the verb "to exorcise"] a demon and it was dumb [there is nothing wrong with the larynx of the young man, his inability to speak is caused by the demon who possess him]; and it came about that when the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowd was astonished.

Ekballo

Miracle
Sovereignty of God
Reveals the Gospel
Work of Christ, disciples, and apostles only
Divine grace
Instant results
Authorized by God

Horkizo

Prestidigitation
Device of Satan
Conceals the Gospel
Work of any satanic emissary
Human good and evil
Requires ritual
Never authorized by God

In order to establish the context without getting involved in a meticulous exegetical study of this passage, I am going to quote each verse and give a summary statement of each until we reach verse 21.

Luke 11:15 - But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of demons.”

SUMMARY: In order to explain away the Lord’s miracle as a hoax, some of the Pharisees suggested that the act was made possible by the authority of Satan. In other words, He gave Jesus the authority to cast out one of his very own demons.

Luke 11:16 - And others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a miracle from heaven.

SUMMARY: They have already seen a miracle. But in order for Christ to prove it was not in association with Satan they demand He perform another one. They want to see physical evidence He is associated with God.

We are reminded of Paul’s observation in:

1 Corinthians 1:22 - Jews ask for miracles and Gentiles search for logical rationales.

Luke 11:17 - But Christ knew their thoughts, and said to them, “Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls.”

SUMMARY: In order to establish a truth, one must begin with a premise and then see if it can logically hold water. The premise the Lord presents is, when a kingdom is disorganized within, it is in a state of degeneracy. It is the principle of entropy. If any organization suffers inconsistent leadership, then it will eventually collapse of its own weight. Using this premise, the Lord then makes the application to Satan’s domain in the next verse.

Luke 11:18 - And if Satan is also divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

SUMMARY: Satan is not divided against himself. But the Lord structures a protasis based on the claim of his adversaries, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul (Luke 11:15).” His protasis is based upon the assertion of the Pharisees. It is a debater’s first-class condition. It’s not true but for the sake of the argument, it is assumed to be true. Based on the premise established in Luke 11:17 “a kingdom divided against itself degenerates.” If divided kingdoms must eventually fall, and if

Satan casts out his own demons in association with Christ, then Satan's kingdom must fall since he is in opposition to his own objectives.

Luke 11:19 - And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your disciples cast them out? Consequently, they shall be your judges.

SUMMARY: Again, the protasis is a debater's first-class condition. It is not true but is assumed to be. Thus, if the statement is true, then by what power do the disciples of the Pharisees cast out demons? If the Pharisees are right about Jesus, who claims to represent God, not Satan, how can they not make the same assertion about their students who also claim to represent God. Why would Satan perform miracles which are being credited to God?

This logic would demand that the Pharisees also believe that their disciples cast out demons by the power of Satan.

Luke 11:20 - But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

SUMMARY: If the claim of the Pharisees has been proved false, then only one other option remains to explain the miracle. It was by means of the sovereignty of God. Jesus in his true humanity and through the agency of the Holy Spirit was empowered to perform the miracle of outcasting in order to evangelize the lost who were witnesses and to reveal Himself as Messiah. Satan could not have logically performed this miracle through Christ. To have done so required him to permit a man, whom he ordered to be rendered mute, to be healed, all to the glory of God with Whom he is at war. In reality, when Christ, Who is the supreme authority over all the angelic creation, ordered the demon to come out, the demon had no choice. Now the Lord explains this outcasting of the demon by using an example from divine establishment and natural law which is pertinent to our study.

Luke 11:21

The verse begins with the temporal participle used for an action which is conditional, possible, and repeated many times historically: *hotan* - "Whenever"

This is followed by the nominative singular subject of the noun: *ischuros* - "strong man."

The strength implied here is in the sense of wisdom, personal character, common sense, all contributing to a person whose life is prepared to face any exigency.

The problem in view here is brought out by the perfect passive participle from the compound verb: *kathoplizo* - Literally, "to be armed throughout." Refers to the fact that this man has weapons—plural—and is heavily armed for the purpose of protecting his home.

perfect - Intensive; emphasizes a completed action with the existing result of being totally prepared.

passive - This strong person receives the action of being prepared by the possession of weapons. Otherwise, all his wisdom is neutralized by the encroachment of an armed adversary.

participle - Temporal; after he has been completely armed then his is prepared, not before.

This is followed by the present active subjunctive of the verb: *phulasso* - "to guard"; "to defend."

present - Iterative; describes what occurs or recurs at successive intervals when under attack, therefore this is the present tense of repeated action.

The strong man who is prepared to defend his home will, over a period of time, repeat the action both actively and passively:

- a. Actively by displaying or firing his weapons on occasions when criminal intruders violate the privacy of his home, seek to steal or destroy his property, or threaten the safety and security of his wife, children, or possessions.
- b. Passively by means of the perception in the minds of would-be killers and thieves that he may possess weapons.

active - The armed homeowner produces the action by guarding and defending his property and especially the content of the eternal Logos resident in the souls of his loved ones.

Remember the individual soul is the repository of the “*Word of God which liveth and abideth forever.*”

(1 Peter 1:23b). Those who murder, deny their victims the freedom to respond to the Gospel, recover from reversionism, or advance further in the spiritual life. This is why the time, manner, and place of a person’s death must remain the prerogative of God, not man, with the obvious exception of capital punishment.