

SPECIAL DEVOTIONAL

HOLY SPIRIT AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the ministry of Jesus Christ, there is a lot of new things that are revealed through His teachings and actions. There are things that are not easily understood and require contemplation. Jesus' teaching wasn't readily accepted by those who heard it. There are some teachings that seem "*unfamiliar*" to the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law. Many of them eventually opposed His teachings, which eventually led to the crucifixion of Jesus.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE EVIL SPIRIT

There was a blind and mute man who was demon-possessed, and this man was taken to Jesus. "*Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.*" (**Matthew 12:22 NKJV**).

In addition to bacteria, the human body can also get sick because of the influence of the evil spirit that comes and dwells in it. This is a special case and should be dealt in a special manner. If the sick person was taken to a doctor, then the doctor wouldn't find the same symptoms as in general pain sufferers.

Different evil spirits can cause different sicknesses to different people. "*And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.*" (**Luke 13:11 NKJV**). The woman had a back ache because the evil spirit had possessed her and her condition didn't change for so long. Just like other people in general, when they are sick, they will certainly seek help from the doctors. Unfortunately, the medical world cannot find the cause of her sickness and cannot cure her. She could only experience healing after Jesus helped her.

There was also a boy that couldn't speak because he was demon-possessed. "*Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit."*" (**Mark 9:17 NKJV**). This child was suffering a lot because the evil spirit also cast him into water and into fire. His parents couldn't do much apart from trying to protect him as much as they could. Eventually his parent took him to Jesus.

People become sick because of the negative influence that comes from the possession of demons over them. Besides, there are other effects of being possessed by the evil spirit; some people are bound by curse, evil behavior and some refuse to know Jesus as the Lord. The evil spirits are working to keep people away from the knowledge of God because their goal is to make the people perish. And all this evilness cannot be contained by human's power, only by the power of the Lord.

ENCOUNTER JESUS

Why didn't the people who lived under the influence of the evil spirit be taken to the Pharisees or the teachers of the Law? Maybe they had, but they didn't experience healing. It's possible. Those who took these people to Jesus had a great hope that Jesus would heal these people. Jesus was known as the great Teacher that had the power to restore many people.

Those people encountered Jesus and got healed; the dumb could speak and the blind could see. At once, there was a change in the atmosphere; the multitudes were astonished by what they saw. The power of God was revealed powerfully when the sick person received miracle: being healed in an instance. How could this be? How could an encounter with Jesus result in healing?

THE POWER OF GOD'S SPIRIT

Jesus explained how the restoration could take place. *"But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you"* (**Matthew 12:28 NKJV**). When people who were demon-possessed were taken to Jesus, Jesus directly dealt with the root of the problem. The man wasn't blind because his retina was damaged or because he had cataract (medical reason), but because of the evil spirit. Therefore, Jesus casted the evil spirit out so that his influence over the person would disappear as well. And once the demon was casted out, the person's blindness also disappeared.

How did Jesus cast the demon out? The Scripture said that Jesus cast out the demon by the power of the Spirit of God. The power of the Spirit of God is above all the power that exist in nature. The evil spirits can possess or control the people that don't know or haven't known God. This proves that the evil spirits have some power. When the evil spirits possess some people, these people are under his dominion. It requires a higher power to subdue or to cast out that evil power. When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan river, the Spirit of God came upon Him. And when the Holy Spirit comes upon a person, that person will have power.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Jesus emphasizes that when people are being ministered to, and the evil spirits are cast out from them, then the Kingdom of God has come. We can see the connection between the spirit who possess a person with the kingdom that possess that person. The person who is set free from the power of the evil spirit by the power of God's Spirit experiences the coming of the Kingdom of God. In other words, this person enters into the scope of the Kingdom of God.

Kingdom of God is revealed when people experience deliverance ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. The ministry that Jesus did was preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, meaning to preach that the possession of evil spirits over people can be overcome by the power of God. If the demon's influence is sickness, then the Spirit of God will bring healing, if the demon bounds people with curse, then the Spirit of God will deliver them.

Those who are filled with the Holy Spirit will receive power from on high. The power is given not only to enable people to serve and worship the Lord. That power should be used to help those who are possessed by the evil spirits. That's the essence of the Kingdom of God. Jesus taught us a prayer, *"Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done."* The purpose for the coming of God's Kingdom is to deliver the people who have been bound by the evil spirits so that those people can enter into His Kingdom. And it happens when the people who are anointed by the Holy Spirit do their task, which is to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Amen. (RD)