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# JESUS at War Vs. BEELZEBUL: Prince of Demons

Bible Reading: Luke 11:14-26

## SUMMARY:

“Gentle Jesus, meek & mild” is true—but incomplete. In Luke 11, Christ shows both compassion and confrontation. He mercifully frees a man from demonic oppression, yet is immediately slandered by religious leaders who claim He works by Beelzebul. This is not honest skepticism, but a willful rejection of God’s power. Jesus’ answer reveals the deeper reality: His miracles signal the arrival of God’s kingdom and the defeat of Satan’s. He is the stronger man who overpowers the enemy and liberates captives. This is spiritual warfare, not metaphor. But Jesus goes further—deliverance is not the end. An empty house invites infiltration; an unfilled soul remains vulnerable. Christ does not merely cleanse; He indwells. His aim is not surface reform but Spirit-filled transformation. Where He reigns, the enemy has no claim. True freedom means being filled, not just emptied—and living under His rule daily. We cooperate by guarding against spiritual vacuums.

## Jesus is at War with Satan

- “In [Jesus’] ministry God has gone to war against Satan...Jesus’ announcement of the...kingdom of God means war with the kingdom of Satan...Jesus under[stood]...his mission in terms of war with Satan...” –Craig Evans
- “Exorcisms...are not simply the release...of a few benighted souls...For Jesus...they signalled something far deeper ...the real battle of the ministry...[a] head-on war with the Satan.” –NT Wright
- Luke’s “primary...metaphor...[of] the relationship between Jesus & Satan is in terms of WARFARE.” – Kathy Perry

## The Precipitating Exorcism– 3 Kinds of Response (Lk. 11:14-16)

- A. Positive: “The crowds were amazed” (11:14)
- B. Negative: “Some...said, “He drives out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.” (11:15)

C. Non-Committal: “Others...were demanding of him a sign from heaven.” (11:16)

## Who Is Beelzebul/Beelzebub?

A. The Pagan god: [Gk.] Beelzebul ([Heb.] Baal Zebul) Baal Zebub

- “The discovery of the Ugaritic texts... support that Baal-zebub is a deliberate distortion of Baal-zebul.” –John Day

B. OT Baalzebub: “Lord of the Flies” (2 Kings 1:2-3)

C. The Accusations against Jesus (Mark 3:22)

1. Not denying Jesus’ Exorcisms, but impugning the Source (Power)
2. By Beelzebul: the ruler/prince of demons (Mk. 3:22; Mt. 10:25; 12:24; Lk. 11:15)
3. Devastating Slander; Character Assassination

## Beelzebul equals Satan; Jesus ‘transposes’ the Issue to the Cosmic Sphere

A. ‘Satan’ is equivalent to Beelzebul

- Jesus’ reference to ‘Satan’ reframes the discussion [as]...the cosmic battle...” –Jeremy Otten
- “Jesus’ response essentially renders the figures of Beelzebul & Satan as equivalent.” –Jerome Wilczynski

B. Satan’s Kingdom (11:18)

- “Satan clearly has a kingdom... Satan’s kingdom includes demons...& is opposed to God’s kingdom.” J. Wilczynski
- “Every time...Jesus expels demons, the kingdom of God advances...& the rule of Satan is diminished.” M. Monnig

C. Hierarchy in Satan’s Kingdom

- Satan’s “kingdom...might not be a sophisticated hierarchy...but there’s a demonic hierarchy all the same.” — Katharine Perry D. Clash of Kingdoms: The Kingdom of God vs. Kingdom of Satan

## Jesus Refutes the Accusation:

A. Jesus’ Rebuttal

- “Jesus has come not to collude with Satan but rather to confront & dispossess him.” –RT. France
- “Exorcism of the evil spirit would...direct[ly] conflict with the interests of the ‘ruler of the demons’.” AT. Wright

B. “By the finger of God...I cast out demons” –Jesus (Lk. 11:20)

- Jesus “was battling not only individual demonic spirits, but the satanic agenda on a more cosmic scale, which involved the warfare of two kingdoms.” –Edgar Rac

C. Allusion to Moses vs. Egyptian Magicians (Ex. 8:18-19)

- “Luke stresses...the stark contrast...the Egyptian magicians...were able to recognize YHWH’s act through Moses, & [Jesus’ opponents] ...could not recognize God’s work through Jesus.” — Chakrita Saulina

## Jesus’ ‘Strong Man’ Parable (Mk. 3:27/Mt. 12:29 Vs. Lk. 11:20-22)

A. ‘Strong Man’ Parable: Jesus is the ‘Stronger One,’ conquering, disarming Satan

B. Luke’s Version is more Militaristic

C. Luke ‘transposes’ Matthew’s & Mark’s Parable to a ‘Cosmic Key’

D. Applications to Christians Today?

1. No Neutrality; No ‘sitting on the fence’ (Lk. 11:23)
2. No Example of Christians Casting Down Territorial Spirits (‘Princes’)
3. Christians do Not Attack the Devil (Satan)
4. OT Daniel as a Pattern of Prayer

## Jesus' Parable of the Unclean Spirit's Return (Lk. 11:24-26)

### A. 'House' signifying the Individual – Problem of Returning spirit(s) (Lk. 11:20)

#### 1. More than a One-time Deliverance is Needed

- "It's a mistake ...to see an exorcism as a one-time act of liberation...It was a daily, ongoing spiritual warfare between two kingdoms & two rulers." –Edgar Rac
- "Jesus emphasizes more the filling of the house with Yahweh's Spirit than the emptying of it ...'Our empty, swept, tidy houses will be filled sooner or later by something, because houses are for occupancy... Jesus' thought...that there needed to follow the coming of the Holy Spirit to the individual's life." –Edgar Rac

#### 2. "My House" (11:24b): the Demon's illegitimate Claim

- "The purpose of the [exorcism] is not the cure itself, but...to bring the person into [God's] Kingdom." Craig Evans

### B. A 'Vacant House' (& 'Vacant soul') is Vulnerable

- "If they do not fully align themselves to God's kingdom & receive the Spirit, humans are just as vulnerable as an empty house that attracts an infiltration of an evil force." –Chakrita Saulina
- "Casting out demons...is a temporary solution...The purpose is...to bring the person into [God's] Kingdom." –Craig Evans
- "It is not enough to drive out the unclean spirits: one must also fill the 'house' with a sustaining power that will prevent future demonic infestations...Such power [is] the power of the Spirit." –Nicholas Perrin

### C. "Deliverance without Filling creates Vulnerability" –A Practical Problem

#### 1. Avoid a 'Spiritual Vacuum' (The "Unoccupied House")

- Don't Grieve or Quench the Holy Spirit, but be Being Filled with the Holy Spirit

#### 2. Persistent Sin creates a Spiritual Vacuum

- Monitor your "Spiritual Health," watch for developing patterns of sin, spiritual indifference/complacency, etc.

#### 3. A 'Spiritual Vacuum' is Dangerous; take Preventative Measures

- Engage in Protective Spiritual Practices –Read & Study God's Word; Sing, Pray, & Praise; Gather with Christians
- Take Up the Whole Armor of God (Eph. 6:13-18)