

## **SINS NEVER TO BE FORGIVEN**

– JULY 7. – MARK 3:20-35. –

**Text: – "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." – John 3:19.**

JOHN THE BAPTIST declared of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease"; and so it was. After John was put into prison Jesus' ministry became more and more public, especially through the numerous works performed by Him. The multitudes followed the Great Teacher, and His friends became solicitous for Him, for even they feared and said, "He is beside Himself" – so quickly had His course changed from one of privacy to one of publicity.

The Scribes and Pharisees considered themselves the representatives of the Jewish orthodoxy and qualified to pass upon everything theological; and indeed the public waited for their message, saying, "Have any of the Scribes and Pharisees believed on Him?" Hence Jesus declared that these representatives of Divine things were doubly responsible, for they would neither enter into discipleship themselves, to be members of the Kingdom which Jesus preached, nor would they permit the public to become His followers if they could help it.

Jesus was at the time in Galilee, in the vicinity of Capernaum. Certain of the Scribes who had come down from Jerusalem felt it their duty to warn the public against becoming too interested in this Man and His teachings, and thus ignoring the long-established theories for which they and the Pharisees stood.

That Jesus did many miracles they could not dispute, and that He specially and on many occasions cast out demons they could not deny. They explained this, however, by saying that Jesus had collusion with

Beelzebub (Satan), and that by the power of that Prince of Darkness He was able to cast out demons. But Jesus answered that if it was true that Satan had turned reformer and was breaking down his own power and opposing his own minions, the demons, then it proved that his kingdom would soon fall entirely.

The fact that today many religious systems practice one kind or another of faith-healing is claimed to be a mark of Divine approval, on the strength of our Lord's words. Yet we have, in opposition to this, to remember that those who claim to exercise this power very generally deny the very existence of the Gospel of Christ. Some of them deny that man is a sinner at all, and declare that there is no such thing as sin. Practically all of them deny the redemptive value of Christ's death. Practically all of them deny that He will come again and establish His Kingdom and through it bring to mankind the promised blessings of restitution to human perfection and to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary. – Acts 3:19-21.

There is only one answer to make to the claim that these faith-healings prove the truth of these various antagonistic doctrines, and that answer is the one which Jesus here states. If their faith-healing power be not of God it must be of the Adversary; and if it be of the Adversary, it proves that he is upholding false and contradictory doctrines, and that his house or dominion is more or less divided and in straits; and this implies that the collapse of the dominion of this Prince of Darkness is nigh. This view is more and more impressing itself upon Bible students.

### **BLASPHEMING THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Addressing the Pharisees, who charged Him with being Satan's prime minister and agent, Jesus declared that all manner of sin and blasphemy which men commit are forgivable, except one kind, and this kind can never be forgiven – it is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Savior did not mean that the Scribes had said something against the Holy Spirit of God in an abstract way, but apparently they

had perceived that our Lord's teachings were pure, holy, helpful, elevating to His hearers, honoring to God, and that He spake as never man spake; but after all these evidences of Jesus' holiness and relationship to God they called him a relative and representative of Satan.

Jesus did not say that the Scribes and Pharisees had committed the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Some of them may have done so, and others of them may have been partially in ignorance of what they did; and the sin against the Holy Spirit could not be committed in ignorance. It would be a wilful attributing of holy things to an unholy power or source. Jesus did not judge or condemn the Scribes, for He declared that He had not come to judge the world, to condemn it, but quite to the contrary, to die for it, to redeem it, to purchase it at the cost of His life.

Our Lord did, however, give the warning reproof that those who could thus see the righteousness of His teachings, and how He glorified God in His words and actions, and who could then impute all of this to Satan, must be to a considerable extent perverse in their hearts, and if so, they would be in great danger of eternal condemnation, the sentence of the Second Death; they would be like "natural brute beasts," made to be taken and destroyed. (2 Pet. 2:12; Acts 3:23.) Jesus made this statement because they said that the spirit that was in Him was an unclean spirit – that He was actuated by one of the fallen angels and not by the Divine Spirit.

### **"HATH NEVER FORGIVENESS"**

The Bible teaches that the penalty of Adam's sin was death – cutting off from life – but that under Divine providence the work of Jesus is to release all mankind from that death sentence, and give to all an opportunity of returning to harmony with God by bringing all to a clearer knowledge of the Truth. To some this knowledge comes now, with the privilege of becoming members of the Bride class, joint-heirs

with Jesus. To such as accept this privilege and receive the begetting of the Holy Spirit, the test of life or death everlasting begins.

But with the world this is not the time of testing respecting life or death everlasting. For them the next Age, the period of Messiah's Kingdom, will be the testing time, and their privilege will be to attain human perfection, otherwise to be cut off in the Second Death. Meantime, whatever light they may be enjoying will be either helpful or injurious, as they shall deal with it. If they allow it to have an uplifting influence in their lives they will be that much more advantaged when they shall come under the Kingdom influences and tests; they will not need to have so many stripes.

On the contrary, those who violate their consciences and ignore the light which they enjoy and sin against it, will find themselves proportionately degraded when they shall come under the Kingdom influences and tests. The Scribes of this lesson had so misused their education and opportunities as to be in great danger of becoming so degraded that even the Kingdom influences would not bring them to a condition worthy of everlasting life. **[R5037 : page 182]**

## **BROTHERS, SISTERS AND MOTHER**

Today's study closes with the Master's explanation of the class to which He acknowledged relationship. The multitudes who flocked to His miracles, and to hear Him speak as never man spake, were chiefly the poor and the publicans and sinners, and such as were not great nor very religious according to the standards of their time. Their degradation, their realization that they were sinners, made the Master's "wonderful words of life" especially attractive to them. No one else offered them hope. All others declared that God would not notice them. The religionists of that day reprovved Jesus because of His recognition of the lower classes, but none were so low, so degraded, that He would not lend them His helping hand if they had a disposition to return to the Father's House. He was indeed the Friend of all willing to come to the Father by Him.

An opportunity of showing the multitudes the basis for His sympathy came when Jesus' mother and brethren on the outside of the throng sent Him word that they desired to see Him. How beautiful the lesson of the Great Teacher's breadth of spirit, regardless of caste and class, when he said, "Who is My mother and My brethren?" And then, looking toward His disciples who were sitting near Him taking in His teachings, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brethren! for whosoever will do the will of God, the same is My brother and My sister and My mother." – Matt. 12:46-50.

