**The Gospel of Luke**

**Witness to the Gentiles - #25**

**Luke 9:37-43, 43-45, 46-48, 49-50**

**Epileptic Boy, another Prediction, the Kingdom**

**Luke 9:37-43 – Jesus Heals the Epileptic Boy**

[***37***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-37.htm)*And it came to pass, on the next day, when they were come down from the mountain, a great multitude met him.* ***38*** *A man shouted from the crowed cried, saying, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; for he is my only child:* ***39*** *Often a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams; and it convulses him so that he foams, and it hardly leaves him, bruising him sorely.* ***40*** *And I begged your disciples to cast it out; and they could not.”*

***41*** *And Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and bear with you? Bring hither thy son.”*

***42*** *And as he was yet a coming, the demon dashed him down, and tare him grievously. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.*  ***43*** *And all were astonished at the majesty of God.*

**Notes and Studies**

1. We have the healing of a body that had no faith in Jesus but Jesus revealed his compassion.
2. This event happened after the great Transfiguration and according to verse 37 it was a day after, so Jesus and the three disciples were on the mountain for a while. Now from the glory of the kingdom to the world of pain and misery.
3. The crowd must have had their time of celebrating the feast of the Tabernacles, then suddenly (verse 38) a father of an afflicted boy cry out for help. He called Jesus “teacher,” which was a title of honor.
4. The cry is “look at,” the same verb used in Mary’s prayer (Luke 1:48). It expresses God’s compassion.
5. The father of the afflicted child attributed his child affliction to a “spirit.” Mark gave a name to this spirit, “mute spirit” (9:17). Matthew followed the Hebrew way of looking at this kind of thing and used the verb ***selenianzetai***, that the body was “moonstruck” (17:15). But what we can see from the description given by Luke is that it was a kind of “epilepsy.” The name epilepsy comes from Greek ***epilepsia*** which means “seizure”.
6. Foaming is still regarded as a sign of demon possession in the Eastern Church but it is clear that brain disorder involves changes in consciousness. The take-over of the personality and projecting another different personality seems to be a sign of possession.

**Who were the unbelieving and perverse generation?**

1. Was Jesus talking to the crowd and his disciples (Verse 41)? “This generation” was used before for the crowd (Luke 7:31) and later on also (11:30, 31, 32,50, 51;17:25 and 21:31). This seems to be the best way of reading. “Perverse and crooked” was used in Deuteronomy 32:5 (compare Phil 2:15). It means a common rejection of what is true and good by the majority or a good number of people.
2. Jesus still had his elected disciples from this generation and still taught and worked among them so that they may come to see things differently.

**A note from Philemon**

**Grace and Victory**

“Please notice that in spite of the fact that the disciples saw the glory of our Lord and entered with Him into the cloud of the divine presence, the three still failed to cast out demon. Being in a state of grace does not mean that we will be always victorious.”

[**Luke 18:43-45**](http://biblehub.com/asv/luke/18.htm#31) **– Jesus Again Predicts His Death**

***43 (cont.)*** *And they were all astonished at the majesty of God. But while all were marveling at all the things, which he was doing, he said unto his disciples,* ***44*** *“Let these words sink into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men.”* ***45*** *But they understood not this saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.*

**Notes and Studies**

The disciples, like the crowd, were fascinated by the healing power of Jesus for it was certainly “majestic.

1. Jesus was not moved by the fascination of his disciples, and he said to them, *“Let these words sink into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men. What I say to you must be stored in your hearts*.” Here, ears stands for understanding for Joshua who said “*put it in your ears*” (Exod 17:14).
2. Jesus will be “handed over” or to delivered to death. The same verb was also used for “handing over the teaching and the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:23 ). The Father handed over his Son for our salvation (Rom 4:25) for this is a personal action whether it is done to others or by others.
3. Verse 45 should be a puzzle for us. Jesus revealed his power and his glory, but then after that Jesus speaks of his coming death. As for the disciples,  *“they understood not this saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.”* These words seemed impossible. But what is concealed?
   1. That the great will suffer.
   2. The powerful will die at the hands of his own people
   3. The Messianic dream has been dashed, for the Messiah himself will die.

**Luke 9:46-48 – The Greatest in the Kingdom**

***46*** *And an argument arose among them, which of them was the greatest.* ***47*** *But when Jesus saw the thoughts of their hearst, he took a little child, and set him by his side,* [***48***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-48.htm) *and said unto them, “Whosoever shall receive this little child in my name receives me: and whosoever shall receive me receives him that sent me: for he that is the least among you all is really great.”*

**Notes and Studies**

1. Luke used the Greek word ***dialogismos***, that is, a dialogue.
2. “Who is the greatest?”, but we are not told in what way this disciple is the greatest. Here Jesus realized their thoughts, which were not expressed openly.
3. Jesus did not expand on their dialogue nor say anything, but took a little child. This child, according to late church tradition, was Ignatius the bishop martyr.
4. Here there is a need to un-pack the words of Jesus in verse 48, “*Whosoever shall receive this little child in my name receives me.”* It means as you receive a child so also receive me, for a child is my representative. This in the exact meaning of the words, “in my name.” Jesus has chosen the least of humans to be identified with him.

Let us give fancy ideas about children.

1. Children sometimes manifest shrewdness, so Jesus wants to be looked on as the least in the human society.
2. A Child is not under the Law. So accept Jesus not even as a Bar Mitzvah, which is the age when a boy or a girl is legally, becomes Bar Mitzvah, which means "subject to the law." Although the term is commonly used to refer to the ritual itself, in fact the phrase originally refers to the person.
3. According to [Jewish law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halakha), when [Jewish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jew) boys become 13 years old they become accountable for their actions and become a bar mitzvah.
4. Who accepts Jesus accepts the Father and both the Father and the Son are the revelation of Mercy and Love, for the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ (John 1:18)

**Luke 9:49-50 – The Disciples and One Outsider**

[***49***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-49.htm) *And John spoke up and said, Master, we saw one casting out demons in your name; and we forbade him, because he followed along with us.* ***50*** *But Jesus said unto him, forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you.*

**Notes and Studies**

1. This unknown person was casting out demons by the power of the name of Jesus. The 12, or it seems the majority of them, is implied in “we forbade him.” Has the sting of envy troubled the disciples? Do they begrudge those highly favored?
2. Do you forbid one who in Christ's name troubles Satan, and crushes evil demons? How was it not our duty rather to reflect, that he was not the doer of these wonders, but that the grace, which was in him, wrought the miracle by the power of Christ? How therefore do we forbid him who in Christ wins the victory? John the Evangelist gave the answer: *"Yes, he follow not with us."* What if he be not numbered among the apostles, yet he is equally with you adorned with apostolic powers. There are many diversities of Christ's gifts, as Paul teaches, saying; *"that to one is given the word of wisdom, but to another the word of knowledge: and to another faith; and to another gifts of healings.”*
3. What therefore is the meaning of these words "not walking with us” The Savior gave the apostles authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all disease and all sickness among the people. They returned with joy, saying; *"Lord, even the devils are subject to us in your name."* They imagined, therefore, that this mission was given not to anyone else but to themselves alone to be invested with the authority, which He had granted them. For this reason they want to learn whether others also might be sharing with them the same mission.
4. In the OT, God once said to Moses: "*Choose thee seventy men of the elders of Israel, and I will take of the Spirit that is upon thee, and give it."* He says, "to them." And when those who were chosen had assembled at the tabernacle, two men only excepted, who had remained in the camp, and the Spirit of prophecy descended upon them, not only those who were assembled in the tabernacle prophesied, but those also who had remained in the camp. But "Joshua stood before Moses, said, Eldad and Midad, they prophesy in the camp. my lord Moses forbid them. And Moses said unto Joshua, are you envy for me? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, the Lord sending His Spirit upon them." ( Numbers 11:24-26) Christ said "*for he is not against you, He says; for he who is not against you is on your part.*" For on the part of us who love Christ, are all who wish to act to His glory, and are crowned by His grace. And this is a law to the churches continuing even to this day. For we honor only those who lift up holy hands, and purely and without fault or blame, in Christ's name, rebuke unclean spirits, and deliver multitudes from various diseases: for we know that it is Christ Who work in them.
5. We must, however, examine such things carefully. For there are men, who have not been counted worthy of Christ's grace, and make gain and fame from ministry.

**A note from Philemon:**

**Who are the false teachers?**

Watch their teaching if it lacks God’s love and mercy, and if it is loaded with judgment that does not point to healing, fear that lacks hope, condemnation that lacks forgiveness, legalism that ignores grace, [and has] divine wrath as its foundation rather than love, for God is Love not wrath. [A false teacher] uses the holiness of God to strike fear rather than to preach how the Holy God loves to make us holy. “

***Pope’s Notes***

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