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Whoever Blasphemes Against the Holy Spirit Will Never Be Forgiven
Matthew 12:30-37 and Mark 3:28-30

Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven DIG: What is meant by blasphemy against the Ruach? What is the context here? How did the Pharisees commit that sin? Since forgiveness must be asked for, why is it impossible for this sin to be forgiven? Are people sent to hell because of their sins? What are the two aspects of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? What does that mean to Jesus' generation? Can it be committed today?

REFLECT: What real difference does Christ's power make in your daily struggles against evil? In your freedom to be honest with God? In the way you talk to others? We need to be aware of pride and self-righteousness, but, do you need to worry that you are committing some sin that cannot be forgiven?

After being rejected by the Sanhedrin on the basis of demon possession (**to see link click Ek – It is only by Beelzebub, the Prince of Demons, that This Fellow Drives Out Demons**), **Jesus** made it clear to the Pharisees that there is no neutral ground as far as having a relationship with **Him** is concerned. Few passages have been more misinterpreted and misunderstood than these. But, because of the consequences of misunderstanding them, it is critical that we understand them correctly. **Blasphemy against the Ruach** has **two applications.**

First, Jesus pronounced a special divine judgment upon that specific generation of Isra'el for being guilty of the very unique sin of rejecting Him as the Messiah. The unpardonable **sin** is **blasphemy against**, or rejection of, **the Holy Spirit**. Because it was unpardonable, judgment was then set against that generation. **Its judgment would come forty years later in 70 AD with the physical destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.**

There are four ramifications of this judgment. First, at that time it was a national

sin, not an individual **sin**. Individual members of that generation could and did escape the judgment. Secondly, it was a **sin** that was unique to the specific generation of Jews that rejected **Christ** and cannot be applied to any other generation of Jews. Watch for the phrase **this generation**. It occurs over and over again. Thirdly, it was not a **sin** that some other generation could commit. **Jesus** is not currently physically present offering **Himself** as any other nation's **Messiah**. Fourthly, because this offer was rejected it was rescinded. That **generation** missed out on seeing the messianic Kingdom established in their day, but, it will be offered to another Jewish generation that will accept it. This will be the Jewish generation of the Great Tribulation (see my commentary on **Revelation Ev – The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**).

Jesus issued a somber warning of judgment to **His** own generation: **Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather with Me scatters** away from **Me (Matthew 12:30).** There are only two possible relationships with **Christ**, and therefore with **God**. You are either **with Him** or against **Him**. There is no middle ground. Black or white. Precious adopted child or banishment to hell forever. It's like being a little bit pregnant. You can't. You're either pregnant or you're not. There are only two kinds of spiritual food. There's only angel's food or devil's food – and if you aren't eating one, you're eating the other! It is impossible to accept **Yeshua** as merely a kind man, a good teacher, a great man of **God** if you will, and nothing more. At **His** death, **He** proved that **He** was **God's Son**, having authority over disease, sin, demons, the world, and Satan.

The apostles had a hard time understanding that their **Master** was, indeed, **the Son of God**. **He** ate, drank, slept and became fatigued just like they did. Beyond that, many of **His** actions didn't seem to be godlike. **The Nazarene** continually humbled **Himself** and served others. **He** took no earthly glory for **Himself**, and when others tried to force it upon **Him**, **the miracle-working Rabbi** refused to receive it – as when the crowd wanted to make **Him** king after **He** dramatically fed the 5,000 (see **Fo – Jesus Rejects the Idea of a Political Messiah**). It was even more difficult for those outside **Messiah's** inner circle to appreciate **His** deity. Even when **He** performed **His** greatest miracles, **He** did so without pomp or dazzle. **Yeshua** did not always look or act even like a human lord, let alone like the divine **Lord**.

Secondly, Yeshua warns people today that if they deliberately keep on sinning after the Ruach has made His truth known to them, then there is no sacrifice for sin left. And so I tell you, people can be forgiven all their

sins and every slander they utter; even if they speak **a word against the Son of Man (Matthew 12:31a; Mark 3:28). Sin** here represents the full gamut of immoral and ungodly thoughts and actions. **Son of Man** designates **the Lord's** humanity. **The lost** may have a faulty perception that may not allow **them** to see **Christ's** deity. If **they** come to that conclusion based on a faulty assumption and speak against **the Deliverer** in **His** humanness, such **a word against the Son of Man can be forgiven** if, after gaining fuller light, **they** then believe in the truth of **His** deity. In fact, **many** who denied and rejected **the Lord of Life** before the cross later saw the truth of who **He** was and asked forgiveness and were saved.

But, whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin. He said this because they were saying "He has an impure spirit" (Matthew 12:31b; Mark 3:29-30). Blasphemy is a conscious decision to reject **the Holy Spirit** who testifies that **Jesus** is **the Savior of Sinners**. This is not an ignorant rejection, or a rejection based on a faulty perception. No, this is the refusal to **bend the knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11)** in the face of every possible evidence of **Yeshua's** messiahship and deity. **They** say no. There is never enough evidence for unbelief. **They will never be forgiven** because **they** are unwilling to walk down the path that leads to pardon. For the thief, the adulterer, and the murderer there is hope. The Good News may cause them to cry out: **Oh God, have mercy on me, a sinner (Luke 18:13).** But, when someone has become hardened to the point where they make up their mind to ignore **the Spirit**, they place themselves on the road that leads to hell.[664] **If we keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:26-27, 31).**

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven either in this age or in the age to come (Matthew 12:32). Yeshua emphasized the importance of our words with regard to the teaching of **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** about **the Meshiach**. Is **Jesus** really **King Messiah** sent from **the Father**, or is **He** a false teacher representing the kingdom of the Adversary? It is by our words regarding this work of **the Spirit** that we will either be acquitted or condemned. Many in our day say that **Yeshua** is not our **Messiah**. But what do ***you* say**? Or as **Jesus** asked the Twelve: **What about you? Who do *you* say that I am (Matthew 16:15)?** May our words and actions testify that we believe that **He** is our personal **Lord** and **Savior**.[665]

This age and **the age to come** are Jewish terms that apply primarily to the contrast between this life and the next rather than to successive phases of life. **This age** (Greek *aion*) means that same thing as "the world" (Greek: *kosmos*), thought of as an earthly reality apart from **God**. In **Mattityahu** the term is used especially in the phrase **the end** (or fulfillment) **of the** *aion*, which we see in **Matthew 13:39-40, 24:3** and **28:20**. What follows from that **end of the** *aion* is the *aion* **to come** that lies on the other side of the judgment of this age. Here, then, the consequences of the unforgivable **sin** apply not only to this life but also to the life to come,[666] **when all those who refuse to believe in Messiah will be judged at the great white throne** (see my commentary on **Revelation Fo – The Great White Throne Judgment**).

Today the unpardonable **sin** is not merely unbelief, but determined unbelief. It is the refusal, after having seen all the evidence necessary, after having sufficient light to make an informed decision, to even consider believing in **Messiah**, **they** harden **their** hearts to the point where **they exchange the truth about God for a lie (Romans 1:25a).** In the face of every possible evidence that **Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures**, they say no **(First Corinthians 15:3b-4)**. And as a result of their conscious *choice*, **God** (because **He** will not violate mankind's free will) cannot do anything more for **them**. All **He** could do, **He** did on the cross. **His** shed blood isn't enough for **them**. Although it breaks **His** heart, **He** will honor **their** choice to reject **Him**, and as a result, **they** will remain eternally unforgiven.

Therefore, the key issue is light. **An unbeliever** who **blasphemes God** can be forgiven. When **people** reject **the Lord of Life** with less than full exposure to the evidence of **Christ's** deity, they may yet be **forgiven** of that **sin** if they confess

and repent of it. Rabbi Sha'ul confessed that **even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus . . . Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners – of whom I am the worst (First Timothy 1:13-15). Peter blasphemed Christ** with **curses (Mark 14:71)**, and was forgiven and restored (see **Mn – Jesus Reinstates Peter**). And many of **those** who had denied and rejected **the Meshiach** during **His** earthly ministry later saw the truth of who **He** was and asked for forgiveness and were saved.

Even **a believer** can **blaspheme**, since any thought or word that discredits or defames **the Lord's** name constitutes **blasphemy**. To question **God's** goodness, wisdom, fairness, truthfulness, love, or faithfulness is a form of **blasphemy**. All of that is forgivable by grace. Speaking to believers, **John** said: **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 Jn 1:9).** It does not give us an excuse to **sin (Rom 6:1-14)**, but, believers are eternally secure in **Christ** (see **Ms – The Eternal Security of the Believer**). There is no **sin** that **Jesus** did not pay for when **He** shed **His** blood on the cross.

It was not surprising that immediately after **Yeshua** denounced the Pharisees for their unforgivable **sin** of rejecting **Him** as **the Messiah**, **He** gave a warning with a short parable to illustrate an obvious truth: You will know a persons spiritual condition by the spiritual fruit in their lives. **Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned (Matthew 12:33-37).** Salvation and condemnation are not produced by words or deeds, but are revealed by them. They are objective, observable evidence of a person's spiritual condition.

During World War II, an American naval force in the North Atlantic was engaged in heavy battle with enemy ships and submarines on an exceptionally dark night. Six planes took off from an aircraft carrier to search out those targets, but, while they

were in the air a total blackout was ordered for the carrier in order to protect it from attack. Without light on the carrier's deck the six planes could not possibly land and they made a radio request for the lights to be turned on just long enough for them to come in. But, because the entire aircraft carrier, with its several thousand men as well as all the other planes and equipment, would have been put in jeopardy, no lights were permitted. When the six planes ran out of fuel, they had to ditch in the freezing water and all crew members perished into eternity.

There comes a time when **God** turns out the lights, when further opportunity for salvation is lost forever. That is why Rabbi Sha'ul told the believers at Corinth: **Now is the time of God's favor, if you hear His voice today – now is the day of salvation (Second Corinthians 6:2b; Hebrews 3:7).** The one who rejects full light can have no more light – and no more forgiveness.[667] People don't end up in hell because of their **sins**. **Jesus Christ** has already paid for all their **sins** at the cross. They go to hell because of their rejection of **the Holy Spirit**.