

John 10:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil.
Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

Analysis

Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil—A dissenting voice emerges. While "many" (verse 20) accused Jesus of madness, "others" (ἄλλοι/alloi) recognized the inconsistency: demon-possessed people don't speak with such wisdom, authority, and coherence. The phrase "these are not the words" (ταῦτα τὰ ρήματα οὐκ ἔστιν/tauta ta rhēmata ouk estin) appeals to the content and character of Jesus's teaching as evidence against the accusation.

Demons produce confusion, destruction, and darkness. Jesus's words produce illumination, life, and coherent truth. The disconnect between the accusation (demon possession) and the evidence (Jesus's teaching) was obvious to those willing to see. This demonstrates that even amid opposition, truth has witnesses. Not everyone was blind to Jesus's credentials.

Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?—This question references Jesus's recent healing of the man born blind (John 9), a miracle that preceded this discourse. The logic is irrefutable: demons blind, destroy, and kill; they don't heal, restore, and give sight. The miracle provides empirical evidence that Jesus operates by divine, not demonic, power.

The Greek construction expects a negative answer: "A demon cannot open blind eyes, can it?" The question exposes the absurdity of the accusation. Satan's kingdom opposes God's restorative work; Jesus's miracles demonstrate the kingdom of God breaking into Satan's domain (Matthew 12:28). To attribute

Christ's healings to Satan is to credit darkness with producing light—a logical and theological impossibility.

Historical Context

The healing of the blind man (John 9) was a watershed event. The man's testimony was simple but devastating: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). The Pharisees couldn't dispute the miracle—neighbors confirmed the man's previous blindness—so they excommunicated him and attacked Jesus.

In first-century Jewish thought, healing demonstrated divine favor and power. Demons caused afflictions; God healed them. For Jesus to consistently heal diseases, cast out demons, and restore the broken suggested He operated with divine authority. The question "Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" leveraged this theological framework: if Jesus heals, He cannot be from Satan.

Jesus Himself made this argument when accused of casting out demons by Beelzebub: "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" (Matthew 12:26). A divided kingdom falls. The consistency and nature of Jesus's works testified to their source: the Father.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do Jesus's miracles serve as evidence of His divine identity and mission?
2. Why do some people acknowledge Christ's extraordinary works yet refuse to believe in Him?
3. What role does willingness to see the evidence play in coming to faith—is unbelief primarily an intellectual problem or a volitional one?

Interlinear Text

ἄλλοι ἔλεγον Ταῦτα τὰ ῥῆματα οὐκ ἔστιν

Others said These the words not are

G243 G3004 G5023 G3588 G4487 G3756 G2076

δαιμονιζομένου· μὴ δαιμόνιον δύναται τυφλῶν

of him that hath a devil Can a devil

G1139 G3361 G1140 G1410

of the blind

G5185

όφθαλμοὺς ἀνοίγειν

the eyes open

G3788 G455

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 4:11 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?

Psalms 94:9 (Parallel theme): He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

Psalms 146:8 (Parallel theme): The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

Proverbs 20:12 (Parallel theme): The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

Exodus 8:19 (Parallel theme): Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

Matthew 11:5 (Parallel theme): The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

Matthew 4:24 (Evil): And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and

those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

John 9:6 (Parallel theme): When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

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