

Luke 4:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

Analysis

After Jesus casts out a demon, people marvel: 'What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.' The combination of 'authority' (Greek 'exousia,' ἐξουσία) and 'power' (Greek 'dynamis,' δύναμις) describes Jesus' complete dominion over evil spirits. He doesn't negotiate or struggle—He commands, and demons obey instantly. This demonstrates His deity and messianic identity—only God possesses absolute authority over evil. The crowd recognizes something unprecedented—Jesus' word alone accomplishes what others achieve through lengthy rituals or formulas (if at all).

Historical Context

First-century Jewish exorcists used elaborate rituals, incantations, and divine names to attempt casting out demons (see Acts 19:13-16 for failed exorcism attempts). Jesus' simple command with immediate effect was unprecedented and shocking. His authority over demons fulfilled messianic expectations—the Messiah would defeat evil and establish God's kingdom. Each exorcism demonstrated the kingdom's breaking into the present, evil's power being broken, Satan's kingdom falling. The combination of teaching authority (v. 32) and spiritual authority (v. 36) validated Jesus' claims about His identity.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus' effortless command over demons reveal about His divine identity and authority?
2. How do Jesus' exorcisms demonstrate the kingdom of God breaking into the present and evil's power being defeated?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐγένετο θάμβος ἐπὶ πάντας καὶ συνελάλουν πρὸς
And they were amazed all G3956 And spake among
G2532 G1096 G2285 G1909 G2532 G4814 G4314

ἀλλήλους λέγοντες Τίς ὁ λόγος οὗτος ὅτι ἐν
themselves saying What G3588 a word is this ! for with
G240 G3004 G5101 G3056 G3778 G3754 G1722

ἔξουσία καὶ δυνάμει ἐπιτάσσει τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις
authority And power he commandeth G3588 the unclean
G1849 G2532 G1411 G2004 G169

πνεύμασιν καὶ ἔξερχονται
spirits And they come out
G4151 G2532 G1831

Additional Cross-References

Luke 4:32 (Word): And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

1 Peter 3:22 (Parallel theme): Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Mark 7:37 (Parallel theme): And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Mark 1:27 (Spirit): And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

Matthew 9:33 (Parallel theme): And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.