

# Matthew 12:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

## Analysis

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**But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.** This verse is Jesus' powerful response to the Pharisees' blasphemous accusation that He cast out demons by Beelzebub's power (v. 24). The Greek construction *ei de* (εἰ δέ, "but if") introduces a conditional argument: if the premise is true (which Jesus asserts it is), then the conclusion necessarily follows. The phrase *en pneumati Theou* (ἐν πνεύματι Θεοῦ, "by the Spirit of God") identifies the power source as God Himself, not Satan. The verb *ekballō* (ἐκβάλλω, "cast out") denotes forcible expulsion—Jesus doesn't negotiate with demons but commands and they must obey.

The conclusion—*ephthāsen eph' hymas hē basileia tou Theou* (ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ, "the kingdom of God has come upon you")—is the crucial point. The verb *phthanō* (φθάνω) means to arrive, reach, or overtake. **Jesus declares that His exorcisms prove the kingdom of God has invaded Satan's domain and is actively present in His ministry.** The kingdom is not merely future but has broken into history in Jesus' person and work. His power over demons demonstrates that the eschatological age has dawned.

This verse establishes that Jesus' miracles are not mere displays of power but kingdom signs—evidence that God's reign is overthrowing Satan's tyranny. When Jesus expels demons, He plunders the strong man's house (v. 29), demonstrating that Satan's kingdom cannot stand against God's kingdom. The kingdom comes not

through political revolution but through spiritual liberation from demonic bondage and sin's power.

## Historical Context

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This confrontation occurred during Jesus' Galilean ministry, after He healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute (Matthew 12:22). The Pharisees, unable to deny the miracle, attributed it to Satanic power—a desperate attempt to discredit Jesus while acknowledging the supernatural event. **In first-century Judaism, exorcism was practiced but rare, and successful exorcists were highly respected.** Jesus' frequent, effortless casting out of demons marked Him as uniquely powerful.

The reference to "the kingdom of God" would resonate with Jewish messianic expectations. The prophets foretold a coming age when God would establish His reign, defeat evil, restore Israel, and bless the nations. Daniel prophesied an eternal kingdom that would crush all earthly kingdoms (Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14). **Jesus claimed this kingdom was present in His ministry—not in the expected military/political form, but in spiritual victory over Satan and deliverance from evil's power.**

The Pharisees' resistance to this clear evidence demonstrates the hardening of hearts that Jesus would condemn as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (vv. 31-32). They witnessed undeniable divine power yet willfully attributed it to Satan, revealing not intellectual confusion but moral rebellion. The tragedy is that the kingdom they longed for had arrived, but their spiritual blindness prevented recognition.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does recognizing that Jesus' miracles are kingdom signs rather than just compassionate acts change your understanding of His mission?
2. In what ways might you functionally limit God's kingdom to future hope while missing its present invasion of your life and circumstances?
3. What areas of bondage (sin patterns, demonic oppression, destructive habits) need to experience the liberating power of God's kingdom right now?
4. How should the reality that the kingdom has come in Christ but is not yet fully consummated shape your expectations and prayers?
5. What evidences of kingdom breakthrough (spiritual fruit, changed lives, answered prayer, demonic defeat) have you witnessed or experienced?

## Interlinear Text

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εἰ	δὲ	ἐγὼ	ἐν	πνεύματι	θεοῦ	ἐκβάλλω	τὰ	δαιμόνια
if	But	I	by	the Spirit	of God	cast out	G3588	devils
G1487	G1161	G1473	G1722	G4151	G2316	G1544		G1140
ἄρα	ἔφθασεν	ἐφ'	ὕμῃς	ἡ	βασιλεία	τοῦ	θεοῦ	
then	is come	unto	you	G3588	the kingdom	G3588	of God	
G686	G5348	G1909	G5209		G932		G2316	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 11:20** (Kingdom): But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

**Matthew 6:33** (Kingdom): But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

**Matthew 21:43** (Kingdom): Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

**Daniel 7:14** (Kingdom): And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is

an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

**Acts 10:38** (Spirit): How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

**Colossians 1:13** (Kingdom): Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

**Mark 1:15** (Kingdom): And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

**Romans 14:17** (Kingdom): For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

**Luke 16:16** (Kingdom): The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

**Matthew 21:31** (Kingdom): Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.