

Matthew 9:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

Analysis

Two contrasting responses emerge. The crowds marvel: 'It was never so seen in Israel' (Οὐδεποτε εφανη ουτως εν τω Ισραηλ). They recognize unprecedented divine activity—Israel's history, despite prophetic miracles, had seen nothing comparable to Jesus' sustained miraculous power. However, the Pharisees accuse: 'He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils' (εν τω αρχοντι των δαιμονιων εκβαλλει τα δαιμονια). Unable to deny the miracles, they attribute Jesus' power to Beelzebub (Satan). This blasphemous accusation, later developed in 12:24-32, represents the unforgivable sin—attributing the Holy Spirit's work to Satan. The contrast reveals hardened hearts resisting clear evidence. Same miracle, opposite conclusions: humble crowds amazed, proud leaders blaspheming.

Historical Context

Jewish expectation held that the messianic age would bring unprecedented miracles. Isaiah 35:5-6 prophesied the mute singing and lame leaping. The crowds' recognition that 'it was never so seen' acknowledged messianic fulfillment. However, religious leaders faced crisis: accepting Jesus meant surrendering authority and acknowledging their system's obsolescence. Attributing miracles to Satan became desperate strategy to maintain credibility while denying Jesus. This conflict would escalate to crucifixion. Early church fathers saw this as warning against hardened hearts resisting divine revelation.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How can the same evidence lead to opposite conclusions about Jesus?
2. What role does pride play in religious leaders' rejection of clear evidence?
3. How do we guard against hardening our hearts when confronted with God's truth?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐκβληθέντος τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφός,

And **was cast out** **G3588** **when the devil** **G1140** **spake** **G2980** **the dumb** **G3588**

G2532 G1544 G3588 G1140 G2980 G2974

καὶ ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι λέγοντες ὅτι Οὐδέποτε

And **marvelled** **G3588** **the multitudes** **G3793** **saying** **G3004** **It was never** **G3754**

G2532 G2296 G3588 G3793 G3004 G3763

ἐφάνη οὕτως ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ

seen **so** **in** **G3588** **Israel**

G5316 G3779 G1722 G3588 G2474

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 35:6 (Parallel theme): Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Luke 11:14 (Evil): And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

