

The Unpardonable Sin
(Blasphemy Against the Holy Ghost)

- I. There are three portions of Scripture where this subject is related.
MAT 12:31-32; MAR 3:28-30; LUK 11:14-12:10.

- II. Seldom is all the information on any given topic in one place in the Scripture.
 - A. Topics should be considered cumulatively by gathering the relevant information on that topic from the various places it appears in Scripture in order to come to a valid conclusion.
 - B. To willingly not do this is to be guilty of an error in reasoning called “inadequate sampling,” which forms a conclusion based upon too few particulars or to the exclusion of particulars which militate against one's presuppositional bias.
 - C. Consider the Olivet Discourse as related in **MAT 24, MAR 13 and LUK 21.**
 1. If we were to only consider the accounts in Matthew and Mark, we would neglect the vital verses in Luke which define the “abomination of desolation” (**MAT 24:15; MAR 13:14**) as being the armies which would surround Jerusalem. **LUK 21:20.**
 2. Also, Luke's account adds a detail of great significance: the *times of the Gentiles* which would follow the destruction of Jerusalem. **LUK 21:24.**

- III. Sometimes it is also helpful to take a telescopic view of a topic before a microscopic view.
 - A. The question might be legitimately asked, “If there is an unpardonable sin by which a child of God could lose his eternal life, why is it so lacking in scriptural emphasis?”
 - B. One would think that the apostles would have been constantly warning Christians about this if it was a perpetual peril but their writings are silent on the topic.
 - C. **EPH 4:30; HEB 6:4-6; 10:26-30; 1JO 5:16** are NOT the exact same topic.

- IV. The unpardonable sin is only mentioned by the Lord Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry. An examination of the texts reveals:
 - A. **LUK 12:10.** From this passage, the extent of the unforgiveness cannot be determined.
 - B. **MAR 3:28-30.** This passage shows that eternal consequences are involved.
 - C. **MAT 12:31-32.** This passage shows the consequences to be in time and in eternity.

- V. Remember that no portion of Scripture can be interpreted to the contradiction of any other portion.
2PE 1:20-21.
 - A. Therefore, these texts which describe an unpardonable sin must somehow reconcile with what Scripture elsewhere declares about the eternal security of a child of God.
PSA 37:28; JOH 6:37-40; 10:26-29; ROM 8:28-39; 1TH 5:23-24; JUDE 1:1.
 - B. The concept of “temporary eternal life” for a redeemed sinner is an oxymoron.
 1. Adam temporarily had immortality and lost it through sin. He was made perfect but corruptible. Christ's redeemed family has eternal life that can never be lost and will be raised incorruptible. **1CO 15:52.**
 2. God repented that He made man (**GEN 6:6**) but never repents that He redeemed man. **ROM 11:27-29.**

- VI. The following questions need to be answered:
 - A. To whom do these warnings refer? Who was being addressed?
 1. From Luke's account, we see that there are obviously two groups present: disciples and enemies (notably the scribes and Pharisees). **LUK 11:53-12:1, 11.**
 2. **MAR 3:22-23** confirms that Christ was addressing the scribes.

3. **MAT 12:24-25** shows that derisive Pharisees were also addressed.
 4. Thus we have Christ in the presence of His disciples expressly warning scribes and Pharisees about blaspheming the Holy Ghost, while warning His disciples about what the scribes and Pharisees would do to them whom the Holy Ghost upheld.
- B. What was the occasion of the utterance? What were the scribes and Pharisees doing?
1. THEY were witnessing Jesus Christ, God Incarnate--conceived of the Holy Ghost (**MAT 1:20**) and having the fullness of the Holy Ghost (**JOH 3:34**) exercising His divine power over devils by the Holy Ghost. **MAT 12:28**.
 2. THEY were attributing it to the devil, an "unclean spirit" (**MAR 3:30**) thereby blaspheming the Holy Ghost.
 - a. At the same time their children were purporting to cast out devils. **MAT 12:27**.
 - b. By implication, they were assuming their children's exorcisms to be of God. But what was sauce for the goose should have been sauce for the gander.
 - c. Jesus in the same discourse warned against a free-range unclean spirit not "bound" (**MAT 12:29**) which can return and reinhabit. **MAT 12:43-45**.
 3. The miracles of Christ were designed to aggravate the condemnation of the ungodly portion of Israel. **1CO 1:22; JOH 15:22-25**.
- C. Scripture elsewhere reveals that these very same scribes and Pharisees were children of the devil, some of "...the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." (**ROM 9:22**).
1. The context implies that they were of an unchanged corrupt nature. **MAT 12:33-34**.
 2. They were thus non-elect sinners of Abraham's line like Esau (**ROM 9:13**) for whom Christ did not die. They were not of His sheep. **MAT 23:33; JOH 8:3, 42-48; 10:11, 19-26**.
- D. The statements of Christ were made specifically to the scribes and Pharisees because of what THEY said! **MAT 12:24-25; MAR 3:30**.
- E. The factors which prompted Christ's statements are simply not in effect today. Christ is not visibly performing miracles in person to confirm His Messiahship to men. **1PE 1:8**.

VII. Objections.

- A. "The warning is issued to 'whosoever' in **MAT 12:32**." Answer: The term 'whosoever' is often used in limited applications, referring only to those of a specific group.
1. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (**ROM 10:13**). But the unregenerate cannot and so will not. **PSA 10:4; JOH 3:20; ROM 8:7-8**.
 2. **EXO 12:15**. This was a law for Israel, not other nations.
 3. **EXO 19:12**. This was a law for a specific people at a particular time. Also, Moses was obviously an exception to the case.
- B. "Why bother warning the unregenerate reprobates about an unpardonable sin if they're hell-bound anyway?"
1. Warnings about sin's consequences are universal to men. **ACT 17:30**.
 2. It should be noted that these wicked men were Jews still under the Levitical law.
 - a. There were priestly sacrifices that could expiate sins of even a non-elect Jew in an outward, temporal sense. **NUM 15:27-29 c/w HEB 9:13**.
 - b. *Presumptuous* (unduly confident or bold; arrogant) sins had no such provision. **NUM 15:30-31**.
 - c. By their self-condemning words and bold, arrogant blasphemy in the face of obvious Divine power they would not have qualified for God's forgiveness

through that temporal Levitical atonement.

- d. It would not be forgiven them “...*in this world*...” (**MAT 12:33**).
3. Texts like this (and others) are not setting forth a condition whereby eternal consequences might be avoided by human resolve or action. They are rather a declaration or forecast of future certainties supported by present evidence.
 - a. It is a way of setting forth the division of God's sheep from Satan's goats, as evidenced by their words and actions.
 - b. It is reasoning from the effect back to the cause.
MAT 12:33-37; HEB 6:7-8; MAT 25:31-46.

VIII. In summation, the “unpardonable sin” was unique to the time, person and circumstances of Christ's first advent and personal ministry.

- A. Blasphemy (profane speaking of God or sacred things; impious irreverence) is still wrong. **COL 3:8.**
- B. But blasphemy against the Holy Ghost as described in the gospels is not possible today.
 1. Those who make much of so-called “holy ghost” gifts like healings, tongues and casting out devils tend to consider anyone who biblically challenges their beliefs as being in danger of the unpardonable sin of blaspheming the Holy Ghost.
 2. Bringing Scripture to bear on error is not speaking against the Holy Ghost. Rather it is the Holy Ghost (Who inspired Scripture) speaking against error.
 3. Rejecting the words of Scripture which condemn error is *resistance of the Holy Ghost* (**ACT 7:51**), not a defense of the Holy Ghost, and is risky. **PRO 13:13.**
- C. Christ's salvation of His elect extends to all their sins. **COL 2:13.**