



WHY COULDN'T THE DISCIPLES CAST OUT A DEMON?

By George Lujack

Yeshua (Jesus) declared that a certain kind of unclean spirit could only be cast out of a person by prayer and fasting. This video will identify what kind of unclean spirit this was and explain why the disciples could not cast out the unclean spirit in the Scripture account of Matthew 17 verses 14 through 21, Mark 9 verses 14 through 29, and Luke 9 verses 37 through 42.

MATTHEW 17:14-21 (NKJV):

And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

Then Yeshua (Jesus) answered and said, "**O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.**" And Yeshua (Jesus) rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. Then the disciples came to Yeshua (Jesus) privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Yeshua (Jesus) said to them, "**Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.**"

MARK 9:14-29 (NKJV):

And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. And He asked the scribes, **“What are you discussing with them?”**

Then one of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.”

He answered him and said, **“O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.”** Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

So He asked his father, **“How long has this been happening to him?”**

And he said, “From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”

Yeshua (Jesus) said to him, **“If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”** Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

When Yeshua (Jesus) saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, **“Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!”**

Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.”

But Yeshua (Jesus) took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?”

So He said to them, **“This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting.”**

LUKE 9:37-42 (NKJV):

Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, “Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth; and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”

Then Yeshua (Jesus) answered and said, **“O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.”** And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Yeshua (Jesus) rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.

The gospel accounts of the failure of the disciples to cast out an unclean spirit from a boy emphasize the importance of studying any Scripture topic from all the relevant verses (Isaiah 28:10). Of the three gospel accounts, only one of them reveals the real reason why the disciples could not cast out this particular demon.

Yeshua (Jesus) declared that a certain kind of unclean spirit could only come out by prayer and fasting. What kind? Are there different kinds of demons, some stronger than others?

Many theologians believe that the disciples could not cast out this unclean spirit because this particular unclean spirit was a very powerful demon that was able to resist them and the disciples did not have enough faith to cast it out. That is an inaccurate assessment.

Yeshua (Jesus) commanded this unclean spirit out of the boy, without prayer and fasting, and the unclean spirit came out. We don't exactly know how the disciples attempted to cast this unclean spirit out of this boy, but we can pretty much presume they stood over the young boy and said, "Unclean spirit / demon, in the name of Yeshua (Jesus) we command you to come out of this young boy and enter him no more!" Yet the unclean spirit did not come out from the young boy. The disciples had cast out unclean spirits and demons before, but they could not understand why they could not cast this one out. Therefore, the disciples had at least some minimal faith that they were able to cast out unclean spirits and demons.

Is it due to the strength of certain kinds of unclean spirits that they are able to stand against righteous saints when they command them to depart in the name of Yeshua (Jesus)? No. Yeshua (Jesus) did not declare that the demon the disciples could not cast out was strong. The demons believe in Yeshua (Jesus) and they tremble with fear at the *sound* of His name (James 2:19).

LUKE 10:19-20 (NKJV) [WITH INTERPRETATION]:

"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on [DEMONIC] serpents and [SPIRITUAL] scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy [SATAN], and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, ..."

If the disciples had authority over the unclean spirit that was in the boy, then why couldn't they cast this unclean spirit out?

MARK 9:25 (NKJV):

When Yeshua (Jesus) saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

It was not because this particular unclean spirit was strong; it was because this unclean spirit was handicapped. This unclean spirit could not hear the disciples. This unclean spirit was deaf.

Why was this spirit and why are other such kinds of similar unclean spirits handicapped with deafness, muteness, blindness, and other ailments? It is because unclean spirits have been cursed by Yeshua (Jesus) Himself. The demons fear Yeshua (Jesus) and the sound of His name for good reason! Even Satan, that serpent of old, was cursed by Yeshua (Jesus) in the garden of Eden (Genesis 3:14).

Why then did Yeshua (Jesus) rebuke His disciples for their unbelief, if it wasn't their fault that they didn't know that the unclean spirit was deaf and thus could not hear them?

MATTHEW 17:19-21 (NKJV):

Then the disciples came to Yeshua (Jesus) privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Yeshua (Jesus) said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

When the disciples stood over the boy and in sum and substance said, "Unclean spirit, in the name of Yeshua (Jesus) we command you to come out of this boy," this kind of unclean spirit could not hear them, because this unclean spirit was deaf. Thus, the unclean spirit did not come out of the boy. The disciples made the mistake of believing in themselves, and not in God, to cast out the unclean spirit. This was evident in their question to Yeshua (Jesus) as they asked, "Why could we not cast it out?"

MATTHEW 19:26; MARK 10:27; LUKE 1:37 (NKJV):

"With God all things are possible."

Should the disciples have known that they could have cast out the unclean spirit from the boy if they fasted and prayed? Yes. There are a dozen Old Testament verses that proclaim fasting and prayer as a special way to appeal to Almighty God (Judges 20:26; 1 Samuel 7:6, 31:13; 2 Samuel 1:12, 12:16; 1 Kings 21:27; 1 Chronicles 10:12; Ezra 8:21,23; Psalm 35:13; Isaiah 58:3; Daniel 9:3; Zechariah 7:5).

The disciples made the mistake of unbelief, believing that they could not cast out the unclean spirit. The disciples did not have a supernatural ability to communicate with a deaf unclean spirit, as Yeshua (Jesus) did. The disciples, when faced with this mountain (a metaphor for a problem that they could not solve – casting the unclean spirit out from the boy), and not understanding the reason why they couldn't do it, rather than fast and pray about it in belief, they gave up in unbelief, thinking it was not possible for them to cast out the unclean spirit. Therefore when they asked Yeshua (Jesus) why *they* could not cast out the unclean spirit, He rebuked them for their unbelief, for not believing that God could do all things through them, including casting out this deaf and dumb unclean spirit, if they fasted and prayed.

When believers are faced with a mountain, an insurmountable problem that cannot be solved, the way to move such a mountain is through fasting and prayer, appealing to Almighty God to act. Demons flee, when commanded to, upon *hearing*, "In the name of Yeshua (Jesus).

The reason the disciples could not cast out the unclean spirit from the boy was that the unclean spirit was deaf and could not hear their command, in the name of Yeshua (Jesus), to come out from the boy. When the disciples realized that they could not cast out the unclean spirit from the boy, they gave up trying in unbelief. Yeshua (Jesus) explained to them that the only way for this kind, a deaf unclean spirit, to come out from a person is through prayer and fasting; by appealing to Almighty God and then God will cast this unclean spirit out.

For with God, all things are possible.