

Eternal Security ~ Part 20

Unpardonable Sin and Grieving the Ruach

In my last post, we concluded our presentation of **Election** that we started in **Eternal Security ~ Part 2**. In this post, I want to tackle the issue of the **Unpardonable Sin** and **Grieving the Ruach**. Once those issues are fully addressed, I will move on to the contested passages before wrapping-up this series with my own personal position.

Unpardonable Sin

What is the Unpardonable Sin? Interestingly, that phrase is not contained in the Bible. It has developed over the years to refer to *blaspheming the Ruach HaKodesh*. *"I tell you that people will be forgiven any sin and blasphemy, but blaspheming the Ruach HaKodesh will not be forgiven"* ~ Matthew 12:31. Attributing to the Adversary the work of the Ruach can imperil the soul for eternity. *"Someone who blasphemes against the Ruach HaKodesh never has forgiveness but is guilty of an eternal sin"* ~ Mark 3:29. *"Everyone who says something against the Son of Man will have it forgiven him; but whoever has blasphemed the Ruach HaKodesh will not be forgiven"* ~ Luke 12:10.

Recall in **Eternal Security ~ Part 2: Glossary of Terms**, Unger stated:

This was a specific sin possible only during the earthly life of our Lord, when He was ministering in the power of the Holy Spirit. Under those unique conditions a person who attributed to Satan the power of the Holy Spirit, so visibly and openly manifested, was guilty of this peculiar sin. For this reason, there could be no forgiveness in the age then present or in the age immediately following. Since no such conditions exist in this age, the unpardonable sin is now impossible. An unpardonable sin and the gospel of "whosoever will" cannot coexist. Were such a sin possible today, every gospel invitation would specifically shut out those who had committed such a trespass.

In both Mathew and Mark, the context for Yeshua's pronouncement is His defense against the P'rushim's accusation that He was driving out demons under the power of Satan, not the Ruach. The passage in Luke is contained in several mini-teachings to the talmidim on His way to Jerusalem.

With respect to Matthew 12:31, the ESV Study Bible ¹ states:

The sin is attributing to Satan what is accomplished by the power of God, and doing this through the flagrant, willful, and persistent rejection of God and His commands. This sin is committed today only by unbelievers who deliberately and unchangeably reject the ministry of the Holy Spirit in calling them to salvation.

With respect to Mark 3:29, the ESV Study Bible states:

The opponents' accusation against Jesus is the unforgivable, eternal sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mark 3:28 emphasizes that "all sins will be forgiven," anticipating the eternally valid, substitutionary atonement of Jesus. However, if a person persistently attributes to Satan what is accomplished by the power of God - that is, if one makes a flagrant, willful, decisive judgment that the Spirit's testimony about Jesus is satanic - then such a person never has forgiveness.

With respect to Luke 12:10, the ESV Study Bible states:

Jesus closes this occasion of teaching his disciples with one of the most enigmatic, debated, and misunderstood sayings of His ministry. Key to understanding this passage is the distinction Jesus makes between, on one hand, the extreme case of blasphemy against "the Holy Spirit" and, on the other hand, the lesser case of speaking in a

¹ In my personal devotion time this year, I have been using the English Standard Study Bible as I re-read through the Brit Hadashah, Psalms and Proverbs.

dishonorable way against “the Son of Man.” One who asks to be forgiven for disrespectful words hastily spoken against Jesus (the Son of Man) will be forgiven. But blasphemy against the Holy Spirit - that is, the persistent and unrepentant resistance against the work of the Holy Spirit and his message concerning Jesus - this, Jesus says, will not be forgiven. The person who persists in hardening his heart against God, against the work of the Holy Spirit, and against the provision of Christ as Savior, is outside the reach of God’s provision for forgiveness and salvation. Christians often worry that they have committed this sin, but such a concern is itself evidence of an openness to the work of the Spirit.

As we see, we have a difference of opinion between Unger and the authors of the ESV Study Bible on when the Unpardonable Sin can be committed. Unger maintains that it was limited to when Yeshua was ministering on earth; while the ESV Study Bible can still be committed by those *unbelievers who deliberately and unchangeably reject the ministry of the Holy Spirit in calling them to salvation*. While I understand Unger’s position, I can’t reconcile it with the whole of Scripture.

What if someone after Yeshua’s ascension or even today were to repent of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? Is there no forgiveness for the person who repents of this sin? Was Sha’ul sinning against the Ruach in the days when he persecuted Believers and even “*trying to make them blaspheme*” ~ Acts 26:11? Evidently not! He wrote to Timothy and stated: “*I received mercy because I had acted in unbelief, not understanding what I was doing*” ~ 1 Timothy 1:13.

A.W. Tozer has stated:

“I have discovered a very helpful rule in this matter. I believe it holds good throughout the whole church of God around the world. *Anyone who is concerned about having committed the unpardonable sin may be sure he or she has not!*”²

Grieving the Ruach

The concept of grieving the Ruach is found in Ephesians 4:30: “*Don’t cause grief to God’s Ruach HaKodesh, for he has stamped you as his property until the day of final redemption.*” That the Ruach can be saddened or grieved points to the personality of the Ruach. The Ruach is a person who can be saddened by the way we live. Sha’ul has already explained that the Ruach’s power within gives new life to believers. While we continue to battle with our sinful nature, we should be living for Yeshua each day. To refuse to do so, to constantly give in to lying, anger, stealing, and foul talk is to *grieve the Ruach of God*. Because the Ruach controls and guides speech, praise, prophecy, and tongues, we offend him when we use them improperly.

Sha’ul reminded the readers that the Ruach within them gives both a privilege and a responsibility. Their responsibility is to not disappoint Him by the way they live; their privilege is their promised future, for through the presence of the Ruach, they were *stamped until the day of redemption*. The seal of the Ruach upon a Believer marks that Believer as God’s property until the day he or she is completely redeemed.

For further study, be sure to check out my friend Michael’s blog at Altruistico on [“What Is the Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit?”](#) and [“What is the Unpardonable or Unforgiveable Sin?”](#)

In my next post, I will begin to examine several of the contested passages we have encountered along our journey.

² “Jesus, Author of Our Faith” by A.W. Tozer