



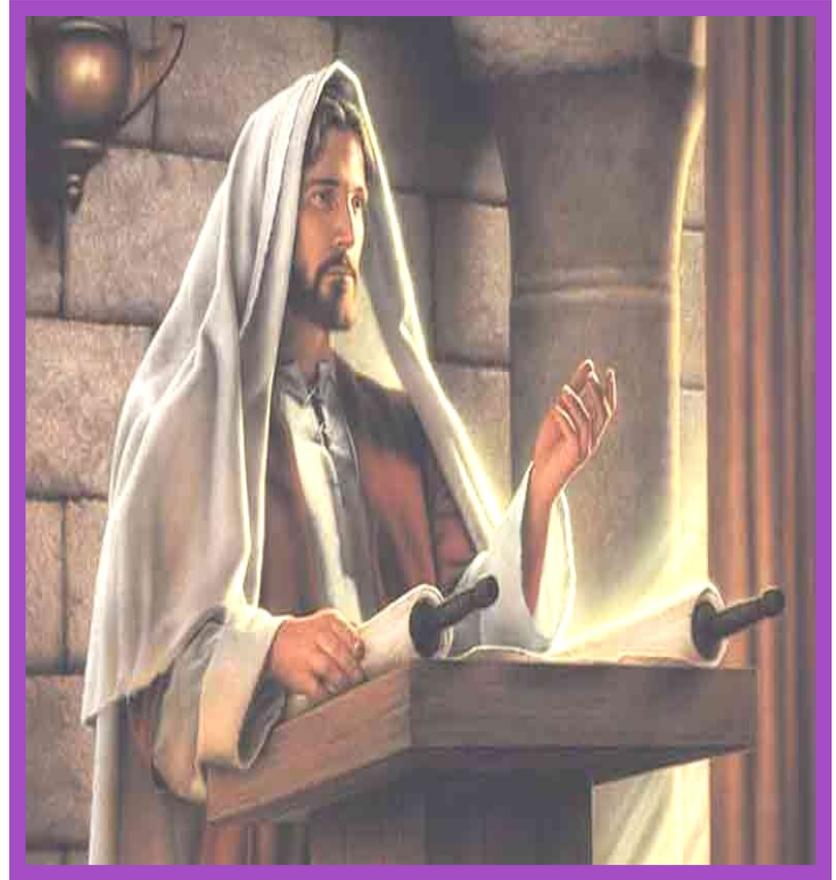
totality is often signified by this number; for it was on the seventh day that, having finished the work of creation, God rested (Gen. ii. 2); and we read, *Therefore the barren hath borne many* (hepta), and *she that had many children is weakened* (I King ii. 5). In Chap. 12: 10-12: *And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but to him that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him.* Christ is the Son of man,

Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin... there is but oneness of power; *for the Lord is great, and of his greatness there is no end* (Ps. cxliv. 3). That Oneness belongs to the Trinity, then so does indivisible might, and undivided action...

Unless that we may know that it is not lawful for us to deny the Divinity of Christ, what was it that was demanded of us in the persecutions but that we should deny that Christ was God? Whosoever does not confess that God is in Christ and that Christ is in God and from God, will not be deserving of pardon. Also those who do also confess that Christ came in the flesh is not of God; for he who has denied the Man has denied the God: because God is in the Man, and Christ as Man is in God. Amen.



**SERMON ON
A KINGDOM DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH
145 - 1**



JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

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Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 11: 14-28

by: Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor

Every kingdom divided against itself, shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall.

The cause of this saying was because our Lord was accused of casting out devils by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils. To show that His own kingdom is one and everlasting, and rightly did He also answer Pilate: My kingdom is not of this world (Jn. xviii. 36), Jesus tells them that those who do not place their trust in Christ, and who believe that He casts out devils through the power of the prince of the devils, do not belong to His eternal kingdom. This refers to the Jewish people who, in affliction of this kind, seek the help of the devil to cast out the devil.

How can a kingdom remain undivided when its faith is destroyed? Since the Jewish people are subject to the Law, Christ also as man was born under the Law, how can the kingdom of the Jews, which derives from the Law, endure when this same people divided the law into parts; when Christ Who was promised under the Law was rejected by the people of the law? So in part the faith of the Jewish people turns against itself, and so turning becomes divided, and being divided it is brought to nothing. Therefore the kingdom of the Church shall endure for ever; for being one faith, it is one body: For there is One Lord, one faith, one baptism; One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in us all (Eph. iv. 5-6)...

Since His Body is One, shall His kingdom not seem to be one? For, as you have read, *in him dwelleth all the fullness of the divinity corporally* (Col. ii. 9). What you may not deny of the Father you ought not deny of the spirit; nor should a certain part appear as the instrument of power, because of this comparison with our members; for there is no division of an indivisible thing. Because of this the use of the term *finger* is to be referred to the reality of their unity, not to a division of power. For the Right Hand of God also says: *I and the Father*

are one (Jn. x. 30). Yet though divinity is undivided, the person is distinct and separate.

When the Spirit is called *Finger* operative power is signified; for the Holy Spirit. Equally with the Father and the Son, is the holy Operator of the divine works... and when Jesus says: *But if I by the finger cast out devils; doubtless the kingdom of God is come upon you*, then, saying this, He shows that there is a certain royal dominion of the Holy Spirit, which is the Kingdom of God... We must consider the Holy Spirit as being an equal sharer of the Divinity, and of the Divine Power, and of the Divine Majesty; because *the Lord is a spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty* (II Cor. iii. 17).

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through places without water, seeking rest, and not finding. It cannot be doubted that this was said of the Jewish People, whom in the preceding words the Lord severed from His Kingdom. From this we are to understand that heretics and schismatics are also severed from the Kingdom of God, and from the Church... Accordingly, the whole Jewish People is compared to a man from whom through the Law, an unclean spirit has gone forth.

Because he could find no resting place among the nations and Gentiles, because of their faith in Christ (for Christ is the undoing of the unclean spirits; for He has cooled the fiery darts of the enemy against the hearts of the Gentiles, which before were dry and hard, but which now have begun to be soft from the dew of the Holy Spirit in baptism) He returns to the Jewish People, which had been swept and garnished to a legalistic but superficial cleanness, yet remained ever more stained in its inward soul... So not without reason did the unclean spirit return to it; bringing with him *seven other spirits more wicked than himself*; for in this impious purpose he warred against the *week* of the law, and the mystery of the *eighth day*.

As the grace of the sevenfold Spirit is multiplied on us, so on them is heaped every violence of the spirits of evil; for