

Articles and Sermons :: Rebellion is Largely Centred Around the Tongue by Zac Poonen

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In Rev 13: 5-6, we read: “And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.”

Notice the word ‘mouth’ occurring a number of times in this chapter - “a mouth like a lion” (v.2). Man’s praise of God is expressed through his mouth. And man’s rebellion against God is also expressed through his mouth. It says in Prov.18:21, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.”

When man rebelled at the tower of Babel, God brought confusion among the people through the tongue. This is one reason why, on the day of Pentecost, when God was setting right the confusion caused by the rebellion of man, through the Holy Spirit filling people, they spoke in unknown languages. That was the reverse of Babel. God was bringing people out from the spirit of rebellion by which Satan rules humanity. But in the last days, Satan is going to manifest that rebellion to the maximum through the mouth of the Antichrist.

Most believers are not careful about the words they send out from their mouths. Each word we send out from our mouth is like a rocket launched. You may regret what you have spoken and say, “Oh, I would like to take back those words.” But it is too late once you have spoken or written them. They have gone out into space. You can only be careful about the next rocket you send out. You cannot do anything about the words that you have already launched. Jesus said, “Every idle word that men speak (every careless word they send out from their mouth), they will have to give an account for, in the day of judgment” (Matt.12:36). The reason is because rebellion is largely centred around the tongue; and we conquer that spirit by the spirit of praise and submission and thanksgiving to God, and by the spirit of grace and goodness coming forth from our tongues when people curse us and speak evil about us.

Three times the Antichrist’s mouth is mentioned (Rev 13:2,5,6). In Daniel 7 too, we see much about the speech of the Antichrist. “A mouth uttering great boasts... the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking....he will speak out against the Most High” (Dan.7:8,11,25).

The spirit of rebellion in man is manifested in its fullness through his mouth, and the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart (Matt.12:34). If the heart is filled with the Holy Spirit, then words given by the Holy Spirit will come forth from the mouth - whether in an unknown language or a known one. But if you are not filled with the Holy Spirit, and some other spirit rules you, then that other spirit will manifest itself - in tongues or in a known language. It is in our hearts that we must crush that spirit of rebellion, if our tongues are to be pure. This is why it says that “a gentle and quiet spirit” is very precious in God’s eyes (1 Pet.3:4).