

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

MATTHEW 8:23-34

LESSON: ASTONISHING AUTHORITY — February 10, 2019

HISTORY/ INTRODUCTION:

8:14-17 THE HEALING OF PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW

Jesus came to Peter's house and saw that his wife's mother (Peter's mother-in-law) was lying down sick with fever. Jesus touched her hand and the fever left her. She arose from the bed and began to minister to them, that is, she in turn saw to their needs. When evening came people began to bring many possessed with devils to Jesus, and He cast out those spirits with His spoken Word; healing all that were sick. This fulfilled the prophecy spoken by the prophet Esaias (Isaiah—*"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses"* Isaiah 53:4).

8:18-22 THE CALMING OF THE STORM

Jesus observed that there were great crowds around him, so He commanded His disciples to depart to the other side of the lake. Then a certain Jewish scribe came unto Jesus calling him "Teacher", declaring that he would follow Jesus wherever He went. But Jesus was not flattered, but said to him that *"Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man (the Messiah) hath no where to lay his head."* Then, another disciple called out *"Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."* Jesus had a strong reply for him: *"Follow me, and let the dead bury the dead."* These are ¹two illustrations of men who said they wanted to follow the Lord and serve Him but had the wrong motives and excuses.

LESSON: I. AUTHORITY OVER THE SEA MATTHEW 8:23-27

JESUS COMES THE STORM

8:23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. Now, Jesus gets onto a ship/boat and His disciples follow Him onto the ship. They had made the genuine commitment and sacrifice to follow Jesus. This had to be a large shipping vessel for all (13) of them to get on there.

8:24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. Sudden Storms can appear with little warning at any time on the sea, and they discover a storm in the sea with waves that covered the ship. We know that when it rains continuously, it will begin to flood in areas that had never had flooding before, and can devastate us. We face storms throughout life that might not be from the atmosphere of nature, but other circumstances.

- Some storms swoop down upon us totally unexpectedly. There is no warning, no sign of their coming. But they come, and as long as we follow Jesus, He will be with us to give us peace and protection.
- Some storms are great. Their waves and repercussions slash against us. They overwhelm us and threaten to engulf us. We have to keep praying.
- Some are life-threatening. We see no escape, no way out, no deliverance. There seems to be no way to carry on, not in the present circumstances. My eyes can't stay there. I need His peace!

Now, Jesus was peacefully asleep; not even worried. He seemed far away to them, but He was very near.

8:25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. We've got to

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go to Jesus; He's our way through and out! That's what the disciples did. They went to Him and woke Him up shouting **Lord, save us: we perish**. Three things happened at that point.

1. They **believed** to a certain extent that Jesus could save them: they came to Him.
2. They **cried out** in desperation for Christ: *"save us!"*
3. They **confessed** their need to be saved: *"we perish."*

8:26 And he saith unto them, **Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.** The disciples understood that Jesus would never allow them to perish, but, they were still fearful. Yes, their faith wasn't where it needed to be. Jesus had to ask them why were they so fearful because He was on the boat with them on the sea? He even stated *"O ye of little faith."* This is a lesson moment, for Jesus was about to teach them what faith could do. Mind you, they were seasoned fishermen that knew how to handle a boat; that faced storms before, but they were not prepared for this horrendous storm that came upon them. They couldn't steer, for the winds were too much. They couldn't even keep the water out of the ship, for the waves were too much. And they couldn't save themselves, for the sea was too much. Therefore, what we can't handle, we have to call on the name of Jesus! That's why they hollered *"Lord save us!"* He would never allow us to handle a situation without Him. They failed to see what was completely hidden, for the root cause of fear was little faith. Their trust was incomplete and immature. So, Jesus simply got up and rebuked the winds and the sea. He took authority over nature and brought a great calm to the sea!

8:27 But the men marvelled, saying, **What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!**—The men were truly amazed. *"What kind of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him!"* This was something the disciples had to experience. They had to go through this storm. Yes, they immediately followed Him onto the ship, but after seeing this amazing feat, they also see that (nature) the winds and sea obey Him. This teaches us to trust Jesus at the onset, before the situation gets out of hand, not wait until the last moment.

- They now knew more about what it meant to call Him *"Lord."* He was the sovereign Lord who possessed all power over nature. Faith was being built.
- They now knew more about what it meant to trust Him and His Word. He was able to control even the elements of nature. Faith was being built.

II. AUTHORITY OVER SATAN MATTHEW 8:28-34

THE HEALING OF THE GADARENE DEMONS

8:28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. Now, Jesus and the disciples have finally come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes. This is a town on the eastern slope of the Sea of Galilee. This was another teaching moment of Jesus' power. And there met Jesus, two men possessed with devils coming out of the tombs (cemetery; among the dead), beyond violent, that no one could pass by them that way. They threatened whoever passed by. Two points to bring out:

1. We are introduced to evil spirits. These men were possessed with devils/demons that we can't deny. Ephesians 6:12 says *"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against power, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness"*



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in high places." These men represented *"the living dead"*—all men without Christ are *"dead in their sins."* The difference between the two obsessed men and all others is that they were the picture of the worst of the living dead. They were so possessed with evil that they were completely cut off from both God and man, living as among the dead in the grave yard.

- i. Some give themselves over to evil step by step. They walk so long in pride, envy, selfishness, and lust that they become obsessed and possessed with evil reacting with anger against any position or relationship that does not grant their desire.
 - ii. Some are capable of acting and reacting so coldly that everyone becomes nothing but pawns to do their bidding. If anyone expresses a different position, they become an immediate threat.
 - iii. Some are ignored, neglected, rejected, and abused so much that they withdraw and become subject to being possessed with the negative reactions of evil.
2. Jesus went where no other men would go. He went among the tombs where none dared go. He went among the fierce and dangerous men possessed with devils; one who was malicious, that he would devour and destroy.

8:29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?— Now, we see they know who Jesus is. They recognized Him as the *"Son of God"*, something many men don't do. They cried out to Him: *"What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?"* They resented and protested His presence there, for they weren't ready to be tormented, saying *"before the time."* They acknowledged that there was going to come a day, but they didn't want it to be that day. They're talking about judgment. Remember, these are the evil spirits speaking.

- They were indwelling and hurting these men physically, mentally, and spiritually.
- They were tormenting spirits, but their power was not greater than Jesus.

8:30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. The two men possessed with devils see off in the distant a herd of many swine feeding. Being tormenting spirits they have to embody a vessel, so they could continue to inhabit on earth (in an animal or a man). They knew that Jesus would not allow them to continue inhabiting these two men. So they see these swine in a distance.

8:31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. These devils begged Jesus whom they know have the power to destroy them. Evil spirits have nothing to do with Christ.

- They can call Jesus Christ the Son of God and have nothing to do with Him.
- They can acknowledge a day of torment and still have nothing to do with Him.
- They can reject Him, protest His presence, oppose His right to control their lives, rebel against His interference, even hate Him and feel animosity toward Him.

If they were to be cast out, they wanted to be allowed to go into the herd of swine.

8:32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine:

and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. Jesus said *"Go."* The power of the demons had to bow at the Word of God! The devils



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came out and went into the herd of swine. Christ has the power to deliver and save. In Mark 5:13 describes that there were about 2,000 swine that ran violently down a steep place and perished into the sea. Jesus granted the request, but, it was the evil spirits that drove them wildly over the cliff. And the owners suffered a great loss. Why did Jesus allow this? It might show...

1. That this would be a visible sign that two possessed men would truly be saved and freed from the evil spirits.
2. That this would convince those who did not believe in evil spirits that there are most definitely evil spirits who do possess bodies.
3. That this would teach obedience and holiness to the law. It was against the law for a Jew to own and eat swine.
4. That this would teach the value of a human soul. The two possessed men were of far more value than any amount of material wealth, and even more so if the wealth was gained by illegal means.
5. That this would attract the attention and open the door for the evangelization of the surrounding district. No doubt the news of the Messiah's presence and power would spread and stir people to open their hearts and receive the message of the healed demoniacs.

8:33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. The herdsmen that were keepers of the swine fled into the city to tell everyone what had happened to the men possessed of the devils.

8:34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts. The whole city came out to meet Jesus. Well they just wanted to see with their own eyes, and just to tell Him that they didn't want Him messing in their lives. They couldn't control Him. They feared His supernatural power and were upset about losing a herd of pigs, more than glad about the deliverance of the two demon-possessed men. Human beings are created in God's image and have eternal value over possessions, investments or even animals. Is our concern over property or church programs more than people? The people rushed to see Jesus and begged Him to go away and leave them alone.

SUMMARY:

Jesus entered a ship and His disciples followed Him. a great storm arose in the sea, but, Jesus was asleep on the ship. The disciples woke Him up shouting *"save us, we perish."* After waking up, Jesus said *"Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?"* And then He rebuked the winds and the sea, and took authority over nature bringing a great calm. The men wondered *"what kind of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him!"* (8:23-27).

Jesus and the disciples have finally come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, and were met by two men possessed with devils coming out of the tombs. They had been so fierce and dangerous that no one was able to come near or go through the area of the tombs. The demons cried out to Jesus, *"What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"* There's a herd of swine they noticed feeding, and begged Jesus to allow them go into the swine. Jesus said **"Go"**, and the devils came out of the men and went into the swine and the swine ran wildly off the cliff and drowned in the sea. The herdsmen themselves fled into the city to tell the story. The people rushed to see Jesus and begged Him to go away and leave them alone (8:28-34).

