

They Besought Him that He Might Depart

Matthew 8:18 – 9:14

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~ All I can promise in this report from our Spiritual Safari is that we're going to a crazy place; a place of demons and exorcisms, and I promise you that you need to be prepared for anything. It is highly likely that you are going to read things in this report that you've never read before. Some of you will wish you had not read this report. Preparedness on our parts can only happen by getting Jesus INTO our heart - so you won't have to worry about getting demons OUT later; and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall proceed in this rinky-dink little Bible teaching. We have seen, as we have followed Jesus around, that He healed a leper by touching him, He healed the centurion's servant - whom Jesus didn't even see Personally - but healed from afar. Then, Peter's wife's mother came down with a fever and He healed her. After that, multitudes were brought to Him and many that were possessed with demons had the demons cast out by Jesus....

VIII

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

~ There were many – thousands – of miracles performed besides the accounts recorded. John, the last Gospel writer said, “....many other signs truly did Jesus which are not written in this book.” See, the ones that are recorded are here with a very definite purpose. Here comes this young man forward in the crowd and he is wondering to himself, “....should I follow this Jesus or not?” This scribe, certainly a young man, doesn't know which way to go at this point in his life. He sees Jesus and His disciples are packing up and heading out pretty quickly now – and he is forced to make his decision....

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master; I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

~ That frank answer by the Lord Jesus to this young man was an immediate revelation. The Lord Jesus is asking you today, friends: have you ever counted the cost of following Him? Jesus reveals His poverty with this proclamation of foxes and birds! This young man opened his heart to the Lord so the Lord Jesus opened His heart to the young man. That's the way the Lord Jesus always operates, friends. If you're following Christ and it doesn't cost you something then you're not following Him! You may be following something - but it's not the Lord Jesus. We REALLY need to nail this all down in our minds so it doesn't slip around. Poverty is part of the curse that He bore. We're not told if the young man followed Christ – I suspect he did. When they set sail that day I think there was a new disciple with them who had just made the decision to follow Him....

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

~ This is another highly confused passage of Scripture in the church today. This man had already made the decision to follow Jesus. I think his father was very old and would soon pass away. Jesus answers quite harshly and, I'm sure, the man was a little confused, thinking: how could the dead bury the dead? Of course, what the disciple meant was he wanted to stay and take care of his father until he died. What Jesus is saying is: let someone else take care of the old man – or – let him take care of himself! That sure doesn't sound very lovely. What this shows is the Lord Jesus forcing this man to make the immediate decision about which way he's going in his life. How about you, friends? Are you following Christ and putting Him first in it or are you hanging around with dead people? Most people – including Christians – have completely dead-end friends. Are you prepared to leave it all behind if he tells you to? Really? Well, Jesus told both of these men we just met to "follow Him" and....

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

~ This is where the fifth miracle happens; and it is a private event between the Lord Jesus and nature. The power Jesus demonstrates here is the power of dominion that Adam had before the fall. "Dominion" means you have a kingdom, you know? The last Adam is manifested here. This great tempest in the sea was no ordinary storm. Remember, when we observed the temptation of Jesus we saw that the devil left the Lord for a "...little season." Guess what? – Satan's back! Make no mistake – this is a satanic storm. It is an attempt by the devil to destroy Christ. This is a very human scene, too; made into such so that you and I could understand it. The difference is: the Lord Jesus can rest in the storm. I wouldn't be able to sleep in that environment. I get nervous easily. We're not looking at a picture of grandiose faith in the disciples here, friends....

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

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.

~ Luke says of this account that Jesus said to the waves, "be muzzled!" Nature is likened to a dog on Jesus' leash. Soon after the time in which we are studying, there came a day when the storms of persecution broke over the bow of the apostles lives. Not a single man cried out, "...carest not that we perish?" When persecution broke on the early church they did NOT get busy asking the Lord to remove the persecution and calm the waves; they prayed for the courage to stand for Jesus! We need that level of courage and conviction today. We need that level of trust in Christ that He has the dynamic to furnish our ethic in real time....

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

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.

~ So, Jesus immediately goes the way in which it is impossible to pass – and over to the land that the tribe of Gad inhabited. We will discover later that the tribe of Gad stayed on the wrong side of Jordan when Israel crossed over. Well, Gad went into the pig business, too. Of course, they were forbidden from being in the pig business because the nation Israel had been commanded not to even touch a swine in the Mosaic System of Levitical Law. See, once we disobey the Lord, the successive acts of disobedience become easier and easier and more frequent. It won't take much disobedience before you'll find yourself walking on the wrong side of Jordan and WAY out of His will for your life altogether. You may still be a Christian - but you'll likely be in the pig business with crazy people hanging around the tombs! We're talking about dangerous and demon-possessed men....

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?

~ Alright, these demon-possessed men open several spiritual cans of worms that there really is no lid for today - and we know very little about the content of said spiritual cans. There is only one devil but there are many demons. It is difficult for even the most well-learned conservative Biblical scholar to ascertain and deal effectively with the level of importance we now find in this miracle in this section of the Word of God. Frankly, I consider this the greatest miracle Jesus ever performed. It is only due to an utter, phenomenal, willful ignorance of demons and Satan according to Scripture that people aren't thoroughly impressed by the subject of Satanic phenomenon. The other extreme is a danger of going overboard and seeing Satan slip across the street every time we leave the house. Make no mistake: there are people who are demon possessed around you today. You know several; and any credible psychiatrist or psychologist will admit they deal in the supernatural.

Naturally, the field of psychology, in general, is the most popular, by far, in academia today. There's no shortage of patients. Well, anyone indwelt with the Holy Spirit cannot be demon possessed. Perhaps even more naturally, the devil's best and simply most amazing trick ever played upon mankind – and it is truly amazing – is the trick of fooling men into believing he doesn't even exist. That is a class-act and it's hard to follow, friends. It's natural to not believe. It takes no effort at all to reject Christ altogether in your life. These men out in the tombs were dangerous and violent - but they aren't stupid. They're called fallen angels in the epistle of Jude; and it would seem that any eternal destination for them would be better than confinement in the blackness of darkness forever. They had no reason to live, though, either. So, the only logical conclusion to their tormenting dilemma is that they need to hold on to whatever light they could possibly get from God, however dim that may be. Friends, this had better bring a reality to your heart or you probably shouldn't be reading these so-called safari reports....

30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

~ These demons want to be brought into a physical reality as opposed to cast into outer darkness. The demons want to manifest materially. Interestingly, they really don't seem as concerned with being cast out as they do with securing a specific God-appointed destination; to the point of being satisfied with inhabiting a herd of pigs. Now, I don't know for sure – because I've never been a pig – but it seems like a horrible life living in the pigpen. Shockingly, this herd of swine would rather die than be co-inhabited with the tortures and nightmares these demons possessed; so, they commit suicide – yes, the great herd of swine appeared to man to be spooked by some natural cause – maybe thunder – and they panicked as far as animals are concerned. Don't tell me there aren't gradations of torment in hell; because I am here to tell you there are. The Lord Jesus is telling us this swine herd committed suicide because they didn't want to be indwelt by demons.

During the times of Moses, Samuel, Ezekiel, Elijah, others - and Jesus - we will see a supernatural manifestation of demonic activity. As we travel time with our safari it will become so much more intense. We are going into an orbit where we see an increasing manifestation of demonic activity on earth. The horrific acts of current events are a testimony to that day of the coming of the Lord Jesus with milky white teeth and Whose garments are stained in the blood of His enemies. We don't need to pinpoint any of these events because we aren't looking for that on this expedition of the Bible. We are looking for our Blessed Hope – the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior and Holy High Priest; the King - because we want to see Him on every page of Scripture....

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.

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.

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.

~ So, they made a point of coming out to ask Jesus to move along. Translation: they'll take the unclean animal – a swine – and a broken law - instead of God. We need to be careful today because witchcraft, necromancy, tarot and twisted line readings are a reality that man just can't understand; and thank God for that – because, if we did comprehend evil, it would simply be too overwhelming for us. Playing with Satan, considering him, theorizing with evil spirits or compromising in any way with unrighteous spiritual discernment is a direct path to the place where only your tears will you have to eat and drink. Don't look at the tribe of Gad in disdain – there are a whole lot of people running around today engaged in the pig business and surrounded by demon-possessed men and women – and they wouldn't have things any other way. We see the power of God now in this passage; and in the ninth chapter we have a whole lot more

supernatural spirituality to deal with. Jesus is going to return to Capernaum now because they obviously don't want Him hanging around Gad....

IX

1 And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

~ In verse two Jesus not only forgave the man of his sins but he healed him of them. Those two are inextricably intertwined in the life of a genuine believer. Of course, the scribes sitting around are saying Jesus is blaspheming. They didn't answer because, if they had, they would have had to admit that one was as good as the other. See, they saw the man walk out so that means this Man has the power to forgive sin and heal. Friends, that is the only condition on which miracles will be performed today; if you can forgive sins you can heal – otherwise, you're just dealing in the demonic by claiming anything physical pertaining to healing. I want this message to be loud and clear for the modern-day false teacher; but I doubt any of them could read this far. You and I can't forgive sins; so, only the Lord Jesus can heal. Too many people constantly get in the way of what God is trying to do in their lives and in the lives of others. God will not move if He does not get the glory. We're going to leave it at that in this report - and for this miracle - but Mark will reiterate it for us....

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

~ This leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God ends in Matthew's home. Mark tells us Matthew made dinner for them all. There are too many saints today who aren't eating with sinners. The Egyptians thought it to be an abomination to eat with a Hebrew, particularly a shepherd. What are you doing to reach the lost with some sort of contact? Anything? What are you doing to bring the sick to the Great Physician? This idea of church fellowship that's nothing more than a pot luck dinner in a socially religious club is a complete waste of time. Outsiders don't hang around those little groups for very long. If anyone does get in they'll freeze them out completely. They call themselves the church, but they never present the Gospel properly, correctly or completely

in the sound doctrine of the apostles. Without even realizing it, they become downright sinful – and, in some cases, Satanic. The Lord is not the doctor for people who aren't sick, friends. Jesus tells them to go and learn what that means. God says, I will have mercy and not sacrifice. Read the sixth chapter of Hosea again. Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. Sinners. The Pharisees were sinners, so they had the invitation to come to Him if they wanted to....

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? ~

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