

Matthew 8:23–34

Who Is Jesus, and Why Did He Come?

Saturday, May 25, 2024 • Read Matthew 8:23–34

Questions from the Scripture text: What does Jesus do in v23? What do His disciples do? What arises in v24? With what effect? What is Jesus doing? What do the disciples do (v25)? What do they say? What does He ask them (v26)? What does He call them? What does He do to what? With what effect? What do the men do in v27? What do they ask? To where do they come in v28? Whose country is it? Whom does He meet there? Coming out of where? Of what character? With what effect? What do the demons use the two men to do (v29)? What do their demons ask? What information does v30 add? What do the demons beg for (v31)? What does Jesus say (v32)? Where do the demons go? With what effect? Who respond in v33? How? Where do they go? What do they do there? What information do they make sure to include? Who come out in v34? To do what? What do they beg Him to do?

Who is Jesus? Matthew 8:23–34 prepares us for the morning sermon on the Lord's Day. In these twelve verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **Jesus is God, the Lord over all.**

Lord over creation, v23–27. Jesus has just pointed out the great faith of the centurion in v10, and now he turns to the disciples who actually made it onto the boat (v23, cf. v18–22) and tells them that they have "little faith" v26. They do not yet realize (or have not yet taken to heart) that He has the very authority of God in Him. He does not pray for the storm to be stilled. He rebukes the creation itself! This is a hallmark of YHWH Himself in Ps 65:7, 89:8–9, 107:28–29. We must ask and answer the question in v27: "What sort of man is this?" He is the God-Man. And if He is with us, we must never be afraid. If you are a Christian, He is with you. You must not fear!

Lord over the nations and the spiritual powers, v28–34. When they reach the Gentile side of the lake, Jesus's arm is not shortened nor His hand weakened. These demons have great power over these men (v28), but they are completely at Jesus's mercy (v31), both now and especially in eternity (v29). They are also enslaved to their own wickedness, immediately destroying the creatures that they enter (v32). We mustn't read too much of ourselves into v33. Yes, there is a financial loss, but what they especially mention was Jesus's power over the demons that had been an insurmountable power (end of v28). It is He Whom they fear, and Whom they therefore beg to depart (v34). Many do not close with Christ, because they fear the great power with which He will overthrow their whole lives. We must not respond this way. Let us be willing for Him to do whatever almighty work He wills!

Of what are you tempted to be afraid? What are you reluctant for Christ to change in your life?

Sample prayer: Lord, we praise You, who are God almighty, but have come near us and with us to save us. Forgive us our fears and our reluctance to live in proximity to Your power, we ask in Your Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP65A "Praise Awaits You, God, in Zion" or TPH533 "Have Thine Own Way, Lord!"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew chapter 8 verses 23-34. These are God's words. Now, when he got into the boat, His disciples followed him. And suddenly a great Tempest Rose in the sea. So that the boat was covered with the waves. But he was asleep. Then his disciples came to him and awoke him saying Lord save us.

We are perishing. But he said to them. Why are you fearful? Ou of little faith. Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the And there's a great calm. So, the men marveled saying, who can this be? That even the winds and the Sea obey him? When he had come to the other side, to the country of the gergacenes there, met him two demon-possessed men.

Coming out of the tombs exceedingly, Fierce. So that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out saying, what have we to do with you? Jesus, you Son of God. Have you come here to torment us before the time? Now a good way off from them. There was a herd of many swine feeding.

So the demons begged him saying, if you cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said to them, go. So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine. Right ran violently down the Steep Place into the sea.

And perished in the water. Than those who kept them. Fled. And they went away into the City and told everything. Including what had happened to the to the demon-possessed men? And behold the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they begged him. To the From their region.

Amen, this is this reading of God's inspired, and Inherent. And which we see. who Jesus is? And,

we should respond to him. Or at least. Two examples of how not to respond to him. So, Jesus gets into the boat, his disciples, follow him. And suddenly a great storm arises on the sea. This is probably a Galilean fishing boat. Does not have. sales. And one of the great dangers of the Sea of Galilee, Is.

Let the Sea of Galilee. Way below, sea level, the surface of the lake. Is. Not as far below sea level, as the Dead Sea. But still very far below sea level, and it's very hot. And there can be air that rises. quickly off of the lake and cold.

Air comes rushing in from the The flatter. Shoreland that is actually towards the Gentile side of the lake. and you can have a violent storm very quickly. And so this, just a reliable history in other ways. But it coordinates with corresponds precisely to what we actually know about the geography and then the meteorology of the place.

And so, The Lord Jesus is asleep and the boat is being covered with the waves. and They are unable to do anything about it. So verse 25, his disciples come to him and awaken him. Saying, Lord save us. We are perishing. But he says to them. Why are you fearful?

Oh, you of little faith and he arose and rebuked the winds and the Sea and there was a great calm. Then they Marvel saying, who can this be? That even the winds and the Sea? Obey him. Well, the answer is obvious from the Bible. Because in Psalm 16,

Excuse me. In Psalm 65 and Psalm 89 and Psalm 107 all of them. Yahweh the Lord, the one living and true God, the Creator. The Eternal God, who is in himself.

Displays who he alone, is. By quieting, the Seas and quieting raging storms. And even. In an earlier, Psalm We have the voice of Yahweh is over the mighty Waters. And so, The rebuking in particular of the sea, As a way of calming it all demonstrates who he is.

And this. difficult for them to take in. They believe in him. They're following him but they haven't yet realized the fullness of his divinity. Excuse me.

On the other hand. The demons after they land, they know exactly who he is. He is Jesus, Son of God, who has come And in their mind, they're wondering why. As it to torment them before the time. So they know that this is Jesus, this Jesus. The Lord saves.

The Son of God. Not just, Han term. But a Divine term because They recognize him as having entered the world. They recognize him as the one who is the judge over all things, even though God says he alone, As judge. And so, And they know that there is a time coming and that that time is not yet.

And so not only do these demons. revealed to us by their knowledge. That Jesus is God. they reveal to us by their own knowledge. That.

That Jesus has come. A way that they did not expect. They expected him to come, as judge. They expected him to come as the Tormentor. And Destroyer of all of his enemies, all of God's enemies. and yet they put a question. That because they believe in one way they believe that Jesus is God.

Remember the demons believe and shudder. they put a question. that Gives us another thing to answer. So in this passage, we have the question who is Jesus? And The Obedience of the wind and the waves to his rebukes, as he's got And the demons recognize that, he's God.

God, the son, God the judge. And, The thinking. Of the of much of the Bible and especially of the people. A judge, a savior. Especially. Go judge an Avenger from enemies which God is as our savior. The Book of Judges. A book that is about a series of deliverers.

For Israel who saved them from their enemies.

But what is unexpected? And the other question is, why did Jesus come? And the answer. Is to save people. To save us from our sins as Matthew was told by the angel when he was being given the name Jesus. He will save his people. From their sins. And who are then his people.

Well not just Jews.

Excuse me. Like the men who are with him in the boat. But Gentiles like these two men likely were Since this is a gentile territory. On the East side of Lake and where there are such things as herds of pigs, which would have been Unthinkable. In the Jewish territory.

Did the Israelite territory? And so Jesus is saving them in order to save them from their sins. He has to save them. From demon possession. demon possesses someone, he possesses them, especially to make him sin. Those who Are not possessed in the That is described here. but those who are tormented by demonic suggestion in their minds.

the demons are always telling them to do things that are sinful. the demons do not give them instruction to do things that are righteous and godly and according to To the scripture. And so, who is Jesus, he is God. And why has economies come to save from our sins.

So how should we respond? Well, we need to respond with faith. That is more than little faith. He says to them in verse 26, why are you fearful Oh, you of little faith. Notice that his rebuke is not for praying to him. But for their fear, you may always come to the Lord Jesus.

You should never be afraid. well you you should never Halt. From coming to Christ or be hesitant. From of praying to God, with whatever. You need to pray to him about. You may need to be rebuked for something that is in you, but much better for you to come to him and be rebuked for that.

but you ought not be afraid of your circstances. Now when he says, you of little faith, it's very interesting because they actually believe that he can save them. That's what?

That's what their prayer. here.

Asks, for They say, Lord save. But what they're amazed at. Is how he saves them. Who can this be? That even the winds in the sea obey him? They expected probably Jesus to pray that the storm would be stilt. Or. To do some prophetic act like sticking an ore out over the water.

like Moses's staff was extended over the Red Sea to make the Red Sea part and that God would respond, either to his prey anger, his conducting a prophetic act. But Jesus does not pray. He doesn't touch the sea. or extended ore over it or anything. It's not like when he touched the leper, he touched Peter's mother-in-law and so forth.

He just commands it. He is God himself. And they should have known. Who he is? And they should have known. That he could not die. Of a shipwreck. God, the son. Did not enter the world. To shipwreck and drown in the Sea of Galilee. He entered in the world to die on a cursed cross.

On a cursive tree. For Sinners. And so long as they were with him in that boat, They were safe. Because, The Lord, Jesus could not be lost in that way. The one who can rebuke the wind and the waves. Could not be lost in that way. Now, we are not with Jesus in a boat.

We have actually something better. We have Jesus on a throne. And if the time has come for you to die, you can die in a shipwreck or a car wreck or a tornado. Or by cancer. Or however it is that he brings you out of this world. But you can be sure that he who created all things.

And he who commanded wind and waves when he was historically verifiably on a boat, on the Sea of Galilee. And he who gave himself for you. On the cross. He preserves your life as long. As it is his loving Almighty, perfectly wise will To keep you in this world.

And so, You should not be afraid of dying. Not because you can't die. The way that it was impossible here for Jesus. to die in this way. But because if you do die, It will be exactly according To the will of him who died for you. And, So long as you are in this world then.

It is also according to the will of him who died for you. And so, there's actually an extension here of what we've just seen. verses 18 through 22. And, The necessity to live for him. And not for ourselves because that's what our lives are for. That's why we are still here.

Our, our savior. Rules over Heaven and earthy rules over wind and wave. He rules over all of the creation. He rules over all things visible. He rules over all things. Invisible. Notice that? When Jesus permits these two demons to go into. this herd of pigs immediately. The, the Pigs go.

stampeding into the sea. And drown. Violently down the Steep place into the sea. And perished in the water verse 32. So there's actually something implied here that is marvelous. That the Lord Jesus has continually restraining demonic activity. Continually preventing them. From entering into animals. You don't see animals committing suicide all over the world all the time.

Why? Because God in his Providence is not permitting them to enter into animals. You don't see. All eight billion people in the world. Committing suicide, end of such a level of violence that no one can come near them. There are. Something like that. The Lord. Ordinarily. In his ordinary Providence.

Strongly greatly. Restrains demonic activity. He is their Sovereign. The one who saved us. Restrains, the demons. And we know this, if we pay attention to the Bible, Isn't that one of the? Characteristics of the Book of Job. How completely God, restrains Satan. Have completely God, restrains. Even the Leviathan.

There is a real creature, but it's such a fearsome creature that. They they had come to identify him. With. With Satan. Sophia Leviathan. Was this great big sea monster that is described in the Book of Job and we can look at it together some other time. But one of the things that it talks about is God, having a hook in his nose.

That men cannot do anything against him Spears. just bounce off of him. But as far as God is concerned, Is a little tiny insignificant creature. Even though, as far as Leviathan is concerned, man is a little tiny insignificant creature. Well. Even the demons are like that before our God.

And specifically before our Lord Jesus. There's an implication here that. There's a permitted increase of demonic activity. Particularly, so that Jesus. Can demonstrate his sovereignty over them. And cast them out and perform these exorcisms. And, His casting demons out is an eschatological act has to do with the last days.

The demons seem confused and perplexed and Afraid. Is this happening to us now? When it was only supposed to happen to us at the end? and the answer is because The Lord Jesus is displaying who he is. So the one here, on the one hand, we are to trust in him and his saving death.

for us, not an accidental death. In a lake. And entrust ourselves to his wisdom. About when we die and how we die. And not be afraid of it. but on the other hand, Need to welcome him and the difference that he makes in our lives. But we had a little hint of that.

Remember when The other one of his disciples said, Let me go first and bury my father. Jesus gave the response. It reminds us that We and our whole life must belong to him, that there's no other way. To have him. Or to be his. Than to be entirely, his, you can't be partially his And you can't have him as partially your savior, you have to be entirely his, and he has to be entirely your savior, your lord, and your savior, Well, this was was not something that the people of the city were interested in.

The people of the city heard what happened? And they did not say, Here is one with power over all things visible and invisible. Will you please stay with us? We want you. To be our savior, we want you to be our helper. Begged him. To depart from their region, from their region.

They would rather have pigs. They'd rather have pork than the Lord. Of Heaven and Earth and all that is in them. And, Sadly, that is often the way in our own Hearts. Hopefully not in a ,

In a primary way. Hopefully you and I have new Natures that prize Christ above everything but there are those moments When that's info in in that sinfulness that remains, When we do prize, Good. Tasty food. Over belonging to and having the Lord Jesus. Where we do prize wealth and possessions.

Over the Lord Jesus. To. Even the uncertainty of the bargain wasn't worth it. Because you never know when he might cast demons out into Heard of pigs and you could lose a herder pigs. So, They wanted to be rid of Christ. They beg him to depart from their region.

You know, belonging to Christ as an uncertain thing. You never know what he is going to. lead you through next in life. And how difficult it might be, and what you might lose. As far as Earthly things go. As a result. The believer needs to be someone who says, Whatever else comes with having Jesus.

I want to have Jesus. Even if I lose my wealth. Even if I lose my pleasure. We should be those who beg him to remain. Whatever that might end up meaning. And it will mean great things. Greater than we can imagine. Because who is he? He is God, the son.

Who doesn't pray for the wind and the waves to cease but commands them to do so. And why did he come? To save us from our sins. God sent his son. Into the world not to condemn the world. Although, that will happen when he comes again. That said that the world through him might be saved.

So, let us Believe in him more than demons do. Not just who he is, but trusting in him as our savior. and having him as our Lord. And let us believe in him more than these disciples did. Not just knowing that he can save. By prayer and prophecy.

But because he has God himself. Who came to die in very particular way. Let's pray.

Our father, we thank you for giving your son. Our Lord Jesus. To be our savior. And we thank you for this wonderful passage. In which he is. So clearly, Proclaimed to us, as The eternally begotten Divine. Son. The second person of the Triune godhead. And thank you for. Challenging.

to believe in him and his atoning death. To believe in him and his absolute sovereignty over. The time and the manner of our own death. To be willing to have him even if we might lose everything else. And so we pray for the help of your spirit. For your spirit who has given us.

These words by which you challenge us is also our only For meeting that challenge through Spirit given. In the Lord, Jesus. So give us that faith, we pray. Very asking Jesus's name. Amen.