**The Gospel of Luke**

**Witness to the Gentiles - #21**

**Jesus Reveals His Power**

**The Calming of the Storm, The Gerasene Demoniac**

**Luke 8:22-25, 26-39**

**Luke 8:22-25 – Calming the Storm**

***22*** *Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.* ***23*** *But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.*

***24*** *And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, “Master, master, we are perishing.” Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.* ***25*** *And he said unto them, “Where is your faith?”*

*And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, “What manner of man is this? For he commands even the winds and water, and they obey him.”*

**Notes and Studies**

1. Jesus begins his ministry according to Luke with a series of miracles (8:22-25; 8:40-48; 8:48:56). This ends with sending the disciples with a defined message: “Proclaim the kingdom, and heal.”
2. In this passage we can read:

a. Jesus commands / rebukes the wind and waves.

b. The amazement of the disciples.

1. Jesus reveals his power and his word, as he is filled with the power of the Spirit (4:14; 4:36; 5:17). We must not overlook the manifestation of the word of power because Jesus here is acting as God, who can command “the wind the waves.”
2. The lake is the lake of Gennesart. The boat is carried up by the storm, but Jesus was asleep, which could show fatigue, but this works to show that Jesus was not in need of prayers.
3. Lake of Gennesart is in northern Galilee and is surrounded by hills and so gusts of wind of cold from the West can create a storm.
4. Luke used a rare word ***Epistata***, which means “master.” It is used as a substitute for “teacher.” Here we see Jesus as a teacher who has to do something.
5. Jesus rebuked and the wind and the waves and both stopped.

***Where is your faith?***

1. The disciples were under the impression that they will “perish.” This demanded the question from Jesus, *“Where is your faith?*” Looking to Jesus, the disciples likely considered, “If you perish we all will perish but we have to preach the kingdom.”
2. “Faith” here is looking at the purpose of life, and if Jesus came for this purpose to reveal the kingdom, then faith should say no one will perish till the kingdom is revealed.

**Luke 8:26-39 - The Gerasene Demoniac**

***26****”Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee.* ***27*** *As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs.* ***28*** *When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me,”* ***29*** *for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.)*

***30*** *Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” He said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him.* ***31*** *They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.*

***32*** *Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission.*

***33*** *Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.*

***34*** *Then the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country.* ***35*** *Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.*

***36*** *Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed.* ***37****.Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned.*

***38*** *The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying,* ***39*** *“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.*

**Notes and Studies**

1. After calming a storm on the Lake and having rebuked a threat to human life, Jesus now goes to a town to “exorcise” the power that enslaved the inner life.
2. The story is about Jesus’s fight with evil powers. Demons tried to express their lack of fear and their lack of concern by pronouncing his name. Jesus is not neutral towards evil. Jesus commanded the demons to come out and to leave the oppressed human.
3. More intriguing is the demons’ request to enter into the pigs. Jesus sends them to the pigs, but the pigs go in a kind of stampede. Drowning in the lake destroyed them.

What must we see in the story before we lament the fate of the pigs?

1. Jesus’ healing power and his interest in the life of the enslaved, the unfortunate and the demented persons, the outcast of the society and the rejected.
2. Not all who say Jesus is the Son of God are free humans. The demons confessed and Jesus did not accept their confession but subdued them.
3. Jesus came to conquer evil.

Different names in different MSS, P73, B, D 0267

a. Gerasa which is modern Jersh in Jordan.

b. Gadara which is Umm Qe is six miles from the Lake. Origen of Alexandria who read the various MSS (manuscripts) traveled to the Palestine and asked the people about the name of their town. Origen wrote that Gerasa is a city about 33 miles southeast of the Lake. This made the stampede of the pigs the most unusual one in history (Commentary on John book 6:41)

**Homily 44 on Luke 8:28-31 by Cyril of Alexandria**

The prophet Habakkuk foresaw the glory of the Savior, and, overcome by His wonderful deeds, he offered up praises unto Him, saying: "O Lord, I have heard your hearing, and been afraid: I have considered Thy doings, and been astonished." For of which of the deeds wrought by our common Savior Christ can anyone say that it is not worthy of all admiration? Which of them is not great, and highly to be praised, and a proof of His godlike authority? And this we can very clearly see in what has been here read to us from the evangelic Scriptures. Let us behold, then, the tyranny of the enemy shaken by Christ, and the earth set free from the wickedness of demons: let us see the heads of the serpent bruised by Him, and the swarm of venomous reptiles driven away overpowered and in terror: and those who in old time had been full of cunning and audacity; who had held subject to their sway all that lies beneath the heavens; who had prided themselves upon their temples of vast cost, and on their beautifully sculptured altars; who had been honored with sacrifices; and crowned with universal praises; fall from their former glory, and as though retaining sovereignty over no one single man, beg for a herd of swine! A very plain proof is this of the unexpected misery that had befallen them, and of their being broken utterly.

But no more: for I perceive that in my discourse I have taken a leap, as it were, from what we began with, and have hurried to the latter part of the lesson. Come, therefore, that, like a fleet and strong-limbed horse, we may as with a bridle, turn it back to the beginning. For the Savior, in company with the holy disciples, had landed in the country of the Gerasenes; and immediately a man met them, in whom dwelt many unclean spirits: and he was void of mind and understanding, and in no respect different from those already dead, and laid in the earth: or rather, perhaps, even in a more miserable state. For they, carefully wrapped in their grave-clothes, are laid in the earth, like one on his mother's bosom: but he, in great misery and nakedness, wandering among the graves of the dead, was in utter wretchedness, leading a disgraceful and ignominious life: and so was a proof of the cruelty of the demons, and a plain demonstration of their impurity. And besides this, it is a charge and accusation against them of hatred unto mankind: for they would have no man whatsoever upon earth sober, but wish them like one intoxicated, and crazed, to know nothing to their profit, but be left in ignorance even of Him Who is the Maker of all. For of whomsoever they have possession, and have subjected to their power, him at once they make an example of great misery, deprived of every blessing, and destitute of all sobriety, and bereft moreover entirely even of reason itself.

But why, say some have they possession of men? To such, then, as wish to have this explained, I answer, that the reason of these things is very deep: for so somewhere God is addressed by one of His saints, "Thy judgments are a vast abyss." But as long as we bear this in mind, we shall perchance not shoot beside the mark. The God of all, then, purposely permits some to fall into their power, not so much that they may suffer, as that we may learn by their example in what way the demons treat us, and so may avoid the wish of being subject to them. For by the suffering of one, many are edified.

But the Gerasene, or rather the herd of demons lying concealed within him, fell down before Christ's feet, saying, "What is there between me and you, Jesus, Son of God Most High? I beseech Thee, torment me not.'" Here observe, I pray, the mixture of fear with great audacity, and overweening pride: and that the words, which he is forced, as it were, to cry out, are coupled with inflated haughtiness! For it is a proof of the pride of the enemy, that he ventures to say, "What is there between me and Thee, Jesus, Son of God Most High?He knows, then, for certain, that He is the Son of God Most High: he therefore confesses that He is also God, and Lord of heaven and earth, and of all things therein: and how, then, having usurped that which is not yours, or rather that which is His, and assumed to yourself a glory which in no possible way is thy right:----for you claimed to be worshipped:----did you affirm that He had nothing to do with thee, Whom, as far as they endeavors went, thou caused to be expelled from that dignity which most fitly is His alone? All men upon earth are His; and you wickedly corrupted, removing them far from the knowledge of Him Who truly is the Lord and Maker of all, and plunged them into the mire of sin, making them your worshippers:----and afterwards dost thou say, "What is there between me and you?" What earthly king would endure to have those placed under his scepter harassed by barbarians? Or what shepherd is so unfeeling and indifferent, as when savage beasts attack his flocks, to take no heed of the calamity, nor endeavor to aid his sheep? Confess, even though against your will, which you are, and to whom you speak. Utter words such as befit you: such namely as, "I pray you, torment me not." "For He had commanded, it says, the spirit to go out of the man."

Observe, I pray again, the incomparable majesty of Him Who transcends all, even of Christ. With irresistible might and unequalled authority He crushes Satan by simply willing that so it should be. He does not permit him to venture to give one look of opposition to His commands. Fire and flames unto him was Christ's will: so that it is true as the blessed Psalmist said, "the hills melted like wax before the face of God." And again elsewhere, "Touch the hills, and they shall smoke." For he compares to the hills those high and boastful powers of wickedness; which nevertheless, as though in contact with fire, melt like wax before the might and sovereignty of our Savior. And besides this they smoke: now smoke is an indication of tire about to burst into a blaze; and this it is the lot of the impure spirits to suffer.

But Christ asked him, and commanded him to tell, what was his name. And he said, "Legion, because that many devils had entered into him." Did Christ then ask because He did not know it, and like one of us, wished to learn it as something that had escaped Him? But how is it not perfectly absurd for us to say or imagine anything of the kind? For as being God, "He knows all things, and searches the hearts and reins." He asked therefore for the plan of salvation's sake that we might learn that a great multitude of devils shared the one soul of the man, engendering in him a wretched and impure madness. For he was their work, and they indeed are "wise to do evil," as the Scripture says but to do "good they have no knowledge."

As therefore the Psalmist said, "let us keep the feast with flowers." And "Let all the people clap their hands." For let us bear in mind what was the character of our enemies; and who were those princes of all beneath the heavens before the coining of our Savior: bitter were they, impure, murderers, and full of all immorality. But Christ sets us free from the hatred of these noxious beings. Let us therefore with exultation and gladness in our great joy exclaim, "We will cut asunder their cords, and cast away their yoke from us." For we have been set free, as I said, by the might of Christ, and delivered from those bitter and iniquitous beings, who in old time had the dominion over us.

The herd then of impure spirits asked for a herd----worthy of and like itself----of swine! And Christ purposely gave them leave, though He well knew what they would do. And I can imagine someone saying, why did He grant their request? To which we answer, That He gave them the power, in order that this, like all His other conduct, might be a means of benefit to us, and inspire us with the hope of safety. But perhaps thou wilt say, how, and in what manner? Listen therefore. They ask for power over swine: plainly as something, which they do not possess. For what possible doubt can there be, that they would not have asked it, if it had been in their power to take it without hindrance? But those who have no power over things thus trifling and valueless, how can they injure any one of those whom Christ has scaled, and who place their hope on Him? Comfort therefore your heart: for perhaps thou was terrified at hearing that a crowd of wicked spirits dwelt in one man, and made him wander among the graves of the dead in shame and nakedness, and bereft of mind and understanding. Inasmuch as thou too art a man exposed to temptations, you feared a misery thus bitter and unendurable, should Satan attack thee. Rouse therefore thy heart to confidence: do not suppose that any such thing can happen while Christ surrounds us with protection and love. It is certain that they possess no power even over swine. So great is the providence which the Almighty Governor of our affairs deigns to bestow on human things. For He even said to the holy apostles, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them fell to the ground without your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." For if He bestows His protection upon things thus trifling and valueless, how will He not deem us worthy of all regard, for whose sake He Who by nature is God, even became man, and endured the contumelies *(insults)* of the Jews? Away therefore with fear: for God aids, and encircles with the amour of His good pleasure those whose wish it is to live for Him, and who seek to perform those things that are pleasing in His sight.

And this too we may learn from what befell the herd of swine that wicked demons are cruel, and mischievous, and hurtful, and treacherous to those who are in their power.

This fact clearly proves that they hurried the swine over a precipice and drowned them in the waters. Christ therefore granted their request, that we might learn from what happened, that their disposition is ruthless and bestial, incapable of being softened, and solely intent on doing evil to those whom they can get into their power.

If therefore there be any one among us wanton and swinish, filth-loving and impure, and willingly contaminated with the abominations of sin, such a one by God's permission, falls into their power, and sinks into the abyss of perdition. But it can never happen to those who love Christ, to become subject unto them: nor to us, as long as we walk in His footsteps, and, avoiding negligence in the performance of what is right, desire those things which are honorable, and belong to that virtuous and laudable conversation, which Christ has marked out for us by the precepts of the Gospel: by Whom and with Whom, to God the Father be praise and dominion with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

**A Dialogue on Demons with Abba Philemon**

**George:** Have you encountered demons in your life?

**Abba Philemon:** Yes, in the battle for the mind.

**George:** Have you ever seen a demon-possessed person?

**Philemon:** Possession as in some of the Gospels accounts, yes, but very few. I have seen how demons can possess a mind in a hidden way that the human behavior is no longer human. Someone came to the Monastery for one purpose to destroy the cemetery where the monks were buried. He traveled about 200 miles for such a purpose. No one can debate or convince him of the irrationality of his idea and the lack of a purpose. His mind was filled with evil power, but when one of the monks took him to the burial place and showed him that there are no graves, but wood crosses marked each. He calmed down a little and could not break the crosses. He recovered as he was a coma and told us that he had this vision and inner voice speaking to him asking him to come to the monastery and destroy the cemetery. All were irrational ideas, which [always have] two marks:

1. Ideas not from us;

2. Have no obvious good purpose.

These are parts of the battle of the mind.

**George:** How do we know that ideas are not ours but come from an outside source?

**Philemon:** This is not difficult. Three marks are for ideas that are not from us:

1. There is nothing similar or identical to any rational idea in our past life.
2. There is no good propose, I mean no one will profit but hurt and interruption of our human life.
3. The compelling force that takes away our freedom.

This is what is happening in our generation. People we know behave in a very strange way not for a good propose but at the whim or by a compelling impulse they misbehave because they are in the arena of the battle of the mind, and they don’t know that the compelling force that drives is a form of demonic attack.

Lord Have Mercy.

***Pope’s Notes***

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