

Luke 8:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Analysis

When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. This dramatic encounter reveals demonic theology and terror. "When he saw Jesus, he cried out" (idōn ton Iēsoun anakraxas, ἵδων τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀνακράξας)—the demons immediately recognized Christ's identity and authority. The verb "cried out" (ἀνακράξας) indicates a shriek or scream of terror. "Fell down before him" (prosepesen autō, προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ) describes involuntary prostration—not worship but compelled submission before superior power.

"With a loud voice" (phōnē megalē, φωνὴ μεγάλη) emphasizes the violent, public nature of this confrontation. The demon's question, "What have I to do with thee?" (Ti emoi kai soi, Τί ἔμοι καὶ σοί)—literally "What to me and to you?"—is a Semitic idiom meaning "Why do you interfere with me?" Remarkably, the demon correctly identifies Jesus: "Son of God most high" (Huie tou Theou tou hypsistou, Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου). Demons possess accurate theology—they know Jesus is God's Son (James 2:19).

"I beseech thee, torment me not" (deomai sou, mē me basanisēs, δέομαί σου, μή με βασανίσῃς) reveals demonic terror of judgment. The verb "torment" (βασανίσῃς) refers to torture, punishment, or judgment. Demons know their ultimate fate (Matthew 8:29), and Christ's presence triggers fear of premature judgment. This

verse demonstrates that intellectual knowledge of Christ's identity provides no salvation—demons believe and tremble (James 2:19) yet remain unredeemed.

Historical Context

The title "God most high" (Theos hypsistos) was used by both Jews and Gentiles in the first century. Genesis 14:18-20 uses it for Melchizedek's God; Daniel uses it for Yahweh (Daniel 3:26, 4:2). Gentiles also used the title for Zeus or the supreme deity. That a demon in Gentile territory uses this title may indicate the universal recognition of Yahweh's supremacy, even in pagan regions.

Jewish exorcism in the first century involved complex rituals, incantations, and use of divine names (Acts 19:13-16). Jesus needed none of these—His mere presence compelled demonic submission. The demon's plea "torment me not" echoes Jewish belief that demons would ultimately be judged and punished. Intertestamental literature (1 Enoch, Jubilees) describes fallen angels bound in darkness awaiting final judgment.

Early church fathers noted this passage's significance—demons have correct theology but lack saving faith. Intellectual assent to Jesus' identity differs categorically from trusting surrender. Modern applications warn against presuming that knowledge about Jesus equates to relationship with Jesus. Orthodox belief without regenerate heart leads to damnation, not salvation.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does demonic theology (correct belief without saving faith) warn against mere intellectual Christianity?

2. What does the demon's immediate recognition and terror of Jesus teach about Christ's authority over spiritual forces?
3. Why do demons fear torment while unconverted humans often feel no such fear, and what does this reveal about spiritual blindness?

Interlinear Text

ιδὼν δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνακράξας προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ
 he saw When G3588 Jesus and he cried out fell down before him
 G1492 G1161 G2424 G2532 G349 G4363 G846

 καὶ φωνῇ μεγάλῃ εἶπεν Τί ἔμοι καὶ σοί Ἰησοῦς
 and voice with a loud said What have I and thee Jesus
 G2532 G5456 G3173 G2036 G5101 G1698 G2532 G4671 G2424

 υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου δέομαί σου μή με
 thou Son of God most high I beseech thee not me
 G5207 G3588 G2316 G5310 G1189 G4675 G3361 G3165

 βασανίσης
 torment
 G928

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 8:29 (References Jesus): 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?

2 Peter 2:4 (References God): For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;