

Luke 9:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child.

Analysis

And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. The word *idou* (ἰδοῦ, "behold") draws attention to the urgent scene. A man from the crowd *eboēsen* (ἐβόησεν, "cried out")—an anguished shout for help. He addresses Jesus as *Didaskale* (Διδάσκαλε, "Teacher" or "Master") and uses *deomai* (δέομαι, "I beg" or "beseech"), expressing desperate pleading. The request **look upon my son** (*epiblepsai epi ton huion mou, ἐπιβλέψαι ἐπὶ τὸν υἱόν μου*) means "turn your attention to" or "regard with compassion."

The phrase **for he is mine only child** (*hoti monogenēs moi estin, ὅτι μονογενὴς μοί ἐστιν*) uses *monogenēs* (only-begotten or unique)—the same term describing Jesus as God's only Son (John 3:16). This father's anguish over his only son suffering demonic torment mirrors the Father's anguish at giving His only Son to suffer for sinners. The detail intensifies the tragedy and highlights Jesus' compassion—He knows a father's love for an only son and responds with delivering power.

Historical Context

In ancient Mediterranean culture, sons provided economic security, family continuity, and care for aging parents. An only son's affliction threatened the entire family's future. Demonic possession was widely recognized in the ancient world but poorly understood—often confused with epilepsy, mental illness, or divine

judgment. Jewish exorcism practices involved elaborate rituals and incantations. Jesus' exorcisms were immediate, authoritative, and complete—demonstrating kingdom power over Satan's realm. This father's public desperation before a large crowd shows the intensity of his suffering and faith that Jesus could help where disciples failed.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the father's anguish over his only son's suffering reflect God the Father's love in giving His only Son for our deliverance?
2. What does the detail that this was an 'only child' add to our understanding of the father's desperation and Jesus' compassion?
3. In what ways does this father's public cry for help model the kind of desperate, humble faith that moves Jesus to act?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἄνθρωπος ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου ἀνεβόησεν λέγων,
And behold a man of the company cried out saying
G2532 G2400 G435 G575 G3588 G3793 G310 G3004

Διδάσκαλε δέομαί σου ἐπιβλέψον ἐπὶ τὸν υἱόν μου ὅτι
Master I beseech thee look upon son my for
G1320 G1189 G4675 G1914 G1909 G3588 G5207 G3450 G3754

μονογενῆς ἐστὶν μοί
only child he is mine
G3439 G2076 G3427

Additional Cross-References

John 4:47 (Parallel theme): When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

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