

Matthew 8:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

The presence of 'a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding' confirms this is Gentile territory, as Jews considered swine unclean and wouldn't raise them. The detail sets up the demons' request to enter the pigs, demonstrating both Christ's absolute authority over demons and the destructive nature of demonic power. That demons prefer embodiment in unclean animals to disembodiment shows the horror of their existence under God's judgment.

Historical Context

Pigs were raised primarily for Gentile consumption in the Decapolis region. The presence of a large herd (Mark 5:13 says about 2000) indicates significant commercial operation. The herdsmen's livelihood would be destroyed by what follows, explaining their hostile reaction to Jesus.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What does the demons' preference for embodiment in pigs over disembodiment reveal about the misery of their judged condition?
2. How does the subsequent destruction of the pigs demonstrate that demonic power always leads to destruction and chaos?

Interlinear Text

ἦν	δὲ	μακρὰν	ἀπ'	αὐτῶν	ἀγέλη	χοίρων	πολλῶν
there was	And	a good way off	from	them	an herd	swine	of many
G2258	G1161	G3112	G575	G846	G34	G5519	G4183

βοσκομένη
feeding
G1006

Additional Cross-References

Mark 5:11 (Parallel theme): Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.

Deuteronomy 14:8 (Parallel theme): And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase.

Leviticus 11:7 (Parallel theme): And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you.