

Matthew 8:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

Analysis

The demons' petition to 'send us away into the herd of swine' reveals they could not act without Christ's permission, demonstrating His absolute sovereignty over the spirit realm. That they must ask permission shows even in their rebellion, demons remain under God's control, able to do only what He permits for His purposes. Their request also reveals the destructive bent of demonic nature—unable to possess humans, they'll settle for destroying animals.

Historical Context

The demons' petition and Jesus' permission (verse 32) shows that Satan and demons can only do what God permits within His sovereign purposes (Job 1-2). This provides comfort that no spiritual warfare occurs outside God's control and that His purposes prevail even through demonic activity.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the demons' need for Christ's permission teach about God's sovereignty over all spiritual forces?
2. How should this account of Christ's authority over demons strengthen your confidence during spiritual warfare?

Interlinear Text

οἱ δὲ δαιμονες παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες Εἰ
G3588 So the devils besought him saying If
G1161 G1142 G3870 G846 G3004 G1487

ἐκβάλλεις ἡμᾶς ἐπίτρεψον ἡμῖν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὴν
out us suffer us to go away into G3588
G1544 G2248 G2010 G2254 G565 G1519

ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων
the herd G3588 of swine
G34 G5519

Additional Cross-References

Mark 5:12 (Evil): And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

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