

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 11 – January 11th – Matthew 8:18-34

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Matthew

- Hagner, Donald A *Word Biblical Commentary Vols.33a & 33b: Matthew 1-13 & Matthew 14-28*, Word Books, Dallas, 1993 & 1995
- Morris, Leon *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992

Verse 18

Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς πολλοὺς ὄχλους περὶ αὐτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὸ πέραν.

ἰδων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ὄραω trans see, observe, perceive, recognise; intrans make sure, see to; pass. appear

ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude

Most MSS read πολλοὺς ὄχλους or a variant of the same. Only B and cop^{sa} read ὄχλον.

κελευω order, command

περαν i) prep with gen beyond, across, to or on the other side; ii) το π. the other side

Verse 19

καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς γραμματεὺς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Διδάσκαλε, ἀκολουθήσω σοι ὅπου ἂν ἀπέρχῃ.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach, agree with, associate with

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one, a, an, single

γραμματεὺς, εως m scribe, expert in Jewish law, scholar; town clerk

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

ὅπου adv. where, whereas, while; ὅπου ἂν or ὅπου ἂν wherever, whenever

ἂν if, even if, though; often equivalent to ἂν particle indicating contingency and introducing subjunctive

ἀπέρχῃ Verb, pres midd dep subj, 2 s ἀπερχομαι

"It is important to note ... that although the scribe reflects good Jewish practice in choosing his teacher, in the Gospel narrative it is consistently Jesus who initiates the disciple-master relationship by his sovereign choice of disciples. This perhaps explains the coolness of Jesus' response in the next verse." Hagner.

Verse 20

καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσεις, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνει.

ἀλωπηξ, εκος f fox

φωλεος, ου m den, hole

πετεινον, ου n bird

οὐρανος, ου m heaven

κατασκηνωσις, εως f nest

This is the first occurrence of the title 'Son of Man' in Matthew. On this title see FF Bruce, "The Background of the Son of Man Sayings" in *Christ is Lord*, IVP 1982. Of its occurrence here Hagner (who has an excursus on this term) says that υἱος του ανθρωπου here stands in the place of T' and is not a titular instance of 'Son of Man.' Nevertheless, the use of this mysterious and exalted phrase later in the Gospel in predictions of Jesus suffering and death colours its meaning here in describing his ministry in abject humility.

ποῦ interrogative adverb where, at what place, to what place

κεφαλη, ης f head

κλινω trans lay, bow, put to flight; intrans wear away, draw to a close

"There is undeniably a hyperbolic element here (e.g., during the Galilean ministry Jesus used Capernaum as his 'home'), but Jesus' mode of life was anything but a 'settled' one. Also possibly in view is the opposition and persecution experienced by him." Hagner.

Verse 21

ἕτερος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Κύριε, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι πρῶτον ἀπελθεῖν καὶ θάψαι τὸν πατέρα μου.

ἕτερος, α, ον other, another, different
μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

Some mss have τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ. Hagner comments: "The standard critical text puts αὐτοῦ, 'his,' here in brackets because of the difficulty of deciding from the divided MS evidence (⋈ B 33 it sa omit it; C L W Θ f^{1,13} TR lat sy mae bo include it) whether it was in the original text. A majority of the [UBS] committee thought it possible that αὐτοῦ was deleted by some copyists in order to avoid the impression that the scribe of v 19 was a disciple of Jesus."

ἐπιτρέπω let, allow, permit

πρωτον i) adv. first, in the first place, first of all; ii) equivalent to prep with gen before

θαπτω bury

πατηρ, πατρος m father

May mean, 'allow me to stay at home until my father is dead, then I will follow you,' so K.E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes*.

Verse 22

ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτῷ· Ἀκολουθεῖ μοι, καὶ ἄφες τοὺς νεκροὺς θάψαι τοὺς ἑαυτῶν νεκρούς.

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

ἀφιημι cancel, forgive; allow, tolerate; leave, forsake, let go, divorce.

νεκρος, α, ον dead

θαπτω bury

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον reflexive pronoun, himself, herself, itself

νεκρος, α, ον dead

The meaning would appear to be 'let the spiritually dead bury their own physically dead,' though some think that the Aramaic original may have meant 'let the burier [grave digger] bury the dead' i.e., 'let the business take care of itself.' Hagner comments, "Be that as it may, the clarity of the point remains that the disciple is not to let himself or herself be distracted by anything, however legitimate in itself... It would be as much a mistake to take the statement of v 22 quite literally (unless in fact the proposed delay was to be a long one) as it would be to dismember oneself for the sake of righteousness (thus Carson rightly). But, despite the hyperbole, there is a fundamental principle here about the radical character, urgency, and uncompromising nature of discipleship that is to be heard with every invitation to, or volunteering of, discipleship to Jesus and the cause of the kingdom."

Day 684: Matthew 8:23-27

Verses 23-27

Cf. Mk 4:36-41; Lk 8:22-25. Cf. also Mt 14:22-23.

Verse 23

Καὶ ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς πλοῖον ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.

ἐμβάντι Verb, aor act ptc, m dat s ἐμβαίνω get into, embark

πλοῖον, ον n boat, ship

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

μαθητης, ον m disciple, pupil, follower

Verse 24

καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμὸς μέγας ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ, ὥστε τὸ πλοῖον καλύπτεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκάθευδεν.

σεισμος, ον m earthquake, storm (on the sea)

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι θαλασσα, ης f sea

ὥστε so that, with the result that

πλοῖον, ον n boat, ship

καλυπτω cover, hide

κυμα, ατος n wave

καθευδω sleep, be dead

"In the OT such sleep is evidence of a trust in God's protection (cf. Job 11:18-19; Pss 3:5-6; 4:8; Prov 3:24-26). Jesus' sleeping under such circumstances can itself easily give rise to the question with which the pericope ends, 'What sort of man is this?'" Hagner.

Verse 25

καὶ προσελθόντες ἤγειραν αὐτὸν λέγοντες· Κύριε, σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα.

προσερχομαι come or go to, approach, agree with, associate with

C² L f¹³ and TR have οἱ μαθηταί; other witnesses (e.g., C* W Θ f¹) have οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ. The shorter text with no specified subject is contained in ⋈ B 33 and the Western witnesses (it vg Jerome). It would be natural for scribes to add a subject.

ἤγειραν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ἐγείρω raise

σῶσον Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s σωζω save, rescue, heal

ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill, lose; midd be lost, perish, die

Verse 26

καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; τότε ἐγεῖρθεις ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς ἀνέμοις καὶ τῇ θαλάσῃ, καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη.

δειλος, η, ον cowardly, afraid
ὀλιγόπιστος, ον of little faith

"This question comes in Matthew before the stilling of the sea (unlike in Mark and Luke, where it follows the miracle) in keeping with the discipleship theme and thus heightening its impact. If the disciples respond to an absolute call to discipleship and hence leave all and risk their own lives, they must also understand that the one who calls them will also preserve them in whatever circumstances they may find themselves." Hagner.

τοτε then, at that time

ἐγειρω raise

ἐπιτιμαω command, order, give a command, rebuke

ἀνεμος, ον m wind

θαλασσα, ης f sea

ἐγένετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s γινομαι

γαληνη, ης f calm

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

"καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη ... refers to more than simply a cessation of the storm. It instead means there was a mysterious, supernatural calm that testified to the sovereign power of Jesus but that also symbolised the deep peace and security that belonged to those who follow Jesus (cf. the strong contrast with 'the great [μεγας] earthquake')." Hagner.

Verse 27

οἱ δὲ ἄνθρωποι ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες· Ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν;

θαυμαζω wonder, be amazed

ποταπος, η, ον of what sort, what kind, what wonderful

ἀνεμος, ον m wind

θαλασσα, ης f sea

ὑπακουω obey, be subject to

"Power over the sea, which is often symbolic of evil or the dwelling place of evil, was regarded as especially impressive. 'Who is as mighty as you, O LORD?' asks the Psalmist, who then continues, 'You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them' (Ps 89:8-9, NRSV; cf. Pss 65:7; 107:29). If we press the symbolism of evil, then Jesus' power over the sea is of the same kind as his healings and exorcisms, and hence truly representative of the dawning of the eschatological kingdom. No conclusions were yet drawn by these disciples, but they knew beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus was an extraordinary person with incomparable power and authority." Hagner.

Verses 28-34

Cf. Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-39. "We should notice that demon possession is rare if it occurs at all in the Old Testament, and there are very few examples after the Gospels. In the Bible demon possession is part of the upsurge of evil opposing Jesus in the time of his incarnation." Morris.

Verse 28

Καὶ ἐλθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πέραν εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν ὑπήντησαν αὐτῷ δύο δαμονιζόμενοι ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἐξερχόμενοι, χαλεποὶ λίαν ὥστε μὴ ἰσχύειν τινὰ παρελθεῖν διὰ τῆς ὁδοῦ ἐκείνης.

περαν beyond, across; το π. the other side

χωρα, ας f country, region

Γαδαρηνος, η, ον of Gadara

There are variant readings here which probably arose because Gadara was about six miles from the lake while Gerasa was about 40 miles from it. It seems likely that Gadara is correct and that it had territory that reached to the lakeside.

ὑπανταω meet, fight

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two

δαμονιζομαι be possessed by demons

Hagner comments, "There can be little doubt that Matthew has introduced two demoniacs into Mark's (and Luke's) story of a single demoniac. It is easier to explain why Matthew would have increased that number than why Mark would have reduced it. The same phenomenon may be observed in Matthew's doubling of the single blind man of Mark 10:46-52 (and Luke 18:35-43) in 20:29-34 (cf. also the two blind men of 9:27-31). A possible reason for Matthew's doubling here may be to compensate for his omission of Mark's first exorcism story (Mark 1:23-28) from his narrative (Gundry, Green, McNeile) as well as an earlier story of the healing of the blind man (Mark 8:22-26). Matthew apparently has a liking for these stories of pairs of healed individuals and may well regard such a practice as justifiable, given the large number of exorcisms and healings that Jesus performed... It may also be the case, given Matthew's Jewish-Christian readers and their debate with the synagogue, that Matthew is thinking of the importance of more than one witness in Jewish tradition (so too Lamarche; Loader). And as Gibbs notes, in each instance of the pairs produced by Matthew, there is an important christological confession (cf. France). Thus Matthew alone among the evangelists quotes the OT text – granted in another context, but at least showing that Matthew had the verse in mind – which says that every matter is to be 'confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses' (18:16, quoting Deut 19:15, cf. Matt 26:60). In short, Matthew's doubling of those healed is a way of representing something of the true extent of Jesus' healings. This device is analogous to his frequent miracle summaries (which also indicate a concern with this matter) and lessens the need to record further individual stories and thus lengthen the work excessively."

μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb
χαλεπος, η, ον violent, fierce (of men)
λιαυ adv exceedingly, greatly
ωστε so that, with the result that
ισχυω be strong, be able, be sufficient
παρελθειν Verb, aor act infin παρερχομαι
pass, pass by
οδοσ, ου f way, path, road, journey
εκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, he,
she, it

Verse 29

και ιδου εκραξαν λεγοντες· Τι ημιν και σοι, υιε του θεου; ηλθες ωδε προ καιρου βασανισαι ημας;

κραζω cry out, call out

τι ημιν και σοι An idiomatic expression meaning "what have you to do with us?", indicating that the speakers see no common ground between themselves and Jesus. Cf. Jn 2:4.

TR has σοι, Ἰησοῦ, υἱε probably by influence of the parallel passage in Mark and Luke.

ωδε here, in this place
καιρος, ου m time
βασανιζω torment, disturb

The demons recognised that Jesus had authority to 'torment' them on the day of judgement by casting them into Hell, the lake of fire. "This, of course, fits in with Matthew's perspective of realised eschatology: the kingdom has come, but in advance of its fullest and final coming (cf. 12:28; 13:30)." Hagner.

Verse 30

ην δε μακραν απ' αυτων αγελη χοιρων πολλων βοσκομενη.

μακραν far off, at some distance
αγελη, ης f herd (of pigs)
χοιρος, ου m pig

"That it was an αγελη χοιρων, 'herd of swine,' is significant, since swine were unclean animals according to the OT (e.g., Lev 11:7; Deut 14:8); their presence also indicates that the swine-herders and the population of that area were non-Jewish... Whether the demoniacs themselves were Jews or Gentiles remains unclear." Hagner.

βοσκω tend, feed; midd graze, feed

Verse 31

οι δε δαιμονες παρεκαλουν αυτον λεγοντες· Ει εκβαλλεις ημας, αποστειλον ημας εις την αγελην των χοιρων.

δαιμων, ονος m demon, evil spirit
παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
εκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out
αποστελλω send, send out

"At this point the reader will undoubtedly bring to the text questions that the commentator is ill-equipped to answer, questions such as, Why do the demons make this request (v 31)? Why does Jesus heed this request (v 32)? And what was the fate of the demons when the herd of swine drowned (v 32)? In these and other such questions, without a knowledge of the mental and metaphysical worlds of demons, speculation is the only recourse." Hagner.

Verse 32

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ὑπάγετε. οἱ δὲ ἐξεληθόντες ἀπῆλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους· καὶ ἰδοὺ ὥρμησεν πᾶσα ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἀπέθανον ἐν τοῖς ὕδασιν.

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart
ἐξεληθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom
ἐξερχομαι
ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl
ἀπερχομαι
ὄρμαω rush
κρημνος, ου m steep bank
θάλασσα, ης f sea
ἀπέθανον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl
ἀποθνησκω die
ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

"The yielding of Jesus to the demons' request almost certainly has a pedagogical purpose. If the narrative perhaps shows the resourcefulness of the demons, more significantly it makes the point that not even the unclean swine were prepared to contain the demons, and the demons end up destroying the swine... They gained nothing by their delaying tactics but were cast out – and not only into some temporary lodging from which they might be able to do further harm." Hagner.

Morris lists a number of perplexing features of this story, things we find difficult to understand such as: demon possession; demon possession of pigs; the destruction of the pigs. Morris then says, "But at least we can say that this brought to light the real values of the local people: they valued their pigs more than the healing of the demoniacs."

Verse 33

οἱ δὲ βόσκοντες ἔφυγον, καὶ ἀπελθόντες εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἀπήγγειλαν πάντα καὶ τὰ τῶν δαιμονιζομένων.

βοσκω see v.30
ἔφυγον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl φευγω
flee, run away from
πολις, εως f city, town
ἀπήγγειλαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl
ἀπαγγελλω announce, proclaim

Verse 34

καὶ ἰδοὺ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐξῆλθεν εἰς ὑπάντησιν τῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν παρεκάλεσαν ὅπως μεταβῆ ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν.

ὑπάντησις, εως f meeting (εἰς ὑ to meet)
ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὁραω
see, observe
παρακαλεω see v.31
ὅπως (or ὅπως ἄν) that, in order that
μεταβῆ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s μεταβαίνω
leave
ὄριον, ου n territory, region