

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Week 137 – Matthew 8:5-34

Day 681: Matthew 8:5-13**Verses 5-13**

The healing of the centurion's son is the only miracle story in Matthew not found in Mark. The source would seem to lie in the material common to Matthew and Luke but not found in Mark, a source commonly known as Q. A similar story is found in John 4:46b-54. Morris comments on the differences between the account here and that in Luke and takes the view that Matthew "simply gives the gist of the centurion's communication with Jesus, whereas Luke in greater detail gives the actual sequence of events ... Matthew was concerned primarily with the centurion's faith and nationality."

Verse 5

Εἰσελθόντος δὲ αὐτοῦ εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ προσήλθεν αὐτῷ ἑκατόνταρχος παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν

εἰσελθόντος Verb, aor act ptc, m gen s
εἰσερχομαι enter, go in, come in
προσήλθεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
προσερχομαι see v.2
ἑκατονταρχῆς, ου and ἑκατονταρχος, ου
m centurion
παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

Verse 6

καὶ λέγων, Κύριε, ὁ παῖς μου βέβληται ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ παραλυτικός, δεινῶς βασανιζόμενος.

Again, there is ambiguity in the salutation κυριε, cf. v.2.

παῖς, παιδος m & f servant, slave, child

Matthew uses the ambiguous term παῖς which could mean 'servant' (cf. Luke's δουλος), but could equally mean 'son' (cf. John's υἱος). The Q source may have read παῖς which Luke interpreted as δουλος.

βέβληται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s βαλλω
trans throw, throw down, place
παραλυτικός, ου m paralytic, cripple
δεινῶς terribly, with hostility
βασανιζω torment, disturb

Verse 7

καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Ἐγὼ ἔλθων θεραπεύσω αὐτόν.

ἔλθων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἔρχομαι

θεραπευω heal, cure; serve

"Jesus was willing to enter the home of a Gentile, which is striking because the dwelling places of Gentiles were [considered] unclean." Morris.

The unusual syntax has caused many to suggest Jesus' words may have been a question, though Hagner thinks it more likely to be the result of Matthew's terseness of style.

Verse 8

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ ἑκατόνταρχος ἔφη, Κύριε, οὐκ εἰμὶ ἱκανὸς ἵνα μου ὑπὸ τὴν στέγην εἰσέλθῃς· ἀλλὰ μόνον εἰπέ λόγῳ, καὶ ἰαθήσεται ὁ παῖς μου.

ἀποκριθεὶς Verb, aor pass dep ptc, m nom s
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply
ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say
ἱκανός, η, ον worthy, sufficient, fit
στεγῆ, ης f roof
εἰσελθῆς Verb, aor act subj, 2 s εἰσερχομαι
see v.5

"'I am not worthy,' rather than being a reference to personal unworthiness, very probably reflects the centurion's sensitivity to Jewish mores, which prohibited association with Gentiles." Hagner.

μόνον adv only, alone
ἰαθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s ἰαομαι
heal, cure, restore
παῖς, παιδος see v.6

A few MSS lack the words ὁ παῖς μου

Verse 9

καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἔξουσίαν, ἔχων ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτὸν στρατιωτῆς, καὶ λέγω τούτῳ, Πορεύθητι, καὶ πορεύεται, καὶ ἄλλῳ, Ἔρχου, καὶ ἔρχεται, καὶ τῷ δούλῳ μου, Ποίησον τοῦτο, καὶ ποιεῖ.

ἐξουσία, ας f authority, right, power

Several MSS, including x B, read ὑπο ἐξουσίαν τασσομενος. Metzger comments that this is "clearly an interpolation derived from the parallel account in Lk 7:8."

ἐμαυτὸν Possessive pronoun, 1st sing, acc s
ἐμαυτου, ης my, belonging to me
στρατιωτῆς, ου m soldier
πορεύθητι Verb, aor pass dep imperat, 2 s
πορευομαι go, travel
ἔρχου Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 s
ἐρχομαι
ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

δουλος, ου m slave, servant

"All authority in the army was vested in the emperor, so that the centurion was subject to imperial authority. But when a centurion gave orders he was obeyed because he spoke with the authority of the emperor. This man's reply shows that he had an unusual understanding that Jesus spoke with the authority of God. He would accordingly be obeyed." Morris.

The centurion's words "imply belief in the messianic authority and status of Jesus." Hagner.

Oliver O'Donovan comments, "Authority is the capacity to give effective commands, we are told: those who can call upon it are used to having their commands obeyed without attending in person to watch over their execution. Not to be overlooked is the phrase used for 'being in authority': *hupo exousian tassesthai*, literally being set 'under' authority. An important insight is captured there: to be *in* authority you have to be *under* it, and if you are under it you are in it. To be subject to authority is to be *authorised*. In that Jesus exercises the powers of God's Kingdom, he shows himself subject to that kingdom. So God's Kingdom is made known by a true subject of that kingdom, wholly under God's authority, wholly authorised to act in God's name." *The Desire of the Nations*, p. 90.

Verse 10

ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐθαύμασεν καὶ εἶπεν τοῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν, Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, παρ' οὐδενὶ τοσαύτην πίστιν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ εὗρον.

θαυμάζω wonder, be amazed

ἀκολουθοῦσιν Verb, pres act ptc, m/n dat pl
ἀκολουθεῶ follow, accompany, be a disciple

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

In place of παρ' οὐδενὶ τοσαύτην πίστιν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ εὗρον many MSS read οὐδε ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ τοσαυτην πιστιν εὗρον, conforming the text to Lk 7:9.

τοσουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative adj so much, so great, so large

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

"With this first introduction of the word 'faith' in the Gospel (but see 6:30), Matthew has reached an important theme that will be referred to often (e.g., 9:2, 22, 29; 15:28; 17:20; 21:21; 23:23)." Hagner.

εὗρον Verb, aor act indic, 1 s & 3 pl
εὕρισκω

Verse 11

λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσιν καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακωβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν·

Cf. Lk 13:28-29.

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου much, many

ἀνατολη, ης f rising sun, dawn, east

δυσμη, ης f west (always pl.)

ἤκω come, have come, be present

ἀνακλινω seat at table, lay down

The allusion is to the eschatological banquet. "The references concerning the coming of many from east and west (e.g., Ps 107:3; Isa 43:5; Bar 4:37) were understood as referring to the return of the diaspora Jews to Israel. The great family of the covenant people of God would gather with the patriarchs, who symbolise Israel, in the new eschatological kingdom and feast together with them – thus manifesting in this table communion their oneness... But now with the coming of the Messiah, that exclusiveness is turned on its head in an apparent reversal of salvation-history. It is the Gentiles who are being called from the ends of the earth... The centurion represents in effect the beginning of a stream of Gentiles who will come from east and west to join the eschatological banquet, while – and consider the offence of this unparalleled teaching – the Jews, 'the sons of the kingdom,' will themselves (in large part, i.e., who reject the Messiah), be rejected, although, of course, this does not apply to the OT saints... The true 'sons of the kingdom' are now those who respond to the proclamation of Jesus (cf. 13:38; cf. 5:45)." Hagner.

Verse 12

οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἔξωτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων.

ἐκβληθήσονται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 pl

ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out

σκοτος, ους n darkness, evil

ἔξωτερος, α, ον outer, outmost

ἐκει there, in that place, to that place

ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

κλαυθμος, ου m bitter crying, wailing

βρυγμος, ου m grinding, gnashing

ὀδους, ὀδοντος m tooth

"Some of those who might have been expected to respond to Jesus with faith and commitment will not do so, and their failure is shown up by the centurion's faith. The Master leaves his hearers in no doubt that this is a failure with dire and permanent consequences." Morris.

Verse 13

καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ ἑκατοντάρχη,
"Ὑπάγε, ὡς ἐπίστευσας γενηθήτω σοι. καὶ
ἰάθη ὁ παῖς [αὐτοῦ] ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart
πιστεῦω believe (in), have faith (in), have
confidence in, entrust

γενηθήτω Verb, aor pass dep imperat, 3 s
γίνομαι

ἰαομαι heal, cure, restore

ὥρα, ας f hour, moment

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that

A few MSS read ἀπο της ὥρας ἐκεινης

Day 682: Matthew 8:14-17**Verses 14-17**

Cf. Mk 1:29-34.

Verse 14

Καὶ ἔλθων ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν
Πέτρου εἶδεν τὴν πενθερὰν αὐτοῦ
βεβλημένην καὶ πυρέσσουσαν·

ἐλθων Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἔρχομαι

οἰκία, ας f house, home, household

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὄραω trans

see, observe, perceive

πενθερα, ας f mother-in-law

βεβλημένην Verb, perf pass ptc, f acc s

βαλλω see v.6

πυρεσσω be sick with fever

Verse 15

καὶ ἦψατο τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς, καὶ ἀφῆκεν
αὐτὴν ὁ πυρετός· καὶ ἠγέρθη καὶ διηκόνει
αὐτῷ.

ἅπτω midd. take hold of, touch

χειρ, χειρος f hand

ἀφῆκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀφίημι

leave

πυρετος, ου m fever

ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω

raise

διακονεω serve, wait on, care for

"Not only was she cured of the fever but she was restored to full strength." Morris.

Some MSS, followed by the TR, read αὐτοῖς rather than αὐτῷ, conforming the text to that of Mark. Hagner comments that Matthew's singular lends "a distinct christological aspect to the story." He also comments on the striking chiasmus of vv 14-15:

a he saw his mother-in-law

b lying sick

c having a fever

d he touched her hand

c' the fever left her

b' and she rose

a' and she served him

"Matthew appears to have imposed the carefully contrived structure upon the material in abbreviating the Markan tradition. Hill rightly notes that the special form of the passage 'may be evidence of a Christian 'rabbinic' mind in action, making a narrative easily remembered for the community.'"

Verse 16

Ὀψίας δὲ γενομένης προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ
δαιμονιζομένους πολλούς· καὶ ἐξέβαλεν
τὰ πνεύματα λόγῳ, καὶ πάντας τοὺς
κακῶς ἔχοντας ἐθεράπευσεν·

ὄψια, ας f evening

"At the end of the day, when leisure allowed (or perhaps waiting for the end of the sabbath, when the sick could be carried... Mark 1:32)." Hagner.

προσήνεγκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl

προσφέρω bring, bring before

δαιμονιζομαι be possessed by demons

πολυσ, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου

much, many

ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out

"Jesus cast them out *with a word*, a contrast to the techniques characteristic of contemporary exorcists, but characteristic of Jesus (cf. v.8) and indicative of his supreme power." Morris.

κακως badly, severely; κακως ἔχω be sick

θεραπευω heal, cure; serve

καὶ πάντας τοὺς κακῶς ἔχοντας

ἐθεράπευσεν "This inclusiveness suggests (1) that there was no disease Jesus could not heal and (2) the universal scope of the grace of the kingdom announced by Jesus." Hagner.

Verse 17

ὅπως πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ
προφήτου λέγοντος, Αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας
ἡμῶν ἔλαβεν καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν.

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἂν) that, in order that

πληρωθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s πληρωω
fill, fulfill, accomplish

ῥηθὲν Verb, aor pass ptc, n nom/acc s λεγω

Matthew's quotation of Is 53:4 is independent of the LXX and is closer to the Hebrew.

ἀσθενεια, ας f weakness, illness

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω

νοσος, ου f disease, illness

βαστάζω carry, endure, remove

"The healings anticipate the passion in that they begin to roll back the effects of the sin for which Jesus came to die." Gundry.

"It is a sign of the reality of the presence of the kingdom announced by Jesus... Properly perceived, these healings are most important as symbols of the much greater 'healing' that is at the heart of the gospel, the healing of the cross. At the same time, they foreshadow the fulfilment of the age to come when all sufferings and sickness will be finally removed (cf. Rev 21:1-4). During his ministry, the healings performed by Jesus were the fulfilment of prophecy; but Isa 53:4 guarantees no one healing in the present age. What is guaranteed is that Christ's atoning death will in the eschaton provide healing for all without exception. The healings through the ministry of Jesus and those experienced in our day are the first-fruits, the down payment, of the final experience of deliverance." Hagner.

Day 683: Matthew 8:18-22

Verse 18

Ἴδων δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὄχλον περὶ αὐτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὸ πέραν.

ἶδων 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 πολλους ὄχλους or a variant of the same. Only B and cop^{sa} read ὄχλον. Metzger writes concerning the UBS text, "After repeated discussion a majority of the Committee finally decided that, despite its slender attestation, the reading of B and cop^{sa} is to be preferred, and that the other readings are to be explained as amplifications made in order to emphasise the size of the crowd around Jesus."

κέλευω 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

εἷς, 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

εἰν 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 ἀλωπεκες 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 ἀνθρώπου here stands in the place of 'I' 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 [αὐτοῦ] εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Κύριε, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι πρώτον ἀπελθεῖν καὶ θάψαι τὸν πατέρα μου.

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

"The standard critical text puts αὐτου, '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 committee thought it possible that αὐτου was deleted by some copyists in order to avoid the impression that the scribe of v 19 was a disciple of Jesus." Hagner.

ἐπιτρεπω 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

ἀφημι 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 τὸ πλοῖον ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.

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

πλοῖον, ου n boat, ship

ἀκολουθεω follow, accompany, be a disciple

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

Verse 24

καὶ ἰδὸν σεισμός μέγας ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ, ὥστε τὸ πλοῖον καλύπτεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων· αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκάθευδεν.

σεισμος, ου 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, ου 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 μαθηται; other witnesses (e.g., C* W Θ f¹) have οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ. The shorter text with no specified subject is contained in κ 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 ἔγειρω 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 ἐγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς ἀνέμοις καὶ τῇ θαλάσῃ, καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη μεγάλη.

δειλος, η, ον cowardly, afraid ὀλιγοπιστος, 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, ου 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, ου 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.

Day 685: Matthew 8:28-34**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 ἔλθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πέραν εἰς τὴν
χωρὰν τῶν Γαδαρηνῶν ὑπήντησαν αὐτῷ
δύο δαιμονιζόμενοι ἐκ τῶν μνημείων
ἐξερχόμενοι, χαλεποὶ λίαν, ὥστε μὴ
ἰσχύειν τινὰ παρελθεῖν διὰ τῆς ὁδοῦ
ἐκεῖνης.

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 δυοιν two

δαιμονιζομαι 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)

λιαν adv exceedingly, greatly

ὥστε so that, with the result that

ἰσχυω be strong, be able, be sufficient

παρελθεῖν Verb, aor act infin παρερχομαι
pass, pass by

ὁδοσ, ου f way, path, road, journey

ἐκεινοσ, η, ο demonstrative adj. that, he,
she, it

Verse 29

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἔκραξαν λέγοντεσ, Τί ἡμῖν καὶ
σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθεσ ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ
βασανίσαι ἡμᾶσ;

κραζω cry out, call out

τι ἡμῖν 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, ὅτι probably by influence of the parallel passage in Mark and Luke.

ὧδε 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

ἦν δὲ μακρὰν ἀπὸ αὐτῶν ἀγέλη χοίρων πολλῶν βοσκομένη.

μακρὰν far off, at some distance
ἀγέλη, ης f herd (of pigs)
χοῖρος, ου m pig

"That it was an ἀγέλη χοίρων, '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

οἱ δὲ δαίμονες παρεκάλουν αὐτὸν λέγοντες, Εἰ ἐκβάλλεις ἡμᾶς, ἀπόστειλον ἡμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἀγέλην τῶν χοίρων.

δαίμων, ονος m demon, evil spirit
παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out
ἀποστελλω 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 ἀπήλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους· καὶ ἰδοὺ ὥρμησεν πᾶσα ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημνοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ ἀπέθανον ἐν τοῖς ὕδασιν.

ὑπάγω go, go one's way, depart
ἐξεληθόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m pl nom
ἐξερχομαι
ἀπήλθον 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.

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 ἐξηλθεν 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 ὄραω
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

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."