

17. Jesus, the Master of all - Part 2

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Last week I was going to cover all of chapter 8. The more I studied that chapter, the more I realized that it was a way too big chunk for me to bite. So I divided it in two.

We witnessed how Jesus displayed His authority over sickness and demon possession in last study. The force of nature and the force of the evil are no exception under His authority.

When the things around us go haywire or don't go the way we expected or don't follow the time schedule we wanted it to happen, we often panic. We even think that God lost His control over our situations. No, the only person lost cool is us, not our God.

Let's make a few things clear:

1) We often come up with a phrase, "Why does bad thing happen to good people?"

There is no good people according to our Bible. We are all wicked sinners who deserve hell. But in His great mercy and love, Jesus rescued us from one way ticket to hell and set our feet upon the solid Rock that is Christ Jesus. So, any good thing happens to us addition to our salvation is icing. I often have to remind this to myself.

2) Talking about demons and satan makes me spooky.

To be exact, we should be spooky. They are the enemy of God and us. If we believe that there is our God who protects us, we'd better believe that there is demons who wants to steal our joy, to kill our love for the Lord and to destroy our testimonies.

A. AGAINST NATURE - STORM OF THE SEA

Matthew 8:23-27 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

The same storm revealed what kind of foundation we are on from the last study, also reveal who is in control. It seems that the storm will do whatever it feels like on her way. She can reap anything apart a great big ship or multi- million dollar beach front mansion. But there is someone who controls that storm of life. He is the One whom we know as Jesus. This is the same Jesus who holds our lives in His mighty hands. There is not a storm of life that comes to us without an approval by Him.

See the peace Christ displayed—able to sleep in a dangerous storm. This is the peace we can have when we know we are in the center of God's will. It only comes from the Father.

Can we be in storm of our lives while we rae in the center of God's will? Yes, you are looking at the example right now.

Why does God bring tests into our lives? Is it because He wants to give us a hard time or embarrass us? No. It is because God wants us to learn. He wants us to mature spiritually. God wants us to learn to trust Him even when we don't understand Him.

James 1:12 God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

The Bible says, "For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." (Hebrews 12:6 NKJV). Although God will discipline us when necessary, the word chasten also means "to train." God wants to teach us. He wants us to grow. He loves us so much that He will bring a series of tests and lessons into our lives to whip us into shape. Those very tests, those very difficulties, and those very obstacles all can be indications of God's love for us.

There are three kinds of storms in our lives:

1) Correcting Storm - It comes from our own faults and mistakes. We are the ones who caused it. If we are immature in the Lord, we tend to blame on God for this storm even though it is our own faults. For example, we run up charge cards before Christmas and crying out to God when the bill is due in January. Or a guy or gal ran wild and sleep with just about anyone comes way, then he or she realize that they now have AIDS. There are many examples we find around our lives.

Here is a question for this storm. Did we learn from this storm? If we did, something good came out of this storm that God allowed us to go through. But if we haven't, the storm might continue until we learn.

2) Protecting Storm - Right after Jesus fed 5,000 plus people, they wanted to make Him their king even by force. The disciples got excited by that idea. Because if their Master becomes a king, they will also become something significant in the upcoming kingdom. But Jesus knew better and took them across the sea and allowed a storm to come by to get their attention. Jesus was protecting His disciples from the multitudes.

While great and godly things happen in our lives, sometimes our heads get too big. Then God who loves us very much, allows a storm of protection to come by to make us realize that it is not by our own efforts, but by His.

3) Perfecting Storm - God allowed Joseph to go through over a decade of slavery and imprisonment to bring him up to be the prime minister of Egypt. God put Moses through 40 years of wilderness as a shepherd to make him to be the one who led the Israelites in the mass Exodus.

This is one of the most-difficult-to-understand-storms. Why? Because we want to be mature in the Lord without any trials, tests and storms. The people who work at sorry excused New Age Biosphere had to anchor down the trees inside of that place. Because without the wind, the tree becomes so weak and cannot stand on its own weight. But the trees near around the ocean are strong with deep root, because it learned how to survive through difficult raging storm. We cannot be greenhouse Christians, but rough and tough and seasoned Christians who endured the storms of lives.

By His word He controls the wind and the sea, and there is an immediate calm. The only thing still waving back and forth were the disciples' hearts. They were wondering who this man truly is. We go from a "great storm" to a "great calm" because of a great Savior! How thankful we should be that Christ calms the storms of life!

B. AGAINST DEMONIC FORCE

Matthew 8:28-29 When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

The other Gospel accounts mention only one of these men. This must be because there was one that was far more severe in his state of demonic possession, having many demons. The demons knew who Jesus was, even if the disciples didn't. These demons also knew of both their immediate destiny - to be cast out - and their ultimate destiny - to suffer everlasting torment.

There are three groups of people when it comes to how to react against the demonic forces:

1) Completely ignorant people: These people are clueless or could care less about the biblical truth against the demons. Because their lives are completely controlled by the demons without any one of them knowing.

2) Superstitious people: These are the people watched way too many horror movies. They carry garlic around their necks. They say, "This will keep any demon away from me." More than demons, other people will stay away from them, especially when they eat those garlic often. Some carry silver spikes, or silver bullets, or even crucifixes. Demons are not afraid of any of those items. There is one power that the demons are afraid of. It is the power of Jesus.

3) The people with their trust in Jesus: These are the people who know the Word of God and understand the power of God over the demons' according to 1 John 4:4.

C. STUPIDITY OF CHRISTIAN DEMON POSSESSION

Within the ranks of Christianity, there are some Bible teachers claim that Christians can be demon-possessed. That is a major garbage doctrine. Our Holy Spirit will not share our hearts with some filthy low life scummy demons. They have no biblical ground for that.

Mark 5:2-5 And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

Satan bounded these two people under his possession. He put them in self-destruction mode. What did the society do for them? They tried to bound them in chains so much like what we do with criminals in our society.

There are so many social rehabilitation programs that are generated by governments and institutions. However, none of them really works. Over 85% of released prison-

ers ended back in prison. But once they come to Jesus, and dwell in the Word of God, after they get released from the prison, they don't go back to the old habit. Because Jesus set them free and they are free indeed.

D. DELIVERANCE BY THE SAVIOR

So far, we watched what satan did and the society did to these two men. Let's see what the Savior does to them.

Matthew 8:30-32 Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. So the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine." And He said to them, "Go." So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. .

Now, we see the origin of 'deviled ham.'

And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water

Here we see the origin of 'pickled ham.' Sorry, no more porky jokes.

Jesus allowed the demons to enter the swine to indicate beyond question that their real purpose was the total destruction of their host. That is what satan wants - to steal, to kill and to destroy, but our God wants us to have life more abundantly.

As the body of Christ, we should remain confident in Christ. But we often take our eyes off from our Savior and thinking that satan our enemy is more powerful than God. We say, "Oh, the devil is doing this," "The devil is doing that," "Did you hear about this wicked thing that happened?" I believe we should stop focusing so much on what the devil is doing and stop worrying so much about what he will do and instead let him worry about what we Christians will do.

Isaiah 59:19 "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him."

Rather than trembling in fear about what the devil is doing, we can rejoice in the power that God has given us to live victoriously and effectively for Him.

E. SHORTSIGHTS OF MEN

Matthew 8:33-34 Then those who kept them fled; and they went away into the city and told everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw Him, they begged Him to depart from their region.

Instead of rejoicing the fact that two men are set from the bondage of satan, these people thought about their wallets and don't want anything to do with Jesus who can set them free also from the bondage of their worldly desires.

Are any of you like them? Instead of being set free by the Son of God, would you rather be bound by your own selfish desires and ultimately bound by the deception and destruction of satan. If you are like that, without an apology, I will tell you this. You are a short sighted person who can not see anything further than this moment.

F. APPLICATIONS

1) We must remember that the storms of life will not sink us, because Jesus is with us.

It seems that the boat we are in this life is about to be capsized. But our God has not lost His cool and peace, because He controls those storms.

2) The very One who gives us conviction, is also the One who can remove the conviction from our hearts so that we may rejoice in His presence.

How foolish the citizens of that village were to ask Jesus to leave! As He removed the demons from those two people, He could remove their worldly desires and give them heavenly ones. Oh how we miss out God's blessings because of our shortsightedness!