

Gospel of Mark Chapter 5A

Motorcycle accident - headed home, 422 backed up, decided to use 724, car waiting to turn...

- The accident forced me off of the motorcycle and my inertia hurled me down the road until I finally hit the ground.
- A moment before my body was thrown from the bike my brain hit the panic button.
- There are circumstances in life that force us to panic. (Last week it was a storm.)
- Psalm 46:1 gives me great comfort knowing that **the Lord is a very present help in times of trouble.**

In Chapter 4 The Lord Jesus and his disciples encountered a storm that was out of control. In their panic they cried out to the Lord and he delivered them

In Chapter 5 As soon as the disciples get off of the boat they were met by a demon possessed man and he, like the sea was totally out of control.

Both the storm and the man are bent on destruction.

Both the storm and the man are quieted, brought under control by the command of the Sovereign Lord.

1. A Haunted Slave
2. A Horde of Spirits
3. A Holy Sovereign
4. A Horrified Society

1. The Haunted Slave:

We have come to know this man as the Gadarenes Demoniatic.

A simple reading of the text tells us that this poor man had become a slave to the powers of darkness. His life was totally dominated by demonic spirits.

- As a result he was completely uncontrollable. Not only was he unable to help himself, despite their many attempts, the entire town had failed to bring this maniac under control.

Mark 5:3 **He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him.**

- The demonic forces empowered this man to break every physical chain that bound him BUT sadly NO ONE was able to break the spiritual chains that imprisoned him.
- His condition was incurable and he was destined to dwell in a dark world of terror, pain and torment.
- Isolated from the rest of humanity he lived in a world of self-destruction.

Mark 5:5 **Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones.**

- To the Jewish reader there is a strong thread of “UNCLEANNES” running throughout this narrative: (Many things by Jewish Law were considered to be unclean)
 - The Location where this encounter took place was in the cities of the Decapolis which was a Gentile region and considered unclean by the Jews, (Idolatry)
 - The spirits which possessed the man were “UNCELAN” spirits. (Fallen Angels)
 - The fact that he lived among the tombs also made this man “UNCLEAN” according to Levitical Law.

Numbers 19:11-14, Anyone who failed to purify himself from the pollution of tombs , “**Must be cut off from Israel.**”

- A very frightful occurrence takes place when the Lord Jesus steps foot on the land. It very well could be something out of a horror flick.

Mark 5: 6 **And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. 7 And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.” 8 For he was saying to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!”**

- These verses contain a strange and inconsistent mixture of hostility and submission.
- It is almost as if this demoniac comes racing down the cliffs like a rabid dog who is intent on protecting his territory BUT when it becomes clear that the Eternal Son of God is standing on the shoreline the possessed man quickly assumes a posture of submission.
 - Literally he prostrates himself before the Lord Jesus.
 - The posture of the man reminded me that every knee will bow before him.

Philippians 2: 10 **That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

- Moving on we see that this man was plagued not by one demon but by a multitude:

2. A Horde of Spirits

Mark 5:9 **And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” 10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country.**

- Jesus ADDRESSES the demon possessed man who is bowing at his feet asking a simple question, “**What is your name?**”
- Some people mistakenly surmise from this verse that it is necessary to discover a demon’s name in order to cast him out. That is NOT the case.
- Jesus never asked the name of a demon before.
- For our benefit, in order to show the all surpassing power that the Lord Jesus holds over the entire spiritual realm the name “Legion” is uncovered.

The name (Legion) reveals the fact that this poor man was plagued with a multitude of unclean spirits.

- The man’s physical body had become a virtual OUTPOST, an encampment for an entire platoon of demonic entities desiring to wreak havoc on the physical world.
- A legion in the Roman army was the largest troop unit consisting of 5,600 soldiers.

The response of this unholy horde to the authoritative command of the Lord Jesus is one of sheer TERROR. They know that Jesus has the authority to send them to the Lake of fire

- I think it is interesting to hear what the demons actually SAY to Jesus? Let’s go to Matthew’s account of this same event:

Matthew 8: 29 **And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”**

What do the demons KNOW?

1. Jesus is the Son of God. (None of the Disciples had confessed this yet)

- 2. God will one day send them all to a place of torment. (The Lake of Fire)
- 3. They seem to know that this is not necessarily the time of that final judgment.
- How do the demons know these things? They know God and they know the Word of God.
- (They know) The sun will be darkened, the moon turned to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord. That hasn't happened yet.

They know Jesus, they know that they must yield to his command but before they leave they cry out one desperate plea.

Mark 5:10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, 12 and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them."

- "(The Demon Spokesman) begged (Jesus) earnestly not to send them out of the country" In the organization of the powers of darkness there seems to be evidence for territorial preferences. We see this in the book of Daniel. (Prince of Persia, prince of Greece)
- Demons are spirit beings. They seem to have a desire to attach themselves to physical entities, so they ask permission to enter the pigs.
- In this case it seems to me that the demons are most concerned about remaining in the physical world. They don't want to go prematurely to the Abyss.
- Jesus agrees to the demon proposal and we have the first recipe for "Deviled ham."

3. A Holy Sovereign

Mark 5:13 So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the pigs, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

- Under the sovereign rule of Almighty God the powers of darkness are NOT free to do whatever they please.
 - (Dualism - God and Satan battling it out for world domination, see in movies)
- At the end of the age in one swift act God will cast them all into the lake of fire.
- Take note that the demons need permission to enter into the heard of pigs.
- The book of Job makes it clear that Satan can only do that which God permitted him to do and nothing more.

SLIDE #13

Job 1:8 And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

9 Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason?"

10 Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

11 But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face."

12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

- Again in Chapter 2 when Satan desires to afflict Job's physical body, God imposes limits, or restrictions on Satan's work.

The fact that God has not, to this day, sent Satan and his hordes to the Lake of Fire tells us that He must have a purpose for them. What do I mean by that?

- Consider the Apostle Paul. There was a point in his life where he was harassed by a demonic spirit.
- He pleaded with God to remove it but God did not remove it. He did however reveal to Paul the reason why the spirit was sent.

2 Corinthians 12: 7 **So to keep me from being too elated by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

- Jesus' encounter with the Gadarene Demoniac confirms God's sovereignty and ultimate power over the demonic hordes.

4. A Horrified Society

Mark 5:14 **The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. 15 And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.**

- There is an interesting connection between Jesus' commanding the Storm (last week) and Jesus commanding the demonic powers this week.
 - After Jesus miraculously calmed the raging sea, the disciples were gripped with great FEAR saying, **"Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"**
 - After Jesus cleanses the demon possessed man the town's people were also gripped with fear. AND in that fear they send Jesus away.

17 **And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.**

- They had experience with the demon possessed man, they knew what to expect. It was their chains that he broke. It was their tombs where he lived. They learned not to go near him. Somehow they learned to coexist.
- BUT the one thing they could not endure, the one person they would not embrace was the Lord of Glory the only one who was more powerful than the demoniac.

John 1: 10 **He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**

- When God reveals himself to you: When His Word is being proclaimed and you encounter his HOLINESS, When His word cuts through your heart like a knife and you realize you are a sinner and deserving of God's righteous judgment:
- Do you PUSH him away? OR repent of your sin and embrace the cross?

Mark 5:18 **As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. 19 And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.**

- Strange as this may seem, the demoniac now becomes the very first Missionary in the history of the New Testament.

WHAT about US??

How does all of this talk about legions of demons and exorcism fit into our Christian life in the year 2014?

Some people might compare the Gaderine Demoniac to the star of a Hollywood horror flick: He is the Freddy Cruger, the Chucky, the ...

- Just imagine the special effects that would be used to portray the demoniac and thousands of demonized pigs stampeding off a cliff into the Galilee.
- Certainly this man was scary but we don't really read of him hurting anyone but himself.
- The animal rights activists would have more of a problem with Jesus because he sent the demons into the pigs.

Digging into this region called the Decapolis, I found a danger greater than the demoniac. The region of Gadara was a Gentile district Settled by the Greeks and ruled by the Romans. The citizens of the region were wealthy polytheists who held to an epicurean philosophy.

- That is fancy language to say that they were rich, immoral people who worshipped PLEASURE.
- They carved plenty of idols promoting the Roman Pantheon. Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, Venus

The Demoniac was noisy, but the idols were dumb. (quiet)

The Legion of demons brought about the destruction of 2,000 pigs.

The false religion of the Roman pantheon quietly escorted multiplied millions to hell.

- The Apostle Paul warned us of the cunning subtleties and deceptive disguises of false religions and corrupt teachers.

2 Corinthians 4: 13 **For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.** 14 **And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.**

- It is not the naked, bleeding crazy-eyed demoniac that we need to be concerned about in our world today. Rather, it's the handsome, charismatic preacher in the three piece suit promoting a FALSE gospel 24 / 7 on cable TV.
- He sings his siren call of health, wealth and prosperity while he leads his legion into the Abyss.

1Timothy 4:1 **Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,**

We need to be very aware of the spiritual powers that are at work in our world today:

They may not inhabit a specific individual, more likely they will be the deceptive power behind false religions like the Roman Pantheon.

- Turn on the news just about any night and you will find the same legion of demons producing the same murderous destruction that we witnessed in the stampede of the pigs.
- The one who disguises himself as an angel of light hides under the guise of false religion dispatching violence all across the globe.

- It is the doctrines of demons that cause men to fly jetliners into buildings.
- The Legions behind false religion produce ethnic cleansing and mass murder.
- It is the doctrines of demons that produce a state where young women are sold into slavery and young boys are taught to kill.
- Friends the powers of darkness are hiding in plain sight and their destructive fruit is easy to see.

What are we to do?

Ephesians 6:10 **Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.**

- **HEAR ME!** Our battle is not against flesh and blood. (We do NOT promote or endorse violence in any form)
- It is not the women in the Burqa that is the problem it is the lying spirits behind Islam, the demonic powers behind Hinduism and every other false religion that we need to address in prayer.
- We can intercede for the missionaries who are dwelling among the Muslim people in Jordan, Syria and Iraq. We can pray for the Gospel for Asia who infiltrates the Hindu strongholds of India.

Ephesians 6:18 **praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,**