





The Subduing of the Demoniac | 5:1-20

- *This story is elaborately told with vivid details, more graphic than the other gospels. Why? Because with Mark, here is another witness to indicate that Jesus is the Messiah and that the Messiah save and serves. Note Christ sends the man to be a witness at the end*
- *The function of demonic possession is to distort and destroy the image of God in man.*
 - *The issue is not mere sickness, it is alien possession. The man's center of personality, his will, is impaired by demonic powers which seek to ruin him through self-destruction.*
 - *Jesus, conscious that he is the One in whom the dominion of God is present on behalf of humanity, cannot avoid the confrontation with demonic possession. He is the Bearer of the Holy Spirit (remember his baptism), and he must now break the power of the devil and his angels because HE IS THE ONE.*

The demoniac –

- *He is elaborately introduced, probably reflecting the accounts of the townspeople very familiar with him. Every description of him is pathetic.*
- *The people conclude wrongly that he is mad and attempted to chain him to protect themselves. When this proved futile, they drive him off to the wilderness. Their attitudes were an added cruelty to the man.*
- *Day and night he would be seen among the tombs shrieking wildly, cutting himself (likely in demonic worship), seeking an end to the torment of an unbearable existence.*
- *Where does anyone without Christ live? Anyone without Christ lives in midst of a storm and among the tombs, precursors of the final fate awaiting him or her.*
- *The ultimate responsibility for the brutal treatment the man endures are the demons who have taken possession of his personality.*

The encounter with Jesus –

- *The man sees Jesus at a distance and running, falls on his knees before him. This is not worship, nothing in the story indicates that. This is defensive obeisance.*
- *The unclean spirit raises its voice to defend itself essentially shouting, “What do you and I have in common, Jesus?!”*
- *It is unusual for the demon to call Jesus by name. But his reference to Christ’s divinity “Son of the Most High God” is clear. This is not a statement of faith, but a desperate attempt to gain control over Christ using his official title according to the assumption of the period.*
- *Note the virtual identical address in 1:24 and 5:7.*
- *Note the demon invokes God’s protection from Christ. The demon’s kneeling, using Jesus’ official title, and this invoking, the demon clearly knows he is inferior next to Christ.*

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My name is “Legion”

- *May be an expression of number. Legion = largest unit of the Roman army, 3-6,000.*
- *Or it may amount to a cry for mercy.*
- *It may be the demons want to withhold their true names and invoke a powerful name.*
- *In any case, the man is monstrously possessed and desperate.*

The herd of swine (not strange in this Gentile region. Indicates pagan environment)

- *The demons make a special request to enter the pigs, Jesus agrees, and they do so causing them to run down the slope to their death.*
- *While true that demons seem to be frustrated by disembodiment (Matt 12:43-45), this is not the real point.*
- *The point is the demons intent to destroy God’s creation, and stopped in their destruction of the man, they fulfill their mission in the pigs.*
- *The man, however, is fully restored.*

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The reaction of the town –

- *The herdsmen flee to report the loss. And the townspeople come to investigate.*
- *The man whom chains nor men could restrain and terrified others as he ran naked among the tombs is now clothed, in his right mind, and sitting at the feet of Jesus.*
- *The pigs seem foremost in their minds as they ask Jesus to leave. Just imagine. Their motive was also likely their fear to have in their midst one so powerful as Jesus.*

In sharp contrast to the fear of the townspeople is the devotion of the formed possessed man.

- *The man does not want Jesus to go away, he wants to be with him – the technical requirement of discipleship.*
- *Jesus refuses and in an unusual allowance instructs the man to spread his testimony among those formerly estranged. This is grace to the Gentiles.*
- *Most commonly, Jesus instructs those healed to not speak out, possibly because they are normally in Jewish territory.*

The Subduing of Sickness | 5:25-34

The woman –

- *Like the demoniac, was desperate. Losing blood for 12 years, perpetual uncleanness.*
- *She had spent all her money on doctors. All in vain as her condition grew worse.*
- *Having heard of Jesus(3:10, 6:56), she determined her course of action.*
- *Her intense conviction that if she could only touch Christ's garment, she would be healed, combined faith with a magical notion that power transferred clothing.*

The encounter with Jesus –

- *At the moment the woman touched Christ's garment, she knew she had her healing.*
- *At the same time, Jesus knew power had gone out of him but did not know to whom.*
- *This must be understood as the power of God which in the Bible flows from the personal God. God's power constitutes his ability to establish or give organized existence to something.*
- *And here through God's free and gracious decision, God bestows upon the woman the power which was active in Jesus.*

The Subduing of Sickness | 5:25-34

Jesus' question "Who touched my garments?" seemed pointless to the disciples but was an honest question for Jesus.

- *The disciple's impatience reflects an awareness that their immediate mission was to assist a girl who was dying. It also reflects they had no idea what had taken place.*
- *This was not a unilateral event in which touch released power. But a mutual event in which the personal relationship between Jesus and the woman released power.*
- *Jesus could not allow the woman to disappear into the crowd still entertaining thoughts of superstition and magic.*
- *The woman had touched Jesus with an expectation of salvation.*
- *The revelation of Christ had been met with the response of faith and salvation resulted.*

The Subduing of Sickness | 5:25-34

Trembling the woman confessed all.

- *Her action indicates both courage and gratitude.*
- *Though only partially understanding what had happened, she declared the truth to Jesus.*
- *Jesus insisted she understand that it was the grasp of her faith rather than her hand that had healed her.*
- *Here is the effective formula for salvation – faith and Jesus.*
- *Power went out from him precisely because she had sought healing from him.*

"Go in peace"

- *A traditional goodbye but here indicates much more than just her healing.*
- *It is the profound experience of well-being that comes from the salvation of God.*
- *"Be whole from your affliction" indicates whole healing and whole salvation.*
- *The entire story is a call to faith in Christ.*