

Jesus' Total Victory over Demonic Powers

Mark 5:1-20

February 24, 2013

Introduction

Satan and demons are very much real. This day and age there are much interest in the occult—the practice of seeking the things that are hidden (such as magic, astrology). Not only with much interest, there are much dismissal and derision in the ideas that there Satan and demons in the world. C.S. Lewis wrote this in Screwtape Letters:

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.

We either have a unhealthy fascination with demons or we ignore them completely. Both approach is madness according to Lewis. Where do we go to find the best information about demons? The Word of God.

Paul says to Timothy that demons do not operate openly.

1 Timothy 4:1 *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.*

They act as angels of light (**2 Corinthians 11:14-15**)

They are behind every idols of the world—they are the creators of all the false religion in this world.

1 Corinthians 10:20 *Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.*

Demons operate silently behind false doctrines and are content at that. However, when Jesus came, He was the aggressor, attacking demons by His presence. Every time He was in the presence of demons, they scream, blowing their covers. He then commands them to leave. They have to obey Him because He is the Lord of the universe and Creator. He has absolute authority over the demons.

Here is the greatest demonstration of His power since He threw out 1/3 of the angels from heaven (**Rev 12:4; Luke 10:18**).

Mark 5:1-20

1 *Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes.*

- Region was populated by Gentiles—Predominantly Hellenistic
- Decapolis is in the area
- Eastern shore of Sea of Galilee (from Capernaum)

2 *And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,*

- **Matthew 8:18**—mentions two men (Mark is not saying that only one man showed up)

- Note the motif of uncleanness—tombs, unclean spirit (later pigs)
- Tomb—place of defilement—why was he there?

3 *who had his dwelling among the tombs;*

- It was his home

and no one could bind him, not even with chains, 4 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. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones.

- We do not know how this man became demon-possessed or how he had gotten so many demons in him
- Note the negatives (no one, not even, neither)—emphasis on his demonic strength
- Tormented—hell on earth
- He tries to relieve his misery by cutting himself with stones—by suicide—unable to do so
 - This could be demonically inspired since they seek to destroy the body
- He was naked (**Luke 8:28**)
- He screamed constantly day and night—no rest; always in the elements of hot and cold
- He was not able to keep calm
- **Matthew** said that he was exceedingly fierce (**8:28**)
- The two men seem to prevent anyone from getting close to them

6 *When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him.*

- He recognized Jesus immediately
- Worshipped—supplicant—Jesus is the Divine Authority that even demons have to obey

7 *And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."*

- They screamed—which is standard whenever they encounter Jesus

Mark 1:23 *Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out,*

Mark 3:11 *And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God."*

- What have I to do with You—why are You here to bother me?
- Jesus, Son of the Most High God
 - Demons are orthodox in their beliefs—they hate the truth, but they know the truth
 - They recognize that Jesus is the Son of the True God—their Creator

James 2:19 *You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!*

- I beg You by God You do not torment me
 - Matthew states

Matthew 8:29 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?**"

- Luke adds:

Luke 8:31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

- They know their destiny—their final destination
- They know that God will place them in the abyss—the bottomless pit for imprisonment

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

8 For He said to him, "Come out of the man, unclean spirit!" **9** Then He asked him, "What is your name?" And he answered, saying, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

- Jesus did not ask so He could know their names
- He asked so that the disciples would know that He has absolute authority over the demons
- **Luke 8:30**—the man had many demons
- Legion = many demons (a Roman legion is a large number of troops up to 6,000 troops)

10 Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country.

- They did not want to leave the area they were working in

11 Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. **12** So all the demons begged Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, that we may enter them." **13** And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea.

- Jews do not eat pork; therefore this was a Gentile region
- 2000 pigs!
- Note that Jesus gave them permission—they could not have done anything without His permission **Illustration:** God gave Satan permission to destroy Job's livelihood and then his health
- Also note that God placed restrictions on what Satan could not do and Satan will not dare to disobey God!

14 So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. **15** Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

16 And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine. **17** Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.

- **Matthew 8:33**—Those who were keeping the pigs also told others what had happened to the men—how they have been changed

- The man is completely transformed—clothed, able to carry conversations—he has peace for the first time in such a long time
- This is what Jesus came to do!

1 John 3:8 *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

- They were afraid—Luke added that “they were seized with great fear” (8:37)
 - of who? The delivered man?
 - They were afraid of Jesus
 - They were in the presence of God
- They begged Jesus to leave

Luke 8:37 *Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them.*

2 Corinthians 4:4 *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

John 3:19 *And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Note: David Gooding writes, “What a sad comment on man’s fallen and unregenerate state it is, that man should feel more at home with demons than with the Christ who has power to cast out demons.” (According to Luke, 146)

18 And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him.

- He is a true convert—he does not want to be without Jesus!

19 However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you."

- Surprising response!
 - No, stay—go to your family and friends and tell them!
 - The first missionary Jesus sends out—How much training did this man have?
 - You do not need training to proclaim the gospel!

20 And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.

- True faith shows in obedience
- He first proclaims in the city (Luke 8:39b)
- Then he proclaims in Decapolis

Mark 7:31-32 *Again, departing from the region of Tyre and Sidon, He came through the midst of the region of Decapolis to the Sea of Galilee. ³²Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech, and they begged Him to put His hand on him.*

- This is the fruit of his proclamation!