

Jesus Delivers a Demon-Possessed Man Mark 5:1-20

by David Servant

Jesus' authority over evil spirits is demonstrated through His power to deliver a demon-possessed man and His mercy and goodness towards those who are delivered.

Scripture: Mark 5:7-15, John 3:35

Topics: "Demon Possession", "Divine Authority"

Description

David Servant preaches about Jesus' authority over evil spirits, showcasing how even the most powerful demons are no match for Him. The story of the demon-possessed man in the tombs reveals the wickedness of Satan and his desire to mar God's image in humanity. Despite the fear demons have of Jesus, Christians need not fear them, as demons are afraid of Jesus who resides in believers. Jesus allowing the demons to enter the pigs displays His divine authority and the value God places on humanity over animals.

Transcript

As we read yesterday, not only did Jesus have authority over the wind, commanding it to stop, He also had authority over evil spirits. Remember John the Baptist said that God had given Jesus "authority over everything" (John 3:35). The demons that possessed the man we've just read about were obviously very powerful, to the point of being able to empower the man with the strength to break chains. However, they were no match for Jesus. In fact, all the evil spirits in the world together don't have a fraction of the power that God has.

The demons who inhabited this man drove him to do strange things. He lived in a cemetery, wandering through the tombs night and day without any clothes, screaming and cutting himself with stones. That shows us how wicked the devil and his evil spirits are. Because people are created in God's image, Satan loves to see that image marred. If you've ever had an enemy draw a mustache on a photograph of yourself, you have some idea what I mean. Satan would love it if every person would become demon-possessed and act like that man did.

Notice how afraid the demons were of Jesus. When Jesus came ashore, the demon-possessed man ran to meet Him and fell down before Him. Was that act the man's own doing or was he being motivated by the demons? Probably it was the demons, because it's unlikely the man had any idea of who Jesus was.

The main demon, however, named Legion, knew Jesus was the Son of God, and confessed it through the man's shrieking voice, begging Jesus not to torture him. Later, all the demons repeatedly begged Jesus not to send them "to some distant place" (Mark 5:10). Those demons were scared to death of Jesus, because they knew who He was and what He could do! They were bowing before Him hoping for some mercy!

Also notice that Jesus asked the main demon inside the man what his name was. This is another indication that although Jesus was God, when He became a man He laid aside His attribute of omniscience, or knowing everything. God the Father, of course, knew what the demon's name was.

I don't know why Jesus gave the demons permission to go into the nearby herd of pigs. Perhaps it was just to display God's great power. Can you imagine seeing a herd of 2,000 serenely grazing pigs suddenly going crazy, stampeding to their deaths down a hill into a lake? This also seems to indicate that at least 2,000 demons were previously living inside one man. Either demons can squash really close together, or, more likely, there is no such thing as space in the spiritual realm.

This story should fill us with awe at the mercy, goodness and power of the Lord. One day in heaven we'll meet the man who was delivered, and rejoice with him for all that God has done for us. Not all of us were demon-possessed before our salvation, but all of us have been delivered from Satan's power over our lives.

Q. Should Christians be afraid of demons?

A. Absolutely not, because demons are afraid of Jesus who lives in all Christians.

Q. Wasn't it wrong of Jesus to allow the demons to go into someone else's pigs? Surely the owners were upset over the loss of 2,000 pigs.

A. Actually, Jesus' allowing the demons to enter the pigs serves as another proof that He was God, because God owns everything, including those 2,000 pigs. God can do anything He desires with people's private property, because it's more His property than theirs! Additionally, the Jews were forbidden in the Law to eat pork, and so perhaps the owners of those pigs were breaking God's law, and what Jesus allowed was an act of judgment.

Finally, this story also teaches us the value that God places on people, who are created in His image, compared to animals, who are not. One man is worth much more than 2,000 pigs! This is a message to our perverted society, which allows the killing of baby humans but forbids the killing of certain animals.

Application: The people of the region who saw the formerly-possessed man were filled with fear, and rather than bowing before the Son of God and requesting forgiveness for their sins, they begged Him to leave them alone. Jesus sadly granted them their request, but instructed the delivered man to return to his friends with his testimony. This is a picture of the whole world today. They really don't want Jesus around, but Jesus, hoping that they will soften, has sent us, those He's delivered from Satan's power, to tell others what God has done for us.

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