



“The Case of the Deviled Ham” (Mark 5:1-20)

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Topic: Deliverance

Intro: I suggested last weekend from our study that I believe there is Scriptural evidence to believe the storm that Jesus calmed had Satanic origins. Jesus rebuked the wind and the raging waters; See Rev.12:13-16; 13:11-14a; Job 1:16, 18-19.

Jesus was headed by boat for the region of the Gerasenes (also called Gergasenes, and Gadarenes). It was Gentile territory, a place Jews would not normally venture, but Jesus is not a normal Jew. The larger area was known as “The Decapolis.” Decapolis simply means “ten cities.” Following Alexander the Great’s conquest in the fourth century, Greeks settled here. As a result, there was much pagan influence. It became, if you will, a “stronghold” for Satan. We know from Isa.61:1 that Jesus came to “proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.” I believe the storm was meant to prevent Him from reaching His destination.

Read Mark 1:1-20; This is the case of the deviled ham.

Luke’s account of this story tells us that this man “For a long time had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived among the tombs.” Luke also adds that he was not only chained hand and foot but was “kept under guard,” but even the guards could not contain him. One last thing from Luke’s account is that these demons begged Jesus not to send them to the Abyss. See Rev. 9; Jude 6. They did not want to go to the Abyss because that was “demon prison.” They would no longer be free to roam, to seek out “flesh” to inhabit.” See also Luke 22:3 (Satan entered Judas).

Demons & demon possessed people

- Demons are real
 - Bible commentator William Barclay, has helped me over the years with biblical historical background, but I have found is not to be depended on for his theology. Here’s what he says about this story – “Surely what happened was this. The herd of swine was feeding on the mountain side. Jesus was exerting his power to cure what was a very stubborn

case. Suddenly the man's wild shouts and screams disturbed the swine and they went dashing down the steep place into the sea in blind terror. 'Look,' said Jesus, 'Your demons are gone!' Jesus had to find a way to get into the mind of this poor man; and in that way he found it."

- Jesus confronted demons on many occasions; Matt.4:24 says that demon-possessed people were brought to him from far away; 8:16...many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word; 9:32...when the demon was driven out, the man could talk; 12:22...a demon possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see; Luke 13:10-16 a woman who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years; Mark 1:21-25 is the account of a demon-possessed man in the synagogue; man; Mark 1:34 says Jesus drove out many demons.

- Cindy G.; the scars on her body; "There is a direct correlation between the abuse of the physical body and the insistent voice of evil." (Alistair Begg)

- Deliverance is not always immediate, especially in a case where many demons are involved; A legion could be as many as 6,000! Note v.8 Jesus had said; v.10 he begged Jesus again and again; It is my opinion that deliverance will never violate one's free will. I believe this man running to Jesus reveals his desire to be free. Why would the demons run to Jesus? They would not. In the story I just told you about Cindy, my wife and I are convinced she did not really want to be free. She was a plant by the enemy to try and ruin our ministry, and marriage if possible.

- If confronting demons, you'd better have a relationship with Jesus! (Acts 19, seven sons of Sceva).

- Never use physical force when seeking to exorcise demons

- There are no biblical examples of Christians being possessed by demons.
 - Christians can be oppressed by demons
 - II Cor.12: 7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.
 - Christians *are* enticed by demons
 - James 1: 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.
 - See I Kings 22:19-23

Guarding against Satanic influence in my life

- There are degrees of Satanic influence upon a person's life.

- Demons need an open door in which to enter a person's life
 - I Peter 5: 8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith...
 - Eph.4: 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.
 - Footholds can become strongholds

- Potential open doors for the enemy
 - Drugs; the word pharmakia, Rev.21:8; **pharmakeus: One who prepares or uses magical remedies.**
 - The occult; The occult (from the Latin word occultus "clandestine, hidden, secret"); Occultism is the study of occult practices, including (but not limited to) [magic](#), [alchemy](#), [extra-sensory perception](#), [astrology](#), [spiritualism](#), certain [religions](#), and [divination](#).
 - Generational curses; See Ex.34:7; Lev.5:7
 - Anger/attitude issues not properly dealt with
 - Eph.4:26-27 In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.
 - King Saul; I Samuel 18:8-11
 - II Cor.10: 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
 - Prolonged, willful disobedience; King Saul (I Samuel 16:14-23); Note: Praise songs are helpful when dealing with demons.

The people's fear after the deliverance

Why are the people afraid when they see the man dressed and in his right mind (v.15)? Wouldn't you think they would have been afraid before he was dressed and in his right mind? Can you imagine living in this community? This man lived in the tombs, and authorities had tried repeatedly to control him, and had repeatedly failed (read again verses 3-5). If you were within ear shot of the graveyard that became this man's home, you would hear his cry, and if you ever came across him personally, it was worse than a horror movie!

I believe they feared for the same reason the disciples feared after Jesus calmed the storm (Mark 5:41). No earthly power could calm the storm, and no earthly power had been able to help or subdue this man. But Jesus delivered him, and restored him. You would think seeing this man so radically changed would cause them to roll out the welcome mat for Jesus. Instead, they ask Him to leave their region. Why? Read again v.16, emphasizing the second half of the verse. The fear these people had was coupled with their financial loss - they had just lost 2,000 pigs. That's a lot of bacon! They cared more about profit from the pigs than the deliverance of this demoniac. And so they ask Jesus to leave.

The witness left behind

Though Jesus leaves the region at the people's request, he leaves behind a powerful witness. This man not only goes home to tell his family about Jesus, he becomes a traveling evangelist, spreading his story throughout the Decapolis.

What do you think about Jesus' discipleship ministry for this man?

We need to start sharing our faith immediately after we are delivered. Sharing our faith is directly linked with spiritual growth.

Philemon 6 I pray that you will be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

The challenge for the church

- We need to charge the gates of hell
 - Matt.16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
 - William Booth: "Some want to live within the sound of church and chapel bell, I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell."
 - No one that hell holds captive is without hope

- We need to consider going out of our way to reach people.
 - We need people willing to go into the toughest areas and confront Satan on his own turf. This is not for the immature, but for seasoned saints, who know how to deal with the enemy, especially in his area of control.
 - The woman at the well, and the boundaries Jesus crossed to reach her: Geographic, social, racial, & religious.
 - If we were only willing to go out of our way, get out of our routine, who knows the impact we might have for the gospel and the kingdom of God? Sometimes the greatest witness in a very tough region is someone who everyone knew was beyond hope.
 - A warm welcome should not be expected when God gains a victory in Satan's domain.
 - I Cor.16: 8 But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

The bigger picture in the story

There's a good chance that none of us will ever cast demons out of someone. There's an equally good chance that none of us will ever be demon-possessed, especially by a legion of demons. So is there a point to this story that the vast majority of people can benefit from?

The truth is, we have far more in common with this man than we might consider at first glance. Not everyone is demon-possessed, but all are influenced by evil. And anyone who has ever trusted Christ as Savior has been radically and supernaturally delivered.

Eph.2:1-2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

I Timothy 2:26...that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

You don't have to be demon-possessed to be in Satanic bondage. Anyone who has not been born again through faith in Christ is captive to Satan. And let's not forget that demons teach false doctrines (I Tim.4), so some have been deceived and enslaved by believing a religious lie. Then there are of course those who are enslaved by various kinds of passions and pleasures.

Titus 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures...

And there are the drug addicts, as well as the truly demon-possessed.

II Peter 2:19...a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

I will never forget in the days I was having a love affair with marijuana that I was adamant in declaring I could quit anytime I wanted. Usually when I was making such a declaration, I was at the same time rolling a joint, smoking a joint, or else had just finished smoking a joint.

The truth is, I was a drug addict. I was enslaved to drugs. And the enslavement got worse. After a while, marijuana wasn't enough. So I popped pills and smoked pot, and drank. Then it was LSD, etc. And at the same time I was doing drugs, I was pursuing the passion to satisfy the lust of my flesh, as well as my desire for personal glory – I wanted to be a rock star.

But when I met Jesus, He set me free. Could I go back to the old life if I wanted to? Of course I could. But I didn't want to go back, I liked being free!

It is not just the drug addict who has something in common with this demoniac. So does the one who regularly views porn, is filled with lust, has a love for money, cannot control their anger, overeats, purges, pursues personal pleasure rather than God, etc., etc.

Jesus wants us to be free from ANYTHING that would enslave us.

I Cor.6:12...everything is permissible for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

If you cannot give it up, or control it, it has enslaved you.

INVITATION

Demon possession? Seek out pastoral help. But to whatever degree Satan has been able to enslave someone, Jesus has the power to set them free. But you gotta wanta be free. Confess, repent, call out to Jesus, and be free!