

The Miracles of Jesus

Lesson Seventeen

Casting Demons out of Two Men of the Gadarenes

Text: Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39

Introduction:

1. After Jesus calmed the stormy sea, He and his disciples came to the southeastern side of the Sea of Galilee, in the country of the Gadarenes (or, Gergesenes [Matthew 8:28]).
2. Immediately as He came out of the ship, Jesus was confronted by two men who were possessed by demons.
3. Jesus' healing of these men teaches several important lessons worthy of consideration.

I. The Miracle

- A. With authority, Jesus cast the demons out of these two men.
 1. Matthew is the only account to mention both men.
 2. Mark and Luke only wrote of one man; however, this is supplementation, not contradiction.
- B. Consider the description of the worse of these two men.
 1. Possessed by an unclean spirit
 2. Had no house, but lived in the tombs – *“cut out of rock in limestone hills”*
 3. Wore no clothes (Luke 8:27)
 4. Exceedingly fierce and could not be bound for he broke the chains and fetters
 5. Driven by the demon into the wilderness (Luke 8:29)
 6. Crying and cutting himself with stones
- C. Yet, the demons acknowledged the power and position of Jesus – they fell down before Him and worshipped Him.
 1. The demons believed in Jesus – unlike many men in our world.
 2. The demons confessed the deity of Jesus – unlike many in our world.
 3. The demons believed in the certainty of God's Word and the coming of judgment and punishment – unlike many in our world.
 4. However, notice their use of the word “adjure” (cf. Acts 19:13; 1 Thes. 5:27).
- D. There were many demons tormenting this one man.
 1. In the Roman army, a legion was about 6,000 soldiers.
 2. Here, it probably just refers to many demons (cf. Matthew 12:43-45; Luke 8:2).
- E. They begged not to be sent into the abyss (cf. Romans 10:7; Revelation 20:1-3).
- F. Thus, Jesus sent them into a great herd of about 2,000 swine.
 1. Notice that the demons were subject to the authority of Jesus and needed His permission to act.
 2. The pigs immediately bolted down a steep slope into the sea, where they all drowned.
 3. This demonstrates a fundamental difference between animals and men.

4. This one of only two miracles of Jesus that involved the destruction of property. {*The cursing of the fig tree is the other.*}
 5. Remember that swine were unclean under the Law of Moses and it was a violation of that law for Jews to keep pigs (Lev. 11:7-8; Deut. 14:8).
- G. Those who kept the swine went throughout the country and the city telling everyone what had happened.
- H. A great change took place in the men who were now healed.
1. He was sitting, not running wild and endangering himself or others.
 2. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, not in the tombs or the wilderness.
 3. He was clothed, not naked and wild.
 4. He was in his right mind.
 5. He was free, no longer bound in chains nor bound by the demons.
- I. When word spread of this miracle, many came to see Jesus and what He had done.
- J. Sadly, they were overwhelmed by fear and begged Him to go away from their land.
1. What were they afraid of?
 2. Perhaps they feared further damage to their economy.
 3. Could it be that they would rather have their neighbors suffer than to lose their ill-gotten gain?
- K. Unlike the others, the man who was healed wanted to go with Jesus and remain close to Him.
- L. However, Jesus commanded him to teach his friends and neighbors about the good that Jesus had done.
1. This man took his assignment seriously.
 2. Luke says that he published this good news throughout the whole city (8:39).
 3. Mark says that he heralded the word in Decapolis – a region of 10 cities.
- II. **The Manifestation**
- A. Again, Jesus demonstrated His power and authority over the both the spirit-world and demonic forces.
 - B. No matter how large the number of demons, they were all subject to the Christ.
 - C. This proves that He is the Son of God.
- III. **The Message**
- A. Man is in a miserable condition when he lives under the rule of Satan.
 - B. Those who are controlled by Satan desire to flee from the presence of Jesus.
 - C. There will be a time of judgment and torment.
 - D. Those who serve Satan are entirely selfish.
 - E. Meeting with Jesus will cause a transformation in one's thinking and action.
 - F. Those who recognize what Jesus had done for them want to be with Him!
 - G. Some must go and evangelize the world, but some must work to evangelize at home!
 - H. Those who appreciate their salvation will tell others of the love of Jesus!
 - I. Today, many people want Jesus to leave the borders of our cities and country.
 1. Just like then, if this is what we truly desire, He will leave!
 2. However, He left a witness behind to remind the people of His love.
 - J. Jesus does not force Himself upon anyone. The choice is ours.