

Jesus Deals With Demons

As we return today to our study of the Book of Luke, you will recall from our previous study of these words that as Jesus and His disciples were crossing the sea of Galilee, a violent storm had arisen. And with the ease of a Master, Jesus simply spoke to the winds and the waves, and they immediately obeyed His voice and ceased their rage.

And now, in these words that we will study today, we see that Jesus and His disciples then traveled on across the sea of Galilee to the country of the Gadarenes. There they encountered a man who was filled with demons. And that encounter sometimes brings a question to the minds of some who read it. And it should for us also.

The question . . . do you, do I, really and truly believe that there is a realm of existence that swirls all around us each day, a realm where creatures that these scriptures call demons exist and have their being and actually involve themselves within the activities of ordinary people's daily lives?

We say that we do, especially those of us who have put our trust in Christ as our Savior and do diligently read and believe these scriptures given to us here in our bible. We say that we accept and believe that all of this is true, that there really is a mystical realm of existence beyond this "natural world" where you and I live and move and have our being, another realm, that realm that is spoken about in the Book of Ephesians, a realm, there called "heavenly places". A place that is not heavenly as we understand "Heaven" to be, but instead, also has realms of "darkness" within it where all manner of beings exists. There those beings are called "principalities" and "powers", and in other places called "demons", and there they live and move and have their being.

Listen again to those words that I have read to us on many occasions, words given in Ephesians chapter 6, beginning in verse 10!

¹⁰ . . . my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

(Ephesians 6:10-12)

And may I remind us again that this realm of existence isn't just "out there" somewhere in space or down there under the ground. Yes, it is there, but more importantly, these scriptures declare to us that that realm of existence is also all around us, and those beings who live there are able to reach across the boundaries of their realm and invade our personal lives and affect most anything that we do.

But unfortunately, and somewhat contrary to the statement I made a moment ago, though most of us do say that we believe and accept that those demonic beings exist, many of us will "hedge" in our full acceptance and belief about those creatures. We "almost believe", but not quite!

Yes, we freely talk about how the devil is always at work, causing suffering and pain. But then, too often, we will push those thoughts aside and quickly add, "Oh but, we are sinful enough in our own hearts, we don't need the devil to influence us".

But folks, we must not be so naive. We need to read these scriptures and believe exactly what they say. There really are demons all around us, each of them doing what demons do, attacking and hurting us and our loved ones at every opportunity.

It is not just people and their mistreatment of us that is taking place. People do that yes, but demons really are at work also, all of the time, and are often a part of the mistreatment by those people, influencing them to do the things they do without those people even realizing what is taking place. These words of Ephesians 6 are absolutely true. Listen again to verse 12 of Ephesians 6.

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. (Ephesians 6:12)

And folks, Jesus really does want you and me to believe these words, else He would not have put them here for us. And so, here in our scripture passage for today, Jesus gives us a clear account of who demons are and what demons do. And no, the demons are not often as obvious and open in their attacks as we will read about here. They most often prefer to remain concealed within their dark realm. But folks, they really are very real. Listen to these words beginning in verse 26 of Luke chapter 8!

²⁶Then they (Jesus and His disciples) sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" ²⁹For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness.

³⁰Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?"

And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. ³¹And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

³²Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. ³³Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. (Luke 8:26-39)

In other messages we've noted that while people are calmly going about their normal daily activities, the demonic world is also doing much the same, going about their normal activities, that of inserting themselves into and corrupting the things that we people are involved in.

But unlike the people who lived during the days of Jesus who were at that time far more willing to acknowledge the presence and involvement of demons, people in our day and in our culture are far less inclined to believe such things.

Demonic involvement within people's lives today is not always as obvious as it was in this poor man's life. The people of our day prefer instead to ignore or even deny the existence of demons and to put the causes of evil and violent behavior over into the realms of psychology and psychiatry. And we especially like to attach some medical diagnoses to it, such as "syndrome" or "disorder", or simply say that a person is "insane".

But thankfully, Jesus did not do that. He knew well that satan and his demonic companions were often present and at work in the lives of the people He encountered.

And your and my response should be the same. We should call it for what it is, "demonic influence and demonic possession."

And here in today's message, I'd like for us to consider the responses that each of the people had as they encountered this circumstance in front of them, beginning first with the response of the Lord Jesus.

Here, we see that Jesus was going about doing the very work He had been sent to do. He was doing the work of His Father. In John chapter 6, Jesus said

³⁸For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:38-40)

And this is exactly what Jesus was doing on this day spoken about here. He was faithful to always be doing the work of His Father. And all of His responses followed along with that plan.

Here, in this context, Jesus encountered a man who was completely consumed with demonic beings. And as Jesus often did, He told the demons to leave this man. Verse 29,

²⁹For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. (Luke 8:29)

But what was the response by the demons? Note here, one of the demons, probably the most powerful of the demons possessing the man, in verse 28, speaking for all the others,

²⁸When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!"

³⁰Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?"

And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. ³¹And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. (Luke 8:28-31)

The demons knew very well their future fate, the abyss, that bottomless pit in which the inhabitants would be tormented day and night forever and ever. Listen to these words in Revelation chapter 9.

¹The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. ²When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. (Revelation 9:1-2)

The demons within this man did not want to be cast into that bottomless pit with its eternal torment. They begged for mercy and to instead, be sent into a herd of pigs.

Why would Jesus grant the request of those vile demons? Why would He not just go ahead and send the demons into the abyss where they would eventually go? I believe the reason to be simply that it was not yet time for Jesus to be in His role as "Judge". Yes, later on, He would sit in His judgment seat and would judge the works of all men and all angels. But as of that moment, it was not yet the time.

And so then, for the time being, the demons were granted their request. Verse 32,

³²Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He permitted them. ³³Then the demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned. (Luke 8:32-33)

Note also again, a reality that we have pointed to on many occasions. Jesus is the Master over all that takes place on this earth and He had absolute power and control over those demons. They could do nothing except by His permission. Verse 32,

³² . . . So they begged Him that He would permit them to enter the pigs. And He permitted them. (Luke 8:32)

Another thing that we need always to acknowledge and believe is that God providentially orchestrates circumstances. That was so with this demon

possessed man. This man most likely had no common sense remaining within him, being so consumed and controlled by that hoard of demons.

So then, a question, "How did this demon possessed man suddenly find himself standing in front of the one Man on the face of the earth who could help him?"

Let me remind us of the one always prevailing truth that governs all such encounters with Jesus, words that we have mentioned so often of late from John chapter 6. There Jesus said,

⁴⁴No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. (John 6:44)

This man in his crazed demonic condition, having no sense of his own, was drawn by God's Spirit to Jesus so that he could receive healing for his soul. That was true for this man, and it is true for everyone; and it was especially true for you and me on that special day when we were saved.

But let's return to these responses. As the swine herders saw their herd run violently into the water and drown, their response was to run and tell the townspeople. Those townspeople responded by coming out to Jesus, and with great fear, asking Him to leave them. Listen!

³⁵Then they went out to see what had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ³⁶They also who had seen *it* told them by what means he who had been demon-possessed was healed. ³⁷Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. (Luke 8:35-37)

We might want to attribute the response of the townspeople to the fact that some of them had lost a great deal of their fortunes in the loss of those pigs. And that would have been some part in their behavior. But the real reason for their response of asking Jesus to leave from them, was that they had great fear.

Why would they be seized with great fear? I have no doubt that it was because demons were also controlling many of them. Once demonic spirits are given freedom to live and thrive and multiply in an area, they seem to do just that. And this area was probably a haven for demons.

Lastly, let's consider the response of the man who just moments before had been healed from the possession and control of all those demons. Listen!

³⁸Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Jesus that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. (Luke 8:38-39)

Folks, to whom much is given, much is required. This man had been given much, freedom from the control of all those demons and no doubt also, eternal life in heaven. And now, the man wanted to receive more from Jesus, but Jesus had a better plan.

Jesus wanted this man to begin immediately to give back out that which he had received. And that is the way it should be. Too often, we delay and those delays can be devastating to our future ministry for the Lord. Delay gives opportunity for the world, our flesh and the devil to find all sorts of excuses to not be about the works of God.

Recall the admonition from Jesus on another occasion. He said in Matthew chapter 12,

⁴³"When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. ⁴⁴Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds *it* empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. (Matthew 12:43-45)

That man needed to quickly get about the next steps of his walk with Christ, lest the demons return and he then be completely overcome by them.

Jesus' instruction to this man is the same that He gives to you and to me. "As I have been sent, so send I you". You and I must quickly get about the same work that Jesus was about.

And yes, often more discipleship training is needed, and each person should surely do that. But once we have received the call of Christ to go ye into all the world and preach His gospel, woe be unto us if we heed not His calling.

This man received a direct call from Christ to go and to make Him known. And thankfully, the man did exactly that. Verse 39,

³⁹ . . . And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. (Luke 8:39)

Before we close for today, we need to mention one more, very sad part of these responses. And that is the final response that Jesus had to these townspeople. Listen for a moment! Verse 37,

³⁷Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. And He got into the boat and returned. (Luke 8:37)

Yes folks, those people could disinvite Jesus. And yes, so can we, you and I. We can cause Him to leave our presence. And He will do exactly that if we ask Him.

Unbelievers throughout our world have refused Jesus and disinvited His presence and He has shaken the dust off His garment and left them. And you need only to see the condition of most of the world, and especially our great country of America, to see the ill effects of telling Jesus to leave our presence.

But folks, listen! For those of us who confess Christ as Savior, we also are in danger of behaving the same as the unbelievers do, not eternally so, but at least at times, and for seasons.

Sometimes, perhaps often, we will get caught up in some sinful conduct and behavior, and by our actions disinvite the presence of Jesus. And while He does not ever leave us completely and permanently, His immediate presence can be reduced to a faint glow.

The scriptures call that “grieving the Holy Spirit” and “quenching the Holy Spirit. And we can do that easily and often, and we must be very careful of such things. There is great danger for us there.

If you find yourself doing that, then quickly turn your heart back to Him, repent of your sin and He will come back in and fill your heart once again.

One final thought before we close. At the beginning of this message, I asked the question, do you, do I, really believe that there is a realm swirling all about us

each day, a realm where demons live and interact with all that takes place with us here in our “natural realm”?

May I encourage you and me to know, without question, that yes, demons really are real and they do invade and influence our personal lives on a daily basis. Jesus is telling us so here in these words and we must believe Him.

But we need not fear their presence. Thanks be to God, as we remain surrendered to our blessed Savior and Lord, He is our protector and strong shield against all the attacks of those devils. And we can walk confidently throughout our day without fear.

And we can do as this man did who was cleansed from those demonic powers. We can go ahead and get about the work of Jesus, witnessing and sharing the gospel with others who are in need. Verse 39,

³⁹ . . . And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him. (Luke 8:39)

Let's Pray together.