

THE LORD IN SATAN'S DOMAIN

Mark 5:1-20

Intro: During our Lord's time on earth there were more miracles performed by our Lord than had ever been performed before or since by any one person. The Lord was concerned, of course, about the needs of those who were everywhere He went, but in doing these miracles He was giving evidence of His Deity. At the same time there was more demonic activity than is recorded in any similar period in human history. I have been in the ministry for over sixty years, and I have never seen a single case of demon possession. Our charismatic friends would deny that statement, but they are quick to tag almost any kind of abnormal behavior as demon possession. I am not saying that the Devil has not been very busy during the years following our Lord's time on earth, but I have never, and I doubt if any of you have, seen a man who could break chains which had been put on him to restrain him like the man in the parable we are considering tonight. I believe all of the instances that are recorded in Scripture of demon possession, and so I believe that there is such a thing, but if there have been cases of demon possession since our Lord was here on earth, at least they have not been as numerous and common as they were when the Lord was here on earth.

Why were they so prominent during our Lord's ministry in Israel? I think that there was one main reason: it was because the Devil and his demons knew that they were fighting for their very existence. To be sure they were fighting to maintain their control over the hearts of men. Judas was a man who was Devil-possessed, and that explains why he did what he did in betraying the Lord Jesus Christ. Two of the Gospels record this. This is Luke's account:

1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude (Luke 22:1-6).

And then we have the record given to us by the Apostle John is John 13:

21-31. (Read.) The man we are reading about tonight was demon-possessed with many demons. But Judas Iscariot was Satan-possessed. It is clear that Satan was doing everything possible to do away with the Lord, and he had been at it since he tempted the Lord. He knew that he was going to be involved in what our Lord came to do. And we see this very clearly in Hebrews 2:14-15:

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

So, the reason there was so much Satanic activity during our Lord's time here on earth was because by His death He would save His people from their sins, but by His death He would destroy the one who had the power of death, that is, the Devil. So Satan, or the Devil, was doing everything he could to destroy the Lord. His power was displayed in a case such as we are told about here in Mark 5.

Satan is called "the god of this world," or *age*. He has had that position since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden. Only God is greater than the Devil, or Satan. He knows that he is a doomed enemy, but he is trying to do as much damage to people while He can. He will be placed in the bottomless pit during the millennium, and he will be cast into the lake of fire for all eternity. But he is fighting now to do as much damage as he can before that time comes. Revelation 12:12 says that "he knoweth that he hath but a short time." And let us never underestimate what he can do. It looks like he has everything going his way when we look at the world today.

Now let us look at this miracle. You will find this same incident reported in Matthew 8:28-34 and in Luke 8:26-39.

I. THE DEMON-POSSESSED MAN (Mark 1:1-5).

The Lord had just finished a very busy day, and had gone with His disciples across the Sea of Galilee presumably to rest. But instead He and His disciples were immediately confronted by a man "with an unclean spirit," one way of describing a demon. And it speaks of the effect of what the demon does. He defiles all whom he can. He lived in a

graveyard, and he was very, very strong. But he also was very unhappy, and seemed intent on self-destruction. Here we have the Lord's description of one who is under Satan's power. It would have been a very frightening thing even to see such a person.

The Devil is very clever. He blinds people not only to the Gospel, but he blinds them to the effect of sin. We are not told how this man came to be demon-possessed, but you can be sure that he had trifled with sin in some form, and he had become a bondsman of sin, but also of Satan.

So, first of all, we see the man by himself. And it is not a pretty sight.

Next we see:

II. THE DEMON-POSSESSED MAN WITH THE LORD (Mark 5:6-13).

A remarkable change came over this demon-possessed man when he saw Jesus. Verse 7 sound like the words of the man, but in verse 8 the Lord recognized that the demon was speaking through the mouth of the man. But the Lord spoke to the unclean spirit, telling him to come out of the man. And when the Lord asked the demon what his name was, he responded by saying, "Legion." This is a word which has meant different numbers at different times, but it probably meant as many as 3,000. Or it could have meant just a large number, perhaps too many to count.

In verse 10 it apparently was the lead demon who spoke for all of the rest. They requested not to be sent "away out of the country," meaning Israel. I think that we can correctly assume from these words that the demons were there to work havoc in Israel.

Now let us go back and look at what the demon originally said to our Lord. There were plenty of men in Israel, particularly among the scribes and Pharisees, who were ready to dispute the claims of the Lord Jesus, *but that was never the case with Satan or the demons. They knew Him, and they feared Him, and knew that He held the power of judgment over them.*

In verse 11 we read that the Jewish farmers were busy raising and selling pigs. This was an animal that the Jews were not to eat. But evidently they had been eating them as well as raising and selling them. But the demons wanted to go into the swine. And when they did, the swine ran

down into the sea of Galilee, and were drowned. What became of the demons, we don't know. Were the demons destroyed? We don't know. What we do know is that this man was delivered by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. And there are some other things that we know too.

III. THE RESULTS OF THE LORD'S MINISTRY (Mark 5:14-20).

Here we need to look at the various people who are mentioned at the end of this great story.

First, the men who kept the sheep, and the people in the city. See vv. 14-16).

Second, the condition of the man who had been demon-possessed – how he had been changed. See v. 15.

Third, the request of the man who had been delivered from the demons. See v. 18.

Finally, what the Lord told the man that he was supposed to do. See v. 19.

Concl: The lessons for us to learn:

- 1) The power of the enemy we face.
- 2) The condition of the demon-possessed, as an illustration of the effects of sin, and the transforming power of the Gospel.
- 3) The Lord's rejection by the multitudes.
- 4) The desire and the mission of the man the Lord had delivered.