

Jesus Overpowers an Unclean Spirit

Key Verse: “*He departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.*”
—Mark 5:20

Selected Scriptures:
Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-39

AFTER JESUS AND HIS disciples crossed the Sea of Galilee, they entered the land of the Gadarenes. There they encountered a man who was possessed of an unclean spirit. It had such control over him that he had to live among the tombs. Additionally, he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but due to the demon possession no one could overpower him. Seeing the Lord from afar, the unclean spirit,

speaking through this tormented individual’s lips, inquired, “What have I to do with thee, Jesus?”—Mark 5:1-7

Our Lord then directed the unclean spirit named Legion—for there were many—to depart from the afflicted individual thus affording him relief. There was a herd of swine numbering about two thousand nearby. The demons possessing the man requested of Jesus that they might not be sent away, but that they might be allowed to remain in that country. They then asked permission to enter the swine, which the Lord granted. Possessed by the demons, the swine ran violently down a steep embankment into the sea, and drowned.—vss. 8-13

The keepers of the herd and others who observed this

scenario, were fearful because of what they had witnessed, and asked Jesus to depart. It appeared they were more interested in what had happened to the evil spirits and the herd of swine than the fact this poor man, who previously had a useless life, was now in his right mind. Jesus shared the Gospel message with him and encouraged him to tell his experience to his family and friends.—vss. 14-19

Our Key Verse implies that this man who was now healed became active in proclaiming to others the marvelous work that the Master had wrought in him. This evidently has been recorded for us as an admonition to tell the good tidings to all as we have opportunity concerning the blessings that will occur for humanity during God's kingdom.

While it would not be true that all mankind are possessed of devils because of sin, fallen humanity is unsound mentally to a greater or lesser degree. Paul corroborates this thought. He says of those who have accepted Christ and have received of his Spirit, the new mind, that they have "the spirit ... of a sound mind." (II Tim. 1:7) He thus implies that previously they did not have a sound mind, and that the world in general does not presently have a sound mind.

Of Jehovah, the great Physician, the psalmist wrote, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."—Ps. 103:3-5

Through the redeeming love of God, iniquity will be forgiven, and ultimately all will be made whole as a result of our Redeemer's faithfulness in sacrificing his life as a ransom for all. (I Tim. 2:5,6) How thankful we should be for the Heavenly Father's perfect plan that will result in peace, joy, and healing for intelligent beings who honor and reverence him. ■