

AF A9 BIBLE STUDY: “Jesus Chases Out Legion of Demons” Luke 8

Scripture of Lesson: Luke’s Gospel 8: 26-33; Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20

1. The Lord heals the man possessed with a legion of demons

a. What are demons?

- i. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the word *demon* comes from its Greek origin, ‘*daimon*’ and Latin equivalent ‘*daemon*,’ which refers to an agent of evil, distress, harm, or ruin. The Greek philosophers believed that the demons were semi-divine beings that cause evil and unfortunate consequences to the humans.
- ii. Satan, who is the chief commander of all evil spirits (demons), appears early in the Bible. The fallen angels who follow Satan came down to the earth and polluted the people’s hearts to commit all evil sins and to worship him instead of God [Genesis 6: 3-5, 1 Book of Enoch 6-10]. As a result of their evil activities, the earth became extremely corrupt. This caused God to destroy all humans through a great flood except Noah and his family.
- iii. After the flood, Satan’s servants wrought evil in the hearts of the children of Noah and caused them to rebel against God, such as demonstrated in the Tower of Babel incident [Genesis 11: 1-9]. Satan’s forces have not stopped working in this world to deceive and to influence the humans to pull them away from God and to join the evil forces of Satan.

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them[a] in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” [Revelation 12:7-12]

b. Satan’s activities through the human history

- i. Satan has caused much evil, sadness and worsening of human depravity through the ages. While God’s angels and His people attempt to nurture the goodness and godly influence, Satan and his host work against such divine works and instead attempt to plan evil, dissension, hatred, rebellion against God and wars among nations.
- ii. Satan worship has had a long history. Even some of the Israelites, together with idol worship, offered sacrifices to the demons even during their wilderness journey after deliverance from the slavery in Egypt. This practice had to be substituted with the right worship to God as instructed by Moses:

They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations. [Leviticus 17:7]

- iii. We need to be aware that Satan and his forces are still very much active in this world and that we must fight to resist and curve their influence in our families, work environment, schools and communities, with wisdom from God using resources available to us.

2. How did the Lord heal this demon-possessed man?

- a. The man with a legion of demons
 - i. This man had multiple demons, who took control of his mind and body so that he could not lead a normal life. He lived among the tombs of the dead. Today we find many people, unable to lead a good life that honors God, torn among multiple desires and ambitions, all leading them to moral corruption and spiritual death, causing them to live in sinful state.
- b. When the Lord Jesus approached, the demons in this man recognized Him as the Son of God:

When 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!" [8:28]

 - i. Why did this man ask the Lord not to torment him? It is because the demons recognized Him as the Son of God with the divine power. And he asked the Lord for a request:

And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss. [8:31]

Here, 'abyss' refers to the 'bottomless pit' [Rev 11:9], into which Satan and his angels were initially thrown down after losing their battle with Michael and the heavenly host. This legion knew where they belong and desired to be left in the world. God has allowed Satan and his host to be active until the end times when they will be thrown into the bottomless pit forever. [Rev. 20:1-3] Therefore, Lord Jesus granted the legion to enter the flock of pigs and to drown them in the lake nearby.
- c. The demons knew they were not supposed to torment this poor man. They knew they had to leave him alone. God created all humans in the likeness of Himself, to have the Spirit of God indwelling in us, not to have demons living in us. Demons know this truth and when they saw Jesus, they knew they would be thrown out of this man. And they asked for something to take possession upon leaving this man. The only way for a demon-possessed person to be free of demons is to meet Jesus the Son of God so that they will acknowledge the power of God and depart from the possessed person.
- d. Saving a demon-possessed man caused much economic harm to the local pig farmer, hence to the community. But, eventually this saving work of the Lord caused the gospel to thrive in the area around Decapolis. [Mark 5:20]

Discussion topics:

1. *Have you been possessed by Satan's spirits or known such a person?*
2. *Discuss how Satan's forces are active in today's world.*