

Weaving the Word

Demonic Duo

February 12, 2017

Welcome to where we're becoming like children so we can enter His Kingdom!



Do you believe God's Word, as Authored, is perfect? Answer, *yes*, and *act accordingly*, and you're on the Way of truth and life; answer, *no*, and ... you're on your own. **I remember coming to my wit's end with God's Word.** Years ago, I threw my Bible down on a friend's desk and said I'm done. **If God can't write a book that makes sense, He can't be God.** I'm not a theologian. I'm ... *theatrical*. Didn't go to seminary. Went to film school. Wasn't gonna be a pastor. Was gonna be a producer. I enjoyed reading scripts *far more* than scripture.

But, my-oh-my how *that* has all changed, 'cause it turns out, *to my delight*, **Scripture isn't written in theology; it's mostly written in stories. Parables. Puzzles. Riddles.** Were told: **God uses the absurd to confound the self-assured!** (1 Cor 1:27)

Like the story of the guy in the graveyard filled with demons, Jesus casts into pigs. Matthew says *two* emerge from the tombs to confront Jesus. Mark and Luke, there's just *one* man.

Here's the Sea of Galilee. Here's Jesus' headquarters. The *majority* of Matthew manuscripts say they arrived at the land of the Gergesenes; but, Matthew's *oldest* copies say the Gadarenes. Now, the majority of *Mark* and *Luke* manuscripts say the Gadarenes; but, the *oldest* copies of Mark and Luke say the Gerasenes. **Atheists, like our old pal Dan Barker, specifically use this "hopelessly contradictory" story to prove God's Word unreliable.** And, while theologians endlessly argue over which parts are true, translators add and subtract words to "fix" the problem, despite Scripture's dire warnings. (Rev 22:18-19; Deut 4:2, 12:32) **But, what if you just want His Way; His truth; His heart?** Well, first you have to come to the end of *your way*. Like Agur ...

I am the most ignorant of men [and he wrote part of the Bible!] ... I have not learned wisdom, nor have I knowledge of the Holy One. ... **Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak?** [He's not talking about creation, he's looking forward. And we know what he didn't: it's Jesus on the Sea of Galilee] **Who has established all the ends of the earth?** [Jesus again! According to Isaiah, it's when He establishes the Gentile nations; "ends of the earth" is his name for 'em (Is 49:6, 52:10, 62:11)] **What is his name, and the name of his son?** [Agur is like, "Ooh! I can see the clues, but I can't put 'em together!"] **Tell me if you know!** [We can because Jesus came!] **"Every word of God is flawless;** he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. **Do not add to his words,** or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar. [One of the many of those warnings] – Proverbs 30:2-6 NIV

Want to find His Way? Answer His questions, respect His rules, follow His voice, cry out for His wisdom, and become His child. All we have to do is get absorbed in His stories!

When I came to my wit's end, I realized that I *actually barely knew* His Word. **I liked to read about it; but not really just it.** So, I stopped trying to study it and tried to *enjoy* it. Tough at first. But, **I began to see that everything ties together through the clues in the stories.** And all we have to do is enjoy 'em! Because, **as you do, you can't help but collect the clues and the treasures that He's hidden in each and every one!** And, as you do, absurd sounding things that never made sense suddenly *do!* For instance ...

Mark says there's a **human** [*anthrōpos*] with an **unclean spirit** [*akathartos pneuma*].

Luke says there's a **certain male** [*tis anēr*] **holding** [*echō*] **devils** [*daimonion*].

Matthew says there are **two** [*dyo*] **under the power of a demon** [*daimonizomai*].

Matthew never uses a word for man/men. And, any translation that has two "**men**", has added a word that Matthew never wrote. Whenever *anyone* tries to fix a broken Bible instead of solving a perfect puzzle, they only succeed in obscuring the answer.

... two demon-possessed ~~men~~ [*dyo daimonizomai*: lit. *a demonic duo*] coming [emerging] from the tombs met [confronted] him [from a distance] ... **"What do you want with us, Son of God?"** they shouted. **"Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"** – Matthew 8:28-29 NIV

Mark and Luke both record who's asking those questions: Legion, the commanding devil (of a troop of demons) inside this guy. So, according to the story after all the pieces are in place, **one of the two, of Matthew's demonic duo, is Legion.** All the pieces together show us that there is: **one human male under the power of an unclean spirit of devils.**

But, you know what? Legion is just a *side-note*. **This is the story of Jesus establishing the gentile nations. It's His first trip in, and His first apostle sent out.** And, *guess who it is! That's why Matthew, as a Jew, is obligated to record that two acknowledge Jesus' identity;* because, a matter of this magnitude must be established by *two distinct witnesses.* (2 Cor 13:1)



Jesus establishes His Gospel to an unclean nation, through an unclean man, and uses an unclean spirit as a legal witness to His power and authority! Now, *that's* a victory over darkness! And, this guy goes throughout the towns in the region of the Gerasenes; it was called that because their capital was Gerasa, which is 35 miles *inland* from the Sea of Galilee. So, **referring to the shore as the land of the Gerasenes refers to the entire gentile region** that Jesus was reaching into.

Also **there're two towns in the story.** *One entire town* comes to see the miracle. And, they are all still there when Jesus sends the man to *his own hometown* to proclaim the Good News. It's like meeting Jesus in the fields of Burlington in the county of Skagit Valley, and then returning to your home in Mount Vernon.



And, **Luke tells us where his hometown was *Gadara***, which means he's a Gadarene *away* from home, which can only mean **this Gadarene is in the fields of the Gergesenes**.

The story says that this notoriously insane outlaw, famous for breaking chains and escaping; has seized a cemetery, and attacks anyone who comes close. *Oh*, and he screams night and day. So, **everyone knows that nobody goes past the graveyard of the screaming Gadarene, in the fields of the Gergesenes, in the county of the Gerasenes**. (Context dictates plural or singular.) Once the clues are gathered and the stories interwoven, we can see that **every early manuscript variation is true and necessary**.

By the way, this is the only spot along the shore with a slope that runs into the water near caves on a nearby hillside. If you Google Map it and drop to street view, you can see the slope. And, if we turn to the left, you can see one of the caves. And, if you lived in that cave, you'd have *this* view of the water.

How do you suppose he knew Jesus had arrived? He's back in his cave after dark when Jesus lands here. What tipped him off? Just before Jesus' big day, Matthew (12:16-18) quotes Isaiah (42:1-4) about God's Servant being sent to the Gentiles. And, **Isaiah builds, through chapters 56 and 60, to this very moment**.

"I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, **'Here I am, here I am,'** to a nation that was not called by My name. [And *that's* how the Gadarene knew when Jesus arrived! Because, Jesus said He speaks whatever the Father commands; and, "*Here I am!*" is what the Word said He'd say when He came. And it really makes sense when you see Legion's response: "What do you want with us, Son of God?" He knew his scripture! This next part refers to God's people. (Rom 10:19-21)] **I have stretched out My hands all day long to a rebellious people**, [and this particular day just doesn't seem to end] Who walk in a way that is not good, according to their own thoughts; a people who provoke Me to anger continually **to My face**; [that's the reason He left at sunset] who **sacrifice in gardens**, and **burn incense on altars of brick**; who **sit among the graves**, and **spend the night in the tombs**; who **eat swine's flesh** [all horribly unclean things that represent the false righteousness of the rebellious, and brought to life in the contrast of the Gadarene who receives Christ] ... it is written before Me: 'I will not keep silence ...'" [This is Psalm 50:3, which also says, "**a powerful storm surrounds him**"] – Isaiah 65:1-7 NKJ

Now, let's practice being like a child by *enjoying* this story.

It's nighttime. Eerily calm. No breeze. The raging sea is suddenly like glass. And, the boys are soaking wet, seasick, and scared ... *of Jesus'*. (Mk 4:41) And so, they row: "Who is this?" "What kind of man is this?" "He commands the *winds!*" "The *waves* obey Him!" (Mt 8:27; Lk 8:25)

[Distant scream] Sound really travels on such a dead calm. An unnecessary reminder to steer clear of the Gadarene in Gergesa. And then, Jesus says, “We’re going to *them*.” No group of young men has ever rowed to shore as quietly. Beaching their boats, they sit frozen in place, fixing their eyes on the moonlit shadows in the brush along the shore, as 2000 filthy swine grub and root on a neighboring hillside.

They sailed across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. to the region of the Gadarenes. When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gergasenes, Jesus got out of the boat, [only Jesus will exit a boat this night; and He] stepped ashore,

[Much closer scream] And, to their horror, He yelled, “Here I am! Here I am!”

... he was met [hypantaō: confronted] by a demon-possessed man from the town [of Gadara]. a man with an evil spirit [two beings; one body] two demon-possessed ~~men~~ [a demonic duo, under the power of one] They were so violent that no one could pass that way. [Until the One came who is the Way] For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. When he saw Jesus **from a distance**, he cried out [“What do you want with me, with us, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?” (Mt 8:29; Mk 5:7; Lk 8:28) to which Jesus answered, “Come out of this man, you evil spirit!” (Mk 5:8)] and [the Gadarene] ran ...

Charging toward the shore, rushing like a bull through the brush, the boys fumbling for something to use as a weapon; and, Jesus standing His ground as the Gadarene charges ...

... and fell on his knees at his feet, shouting **in front of him**. at the top of his voice, [First, he had cried out “from a distance”] “What do you want with me, with us, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? [And, Jesus answered this question by saying, “Come out of this man, you evil spirit!” Now, bowing down] they shouted. “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?” I beg you, don’t torture me!” Swear to God that you won’t torture me!” For Jesus **had commanded** the evil spirit to come out of the man. Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you evil spirit!” Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places. Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.” because many demons had gone into him. And he **And they begged Jesus repeatedly again and again** not to order them to send them to go out of the area. into the Abyss. – Mat 8:28-29; Mark 5:1-10; and Luke 8:26-32 NIV

And this is where we have to leave the Gadarene for today. **His hometown, Gadara was part of the territory of Gad**, one of the Twelve Tribes, who let his Promised Land fill with gentiles. In Hebrew, “Gad” means troop (Gen 30:11); but in Greek, it’s *legion*.

And, when Jacob prophesied over his twelve sons, he stopped just before Gad, and cried out, “**I will wait for your salvation (yěshuw’ah) oh Lord.**” (Gen 49:18) It’s the first time Jesus’ name is declared in scripture. And then **Jacob tells Gad that a legion shall overcome him, but that he shall triumph in the trampling in the end.** (Gen 49:19) It’s *all about* knowing the stories.