

Weaving the Word

Dividing Demons

February 19, 2017

Welcome to where we build our faith to battle our demons!



Do you battle *your* demons alone? Unaided? Isolated?

The screaming Gadarene was driven by his demons into solitary places. (Lk 8:39) And, it's not like the enemy has changed his strategy. We wrestle not against flesh and blood; so, it's not very smart to try and fight 'em apart from the One whose flesh is the Bread of Life, and whose blood is the New Covenant of God's grace.



The only place we defeat our demons is at the feet of Jesus.

And, that's where we left the Gadarene.



Jesus is fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies to establish the Gentile nations in His Kingdom, by His Word; and that demon-filled Gadarene will be the first apostle sent into them with the Word.

Isaiah places this event on the same day the Savior is rejected by His own house, which Jesus was *earlier* that very day.



But now we're on the shore. At night. 2,000 pigs on a nearby hillside. Those poor boys frozen in the boats, trading one terror for another: from the deadly storm, to Jesus' devastating power, to the screaming Gadarene, to the Legion of demons at Jesus' feet.

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 send them out of the area. not to order them to go into the Abyss. Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. on the nearby hillside. – Mat 12:30; Mark 5:8-11; Luke 11:29-32 NIV

Why is Jesus letting him beg so much? He's *negotiating*. *Staring*. Waiting for Legion to ask Him to allow them to go into the pigs. *Why?* Because, **Jesus can't command them to come out**. *Why?* Because, then the boys won't know the *truth*. *Why?* Because, **Jesus appointed Legion to judge the truth for 'em**. *Why?*



The ruins of Capernaum and its synagogue

Well, for that we got'a go back to Capernaum, earlier that day, when the religious rulers officially rejected Jesus. *Why?*

Because they logically determined He's the devil.

Why?

Well, *because ...*

Jesus was driving out a demon **that was mute**. [Impossible. They had to know a demon's name in order to ask God to cast it out] When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was **blind and mute**, [it can't even perceive Jesus] and Jesus healed him, so that he could both **talk and see**. [Proving that it was gone] All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" But when the Pharisees And the teachers of the law **who came down from Jerusalem** [to render an official judgment regarding Jesus] heard this, they said, "He is possessed by **Beelzebub!** [a title for Satan: Lord of the house] "It is only by **Beelzebub**, the **prince of demons**, he is driving out demons." – Mat 12:22-24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:14-15 NIV

Instead of hailing Him as Lord Jesus, they label Him Lord Satan. *Why?* Because, **He doesn't call on God to cast 'em out.** (Mt 8:16; Mk 1:25; Lk 4:35) And **such mighty authority means He's either God or Satan.** And so, the hard-hearted religious rulers, in a pigheaded act of self-preservation, *logically* renounce their Savior as Satan. *Why?*

It's always easier to treat Jesus as if He isn't actually God. But, if you don't *treat* Him as God, you don't *trust* Him as God. And, if you don't *trust* Him as God, He might as well be the devil.

[Jesus said] "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a house is divided against itself, **that house cannot stand**. [You can't win a battle by taking out your own soldiers – especially true in a household: spouse, kids, family, friends] **a house divided against itself will fall** [you can't battle your demons alone and you can't beat 'em by wounding your own; we only defeat 'em at the feet of Jesus] [Now listen closely to Jesus' claim] **If Satan drives out Satan**, [which, under normal circumstances he'd never do ... but] **If Satan** is divided against himself, his end has come. – Mat 12:25-26; Mark 3:23-26; Luke 11:17-18 NIV

Jesus' young disciples aren't any more prepared to accept *Him as God* than their rulers; and they know the Scriptures *even less*. So, **how can they know who's right?** Well, here's *Jesus'* thought ...

Now if I drive out **demons** by **Beelzebub**, [**Lord Satan**] by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, **they will be your judges**. – Luke 11:19 NIV

Who will? The demons and their lord. All Jesus has to do is find Satan and his forces while they're housed in *one* human and then deceive the deceiver into driving out and dividing his own. *Not as easy as it sounds.* But then, **how can His disciples know the truth if they don't know His Word?** So, it's time to take the doubting on a little outing, to meet an old acquaintance, who will act as the judge.

And so, the Lord Jesus waits while Legion's lord begs. Ever notice Jesus always casts out a loner demon? **Does it seem a *bit odd* that the Gadarene is filled with a force of *thousands*?**

Remember when Jesus was tempted? **The devil, "left Him until an opportune time."** (Lk 4:13) Jesus knows that Satan is waitin' across the pond. Because, as demonstrated at the temptation, the devil knows Scripture (has to in order to twist it); and, Isaiah foretells that Jesus establishes the Gentiles on the same day His own reject Him. (Is 65:1-7; Rom 10:19-21) And so, Satan's demons drove the Gadarene to Gergesa to oppose Him. Who do you *think* tried to drown 'em in the storm?

Jesus details this whole Gadarene battle, earlier that day. Now, why was the Screaming Gadarene so well known? "He tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. **[And]** No one was strong enough to subdue him." (Mk 5:4) So, **keep this infamous strong-man in mind;** because, the very next thing Jesus says about Beelzebub's forces is that ...

No one can enter a strong man's house and **carry off** [*diarpazō: take by force*] **his possessions** [*skeuos: vessel; implement; a man as a chosen instrument; an assistant in accomplishing an evil deed*] unless he first **ties up** the strong man. [*deō: binds; chains; as Satan had bound the bent-over woman Jesus healed that morning (Lk 13:16); but, also as the weeds (in the Parable) are bound and divided into bundles (Mt 13:30);*] **Then he can rob** [*diarpazō*] **his house.** "When a strong man, fully armed, **guards his own house**, [on his own; by himself; all by his lonesome; like the Gadarene] **his possessions** [*hyparchonta: that which is possessed*] **are safe.** [*eirēnē: have peace*] But when **someone stronger** attacks and overpowers him, [pick your demon, or your personal crisis, or your devastating disappointment] **he takes away the armor in which the man trusted** and divides up the spoils. – Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21-22 NIV

The man was isolated and his armor wasn't trustworthy. That's why we must ...



Be strong **in the Lord** and in **his** mighty power. Put on the **full armor of God** so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For **our struggle is not against flesh and blood**, [that fight with your wife ... *isn't really*] but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [You should read Paul's full list of armor after this] – Ephesians 6:10-13 NIV



Now, all those forces, *stronger than the strong man*, are at the feet of One stronger still. And, into the pigs they'll flee. Did you know pigs are great swimmers? **Fat floats; so, drowning pigs takes some doing.** But, here's the thing: look how Jesus ends the *Strong Man Battle Plan* ...

He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not **gather** [in this case, the Gadarene] with me, **scatters.** [*skorpizō: of those who, overpowered or terror stricken or driven by some other impulses, fly in every direction*] – Luke 11:23 NIV

And so, Jesus waits while Legion begs. Repeatedly. Terrified. Jesus is thinking: “Notice the pigs, notice the pigs. They’re not here on accident or by coincidence. God declared ‘em unclean for His own. It’s in Scripture. (Lev 11:7-8) So, what’ll you do? Think! What’ll you do? Notice the pigs!”

And then, *they do*. But, **Jesus is walking a very fine line. He has to send these demons out without actually commanding ‘em**. And so, after they’d begged Him “not to order them to **GO into the Abyss**”, but “to let them **GO into (the pigs)**”. Jesus simply, brilliantly, says, “**Go!**”

Into the Abyss or into the pigs? How can they know?! Well, **He’s got’a be pointing**. I mean, it’s imperative that He’s *pointing*. He said *that’s* how the boys will know He’s God. **That’s the whole point of the point**. Back in Capernaum, just after the thing about Satan casting out Satan, and just before the Strong Man Battle Plan, Jesus said ...

Now if I drive out **demons** by **Beelzebub**, **[Lord Satan]** by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, **they will be your judges**. But if I drive out demons **by the finger of God**, then the kingdom of God has come to you. – Luke 11:19-20 NIV

And so, Jesus waits, while Legion begs. Again and again. Jesus saying nothing. Just staring. *Why? He’s negotiating*. And, **establishing the Gentiles** in His household. And, **giving His boys a crash course** before sending ‘em out. And, **declaring His authority over the enemy** on his own turf, at night, giving the Prince of Darkness every home-court advantage. **And, proclaiming himself as God himself. All with His little finger**. Let’s read ...

“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 send them out of the area. not to order them to **go** into the Abyss. **Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. on the nearby hillside**. The demons begged Jesus to let them **go** into them, “If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.” allow us to **go** into them.” and he gave them permission. He said to them, “**Go!**” So the evil spirits came out **[shot out, like bats out’a Hell]** and When the demons came out of the man, they **[scattered! And, they]** went into the pigs, **and the whole herd about two thousand in number, rushed [stampeded, in the dark, unafraid of the water, terrified of Jesus, blindly, violently charging] down the steep bank into the lake [Pigs on top of pigs! the clamoring chaos of pig-headed selfish, self-centered, self-preservation. Pushing. Plunging. Pandemonium. Pig divided against pig until they were overcome] and were drowned. and died in the water.** – Mat 8:30-32; Mark 5:9-13; Luke 8:30-33 NIV

That’s what happens when it’s “every pig for itself”.

And, there’s those poor boys frozen in the boats. The judge has reached a verdict: Jesus *doesn’t* cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub. *Why?* Because, **Jesus has authority over Beelzebub**. *Why?* Because, **Jesus’ finger is the finger of God**. *Why?* Because, **the Kingdom of God has come upon them**. *Why?* Because, **Jesus is establishing His Kingdom; and, He is God**.

So, do you battle your demons alone? *That’s just dumb*.