



Online Bible Study Lesson 6

Jesus and Legion Demon

Read Ephesians 6:12

Has there ever been a time when you just met someone and had that feeling come over you that said, 'this person is possessed'? Well try being Jesus for just one day. Demon possessed people came up to Him all the time. Today in our study of the miracles of Jesus we will find Him dealing with demon possessed people. As we will learn, the miracles of Jesus definitely include his powerful work of rebuking and casting out demons. The reason for these miracles is that demons are stronger than natural man, but weaker than God. The demons in the Bible are the same demons we have in the world today. They haven't multiplied and none have been destroyed that we know of except the ones already cast into the bottomless pit waiting judgment found in the book of Jude. The same demons Jesus dealt with are more than likely the same demons we deal with today.

The biblical account of Jesus casting out demons from the madman is the best account of demon exorcism from which to learn, and there is much to learn from this accurate, historical account. This Mark 5 Bible study will enlighten us to many things concerning powerful demons, possessed people, and even possessed pigs! Don't you love learning from God's word? There is never a dull moment!

Let's get started by first reading

Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-39

Jesus and Legion Demon - The Setting

Jesus and his disciples left Galilee in a boat on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was performing miracles and healing many people from sicknesses and demon possession. The demons screamed as they were cast out, "You are the Son of God!" But Jesus rebuked the demons so they wouldn't reveal his true identity - it was too early in his ministry (**Mark 3:9-12**). After leaving Galilee in their boat, a tumultuous storm erupted, causing great havoc at sea. Jesus calmed the storm to everyone's utter amazement. The disciples, jaws gaped open, were in shock, "Who is this man? Even the wind and waves obey him!" (**Mark 4:41**). Finally, the group sailed across the sea, landing in the Gerasenes area, very possibly near the town of Kherasa, aka Kursi. Kherasa's shoreline is 6 miles across the sea from Capernaum, having hills and ample areas for burial caves described in the account (**Mark 5:1-3**).

Who is Legion Demon?

Strangely, upon Jesus and the disciples' docking, a demon-possessed man ran up to greet them. This man was well-known in the Decapolis area as a raging lunatic - a madman. He lived alone in a cemetery, wore no clothing, howled at the moon, and cut himself with sharp stones. People attempted to chain him down over the years, but his supernatural powers would break the chains and set him free. He was a dangerous menace to the people who dared pass by the burial caves. There were many witnesses watching Jesus and Legion Demon, who we'll also call the demon-possessed man. First of all, several boats had departed Galilee, undoubtedly including both the inner and wider circles of Jesus' disciples, even Mary Magdalene.

There were also some herdsmen tending a great many pigs nearby (**Mark 5:14**), who would later run into the city, bringing back more witnesses to observe Jesus and Legion Demon.

Jesus and Legion Demon - The Conversation

The reason the possessed madman, to this point, is referred to as Legion Demon is because he was under total control of the possessing demon(s). You can consider Legion Demon, and its possessed man, half-demon and half-human, because the evil spirit controlled the man's faculties and body. Legion Demon ran up to Jesus, bowing low at his feet. You can say he "bowed to the King." Jesus recognized an evil presence and commanded the prostrate Legion Demon, **"Come out of the man, you evil spirit!"** Legion Demon rose up, looked intently at Jesus, then shrieked in the most shrilling voice, "Why are you interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In the name of God, I beg you, don't torture me!"

Jesus then ordered the demon to answer this question, *"What is your name?"* This activity was obviously for the witnesses' benefit, and for our benefit, so that we know demons are real, they are many, and that they actually have names (**Mark 5:9**). Biblical demon names will be listed later in this lesson. The possessed madman screeched, "My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man." A Roman Legion in the times of Jesus typically composed of up to 5,400 soldiers, so this legion of demons could be made up of the same number, thus the name legion!

Suddenly, all of the demons inside this man's body started shrieking, "Don't send us into the Abyss!" (The Abyss is another name for the Bottomless pit found in the book of Jude). The demons saw the heard of pigs nearby and pleaded, "Send us into those pigs!" They shamelessly groveled at Jesus' feet, "Let us enter the pigs!" (**Mark 5:10-12**).

As you all know, pigs were an unclean animal to the Hebrews (**Leviticus 11:7-8**). God disallowed the Hebrews to eat certain animals, fish, and birds. Most of the forbidden animals were scavengers and predators. No one is exactly sure why God forbade the animals, but a good guess would be to limit the acquired diseases for which these types of animals, fish, and birds are responsible (*i.e.* trichinosis or shellfish poisoning). Another theory is that these predator animals possess a cruel nature. They would therefore be unsuitable for consumption by God's people, because God didn't want his chosen nation associating with such a fallen, worldly condition.

Now, back to the story!

Jesus, showing his humorous side, gave the legion of demons their desire. He cast them out of the man and into the pigs! Oh, but the pigs didn't think much of their new tenants! The demons possessed the pigs, but before settling into their new home, the entire herd of pigs charged down the steep hillside, plunging headlong into the Sea of Galilee! All 2,000 pigs drowned in the sea. This was an incredible display of God's power! Legion Demon, and his gang of filthy spirits, took a bath in the Sea of Galilee, courtesy of Jesus Christ and a herd of unclean swine!

You know, pigs can swim, so why did all 2000 pigs drown immediately?

Why did the pigs charge into the Sea of Galilee and perish?

It's this simple: God drove this huge herd of pigs into the sea just like he drove two animals of every kind into Noah's ark. Animals obey God's commands. God was in charge of this situation for a very important reason. God tossed the unclean spirits and the unclean animals they possessed into the Sea, so that we could "see" the future. This is an illustration of the future judgment! Jesus will humiliate all sin and all sinners on judgment day.

Read Revelation 20:13-15

They were judged, each one according to his works. Death and hell were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. All unclean people, all unclean spirits, and all of their unclean deeds, words, and thoughts will be tossed into the burning sea of fire. This living parable illustrates eternal judgment and punishment by the following representations; Pigs are the non-Christians; spirits portray evil; and, the Sea of Galilee is the lake of fire.

Study of Demons

We're going to devote this section to a more focused study of demons. There is much to learn about the spiritual world before returning to the incredible knowledge gathered from the Legion Demon story. Consider this section a compact theological study on demons.

So, what is a demon?

Read Isaiah 14: 12-15 Ezekiel 28: 12-19

Demons are fallen angels who inhabit the realm of earth. They were swept out of heaven after their leader Lucifer fell from glory. Lucifer's fall is found in these scriptures. These fallen angels' original home was heaven, their current home is the earth, and their future home is the lake of fire (**Read Matthew 25:41 and Revelation 12:7-12**).

Demons were once beautiful angels of God, serving him in heaven before they were cast out with Lucifer. They are now hideous, beastly creatures with incredible powers - much stronger

than any natural man. They've observed humanity since the Garden of Eden; therefore, they are much more intelligent than us. People never outsmart demons; but, demons are NOT omniscient like their Creator God. Demons always recognize Jesus as the Son of God, which is opposed to people generally failing to know Christ is God's Son (**John 5:36-37**).

The revelation of demons is limited in the Old Testament, but here is a list of some O.T. passages that reveal evil spirits:

- Demons, foreign gods, gods, and new gods (**Deuteronomy 32:15-20**).
- Distressing spirit (**1 Samuel 16:15-16,23**).
- Lying spirit (**1 Kings 22:21-23**).
- Activities of demons (**Leviticus 17:7; Psalm 106:37**).

This list doesn't include Satan as a demon, because he is considered the devil (**John 8:44**). The current earth is the kingdom of Satan (**Read Matthew 4:8-9; 2 Corinthians 4:4**), and his demons listen and follow his commands. Satan is the ruler of the kingdom of the air (First Heaven) of this earth and his demons are his subservient fallen angels (**Ephesians 2:2**).

Here are some New Testament references to demons, including a list of theological demons.

Bible List of Demons and Demonic Names:

- Unclean spirits (**Matthew 10:1**).
- Evil, shrieking spirits (**Mark 3:11-12**).
- Wicked spirits (**Luke 7:21**).
- Deceiving spirits (**1 Timothy 4:1**).
- Spirits of demons (**Revelation 16:14**).
- Spirits of divination (**Acts 16:16**).
- Legion Demon (**Luke 8:30**).

Many people add the biblical names of pagan gods, *e.g.* baal, asherah, astarte, *etc.*, to their list of demons; however, that isn't technically appropriate here. True, idols do have demons behind them (**1 Corinthians 10:19-20**); but, idols have their own names and demons have their own names. Surprisingly, there aren't many demons named in the Scriptures, giving serious Christians a hint. We should refrain from entertaining demons, even trying to figure out their names. We should abstain from entertaining demons in the form of television shows or books we read or games we play. They are not edifying in any way, and in fact, if a person begins summoning a demon and allowing access into their lives and homes the demon may possibly activity as an invitation.

Demons in Hell

There are a group of demons chained in hell since their ancient, great sin also called fallen angels or ones that left their first estate. (**Genesis 6:4-5; 1 Peter 3:19-20; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6**).

What Is Demon Possession?

Demon possession means that an evil spirit enters a body of a person or beast. A demon is a spirit, meaning that it is invisible to humans; but, can be much more physically, mentally, and spiritually powerful than humans when God is absent from their lives. (They have not asked Him into their lives.)

A human body can become a "tent" or "house" for one or more demons. The evil spirit is more powerful than the natural human spirit, so after entering the person it's able to control the mind, nervous system, and actions of the possessed body - if they so desire. Demons seek to kill, steal, and destroy, so there are no guiding ethics or morals for them. A person's heart is naturally full of evil intentions (**Mark 7:20-23**); therefore, opening the doors to a demon multiplies the inherent evil already existing within a person. Summoning demons is a strict no-no, because they'll answer the call of the curious soul. Beware.

In short, Satan and his demons, and their corrupt world of evil, want humans opposing God at every opportunity. These evil creatures encourage us to remain selfish, like our naturally sinful heart's desire. They want us rich and proud, relying on them and their world system for power and wealth. Their system is the mammon of which Jesus warns you (**Matthew 6:24**).

Have you ever been in an environment where demons were called upon?

If so take time to close any doors that might have been opened for demons to have access to your life. Plead the blood of Jesus over your life and family. Trust God to have power over forces that might be at work against you. Remember the devils are not subject to you, but they are subject to the one that lives in your heart; Jesus. Speak His name and trust the word of God that says these signs shall follow them that believe, they shall cast out devils (demons). That's not just for your neighbor but cast them off you as well.

Rebuking Demons

Why would Jesus be concerned with demons?

Don't they just fulfill the wishes of wicked people?

Why did Jesus cast out demons?

Jesus and his disciples demonstrated the authority to rebuke and cast out demons (**Mark 3:22-27; 6:7**). This demon-rebuking activity, including casting out demons, revealed the present reality of God's Kingdom. Exorcism was a statement. The statement was this, the Creator and Savior had arrived in full power and glory! Demons heeded his commands and fled from his presence! It also became possible for mere humans to cast out demons, by the power Jesus gives us as believers through and only in Jesus' name (**Acts 4:9-10**).

The power behind his name actually drove out the demons (**Mark 9:38-40**). Jesus addressed his large circle of disciples who were amazed that the demons obeyed their commands. Of course, they only had authority over the demons when using Jesus' name. Jesus calmed their

enthusiasm about their authority by reminding them to rejoice only because their names were written in heaven (**Luke 10:17-20**). Jesus always counteracts one's tendencies towards **pride** and **corruption** which are tools the enemy uses!

Jesus didn't accept the glory for casting out demons, even though it could only be done in his name. The Pharisees and Sadducees were accusing him of casting out demons by Satan's power. Jesus admonished the religious leaders by informing them that he only cast out demons by God's power. Jesus added that because he cast out demons in God's power they should realize that the Kingdom of God had arrived in human form (**Luke 11:16-22**). Jesus made sure everyone was aware of the fact that he was MUCH stronger than Satan and his minions. The Son of God arrived with great power and authority!

Here are some biblical examples of exorcism.

Small list of Demons Cast Out in the Bible:

- Many demons cast out by Jesus (**Matthew 8:16; Mark 1:32-34**).
- Two demon-possessed men (**Matthew 8:28-34**).
- Demon-possessed man who was blind and mute (**Matthew 12:22; Luke 11:14-15**).
- Demon-possessed boy who also suffered seizures, but disciples couldn't cast this demon out (**Matthew 17:14-20; Mark 9:17-29**). Jesus taught that this type of strong, violent demon could only come out by fasting and prayer. God's real presence, by his Spirit, is required to drive out certain powerful demons.
- Satan possessed Judas, but later departed Judas on his own accord (**John 13:27**).
- Shouting man in Capernaum synagogue (**Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37**).
- Woman bent and crippled by an evil spirit (**Luke 13:10-13**).
- Jesus cast out Satan (**John 12:31**).
- Many demon-possessed people healed by apostles (**Acts 5:15-16**).
- Many evil spirits cast out by Philip in Samaria (**Acts 8:6-7**).
- Slave girl fortune-teller, whose demon mocked Paul, was healed (**Acts 16:16-18**).
- Evil spirits in Ephesus cast out using Paul's anointed handkerchief (**Acts 19:11-12**).

There are different types of demons, just as there are different types of people.

Demons have their various evil tendencies, but all demons are immoral and wicked to the core.

Some demons have a propensity towards hedonism and prostitution (**Luke 8:1-3**);

Some towards idolatry and false belief (**1 Corinthians 10:19-20; 1 Timothy 4:1**);

Some physically maim and disfigure the bodies they possess (**Luke 13:10-13**);

While others, influence people towards violence and murder (**Luke 9:37-43**).

Casting Out Demons

Should we desire to cast out demons?

Should we desire to perform these great miracles of demon exorcism?

Demon-possession is still found in America today and different times in our ministry the need to cast out demons has arisen and God's power was there for exorcism. Demon possession does seem to be more prevalent in countries that practice divination, witchcraft, and voo-doo. False religions around the globe are known to foster such activity. It would be wise for us to be aware that Satan and his demons are very active in the lives of humans everywhere. Live holy, and be ready to minister in the powerful name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Jesus and the Cleansed Man

Legion Demon fled the possessed man as Jesus commanded, leaving the man to his own faculties. He could once again think clearly, he felt real emotions returning to him. He regained control of his speech. Legion Demon had stolen away many of the critical elements of humanity from the man.

Satan and his demons love stealing God-given human rights from the unsuspecting soul.

How do you think this man felt?

The man's heart was filled with gratitude towards Jesus! He rejoiced at his deliverance from the Legion of Demons. His soul, spirit, and body were all freed from the claws of evil. Praise the Lord! The man was joyful once again.

Legion Demon was replaced with the Spirit of God. Evil was replaced with goodness. Sin was replaced with righteousness.

This man became a new creation in Christ!

A large crowd had gathered around, because the herdsmen had called the town's people to witness what happened. The herdsmen were scared, they were angry, they were in disbelief. They wanted witnesses to see the travesty wrought by Jesus. They lost their herd of swine with no hope of retribution. The crowd, including Jesus' disciples, watched as the man thanking Jesus arose in his right mind.

As Jesus was departing in the boat, the man begged him, "Jesus, let me go with you and follow you." Jesus said, "No, go home to your family, and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and how merciful he has been." The man listened to Jesus' command and departed the shore. The written account tells us the man walked throughout the Decapolis region telling everyone the great things Jesus did for him (**Mark 5:20**).

This one man brought much glory to Jesus, who in turn, gave all the glory to God.

You may wonder why Jesus wouldn't let the man follow him like his other disciples. That may seem odd to you.

Wouldn't it seem right that Jesus desired all people to "follow him?"

Isn't that what he calls all new disciples to do, *i.e.* follow him?

Didn't nearly the same thing happen to Mary Magdalene a prostitute?
She had seven demons exorcised out of her by Jesus!

So, why was Mary Magdalene allowed to follow Jesus?
How could this man grow in Christ without the Scriptures?

Would he being left behind, be supported by other Christian brothers and sisters?

Was he a real disciple of Christ?

The Lord has reasons for everything!
He knows our beginnings and endings!
So let's just speculate for a moment.

First of all, we need to trust in God for everything; and in this case, we need to trust the plan of growth that God had in mind for this man. God takes care of all his children, including this formerly demon-possessed man.

God is always in sovereign control - don't worry. Jesus definitely wanted the bold witness in the Decapolis area proclaiming his gospel - that is easily understood. Jesus didn't want to perform this miracle near the Gerasenes and then remove the one who benefited most from it. All Decapolis residents knew about this raging demoniac who terrorized the passers-by. All heard about his utter insanity. But now, NOW, they get to meet him, the one who was once a dangerous animal, howling at the moon. The man became a gentle lamb, saved by the grace of God, his Creator. He was a tremendous witness for the Lord, because his life brought amazement, wonder, and belief in the One who saved him (**Mark 5:20**). There's no harm in wondering if this man continued his great evangelism long after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. I have a strong hunch he did.

Miracles and Belief

Is it easier to cast out a demon from a man, or to forgive the sin in a person's heart?

To us of course, it can seem easier to claim to forgive the sin in a person's heart than to exorcise a powerful demon from his human home. Jesus, the Son of God, came with authority from heaven to do both. He came to introduce the Kingdom of God to a lost world. He came to forgive sins, and he proved his authority by doing something that seemed to us harder than forgiving sins - Jesus cast out demons.

Grasp This! Facing Demons

Do you have a fear of demons?

In one sense you should fear the effects their powerful temptations can have upon you. In another sense, as you mature in your walk, you should not have a fear of demons. Christians have the power and authority to make them stand down. Put on your demon armor, *i.e.* the whole armor of God, so you can fight against these demons (**James 4:7; Ephesians 6:10-18**). Live a holy and spiritually powerful life - the two go hand-in-hand, and you'll defeat evil of every sort.

Living in sin removes your spiritual power and authority, so a weak or fake Christian has no hope for winning these battles against evil. Be strong, wear God's spiritual armor and defeat your attacking demons.

The Final Warning

Make sure demons do not come back (**Matthew 12:43-45**), because the person's condition will be worse than before. If you or someone you love had a demon cast out, or a major sin forgiven, do NOT fall away from Jesus. Do NOT backslide and sink into despair - your demons and sin can and will return with more of their kind to torment you (**John 5:14**). The evil returns with a vengeance, chewing you up and spitting you out, wrecking the spiritual life you and the Lord co-labored so long and hard to build. Always rely upon God's power and strength through these difficult situations. Turn completely away from the world, and turn to God.

Last of all, don't ever think you're too evil for God, who LOVES saving sinners and backsliders from the lost world of darkness. There aren't many things that bring God more glory than rescuing a soul tormented by demons and sin.

Hope in God.

Trust in Jesus.

Today may be the day of your spiritual liberty!