

## Delivering the Demon Possessed

Scripture Readings: Luke 8.26-39, Matthew 8.28-34, Mark 5.1-20

The Bible does not use the term 'demon possessed' but it does describe it in this passage. Today it is not considered appropriate to speak of demon possession as a medical condition, and that to our poverty, for there are many cases which fit the profile and it is possible that these people are being mis-diagnosed. It is outside our objective to explore this aspect. Rather, here we examine a case of demon possession in the ministry of Jesus and how He handled it. We find that it extends our understanding of His exercise of His authority as the Son of Man.

The word 'devils' used in some bible versions is a poor translation of the Greek *diaminion* and ought to read 'demons'. There is but one devil, Satan, and legions of unclean spirits which do his bidding. These are unclean spirits or demons which can and do possess certain men and women.

### Some characteristics of demon possession.

This passage gives to us some classic effects of demon possession. Comparing v27-29 with v35-39 demons will:

- Cause irrational behaviour
- Cause physical violence
- Change the personality
- Despise efforts of reform
- Destroy the conscience
- Disregard law and civility
- Disrupt relationships
- Isolate the individual
- Lower living standards
- Prevent self control.

### How can demon possession take place?

Remember that we were created by God to be filled and led by God through the Holy Spirit, even as was God's Son of man, Jesus. See Luke 4.1,14&18, Isaiah 11.2,& 61.1, John 3.34, Acts

10.38. When we are filled with the Spirit of God we live as God created us to live. We reach our potential and are fulfilled.

We are created spirit, soul and body (1 Thessalonians 5.23).

The body is physical and is world conscious through use of the senses; touch, sight, hearing and speech, smell and taste.

The soul is psychological and is self conscious using the faculties of emotion, will and intellect. In a normal person the soul is dominated by the mind and controls the body.

The spirit is made to be God conscious and controls the mind.

In the Christian the Spirit is quickened or brought to life by the coming of the Spirit of God

The Holy Spirit takes His abode in the human spirit, bringing the whole of life into conformity with the purpose and nature of God.

He does this not by overriding the faculties of the person but restoring them to the Divinely sanctioned full function.

Under demon possession, a demon emulates the Holy Spirit for evil purposes, bringing that person into captivity to wickedness and evil. In this state the person loses part or all control of his faculties. This was the case of the man in our passage, except that more than one demon was in residence. 'Taken captive', in 2 Timothy 2.26 means 'to be taken alive'.

### Jesus demonstrated His complete authority over Satan and His host.

His authority gave Him mastery. He commanded the spirits to leave and they obeyed.

G Campbell Morgan (The Great Physician p162) says, "After the temptation in the wilderness, the Lord is never recorded as having entered into any arguments with evil spirits, or having spoken in any other way than of full and august authority."

Having mastered Satan the Bible says that the devil 'departed from Him for a season.' Season' is a 'defined or fixed period of time when things are brought to a crisis, the decisive epoch waited for' (Online Bible). That crisis was the

Cross when Jesus triumphed over the principalities and powers of evil. The spirits requested Jesus that they be not sent 'into the deep'.

This is not a reference to the deep water as in Jonah 2.3, but the abyss, home of Satan and his followers, from the Greek *abussos*.. See Revelation 9.1&2, a bottomless pit or well.

### How to be safe from demon possession.

See Luke 11.23-28. In this parable the house was cleaned and refurbished but left empty. But this condition is not God's intention for those who are the redeemed and cleansed through the cross-work of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The purpose of God in redeeming men and women is to take up His abode in them. John 15.4, Galatians 2.20.

Be filled with the Spirit, Galatians 5.16-26. He is the Holy Spirit. He will not share His abode with that which is unholy. He cannot. It is against His nature as God. When you are filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God, you cannot be filled and controlled by an unclean evil spirit. That is an impossibility. The answer is clear, place yourself under the control of the Holy Spirit and you need not fear possession by demons.

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Lower Road, Eltham North  
Sundays 10.30 am

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