

### Mark 5.1-20 Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Man

#### Open Question 1

When did a vacation turn into something unpleasant you never expected?

5:1 Καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς θαλάσσης εἰς τὴν χώραν τῶν Γερασηνῶν.

5:1 So<sup>1</sup> they came to the other side of the lake, to the region of the Gerasenes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> sn The region of the Gerasenes would be in Gentile territory on the (south)eastern side of the Sea of Galilee across from Galilee. “...Jesus has crossed over into Gentile territory, ‘opposite Galilee’” (J. B. Green, Luke [NICNT], 337). [map 241]

2 καὶ ἐξελθόντος αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου εὐθὺς ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ἐκ τῶν μνημείων ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ,

<sup>2</sup> Just as Jesus<sup>3</sup> was getting out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit<sup>4</sup> came from the tombs and met him.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> tn Grk “met him from the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.” “a man with an unclean spirit from the tombs met him” implies that the unclean spirit came from the tombs. To make this clear a second verb, “came,” is supplied in English: “came from the tombs and met him.”

#### Dig Question 1 (vv.3-5)

What did we learn about demons from the actions of the possessed man?

3 ὃς τὴν κατοίκησιν εἶχεν ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν, καὶ οὐδὲ ἀλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο αὐτὸν δῆσαι

<sup>3</sup> He lived among the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain.

4 διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν πολλάκις πέδαις καὶ ἀλύσεσιν δεδέσθαι καὶ διεσπᾶσθαι ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ τὰς ἀλύσεις καὶ τὰς πέδας συντετριῖσθαι, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι·

<sup>4</sup> For his hands and feet had often been bound with chains and shackles,<sup>6</sup> but<sup>7</sup> he had torn the chains apart and broken the shackles in pieces. No one was strong enough to subdue him.

5 καὶ διὰ παντὸς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐν τοῖς μνήμασιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν ἦν κράζων καὶ κατακόπτων ἑαυτὸν λίθοις.

<sup>5</sup> Each night and every day among the tombs and in the mountains, he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

#### Dig Question 2

How does the healing take place? (vv.6-13)

6 καὶ ἰδὼν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν ἔδραμεν καὶ προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ

6 When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him.

7 καὶ κράξας φωνῇ μεγάλῃ λέγει· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; ὀρκίζω σε τὸν θεόν, μὴ με βασανίσῃς.

7 Then<sup>8</sup> he cried out with a loud voice, "Leave me alone,<sup>9</sup> Jesus, Son of the Most High God! I implore you by God<sup>10</sup> – do not torment me!"

9 tn Grk "What to me and to you?" (an idiom). The phrase τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί (ti emoi kai soi) is Semitic in origin, though it made its way into colloquial Greek (BDAG 275 s.v. ἐγώ). The equivalent Hebrew expression in the OT had two basic meanings: (1) When one person was unjustly bothering another, the injured party could say "What to me and to you?" meaning, "What have I done to you that you should do this to me?" (Judg 11:12, 2 Chr 35:21, 1 Kgs 17:18). (2) When someone was asked to get involved in a matter he felt was no business of his own, he could say to the one asking him, "What to me and to you?" meaning, "That is your business, how am I involved?" (2 Kgs 3:13, Hos 14:8). These nuances were apparently expanded in Greek, but the basic notions of defensive hostility (option 1) and indifference or disengagement (option 2) are still present. BDAG suggests the following as glosses for this expression: What have I to do with you? What have we in common? Leave me alone! Never mind! Hostility between Jesus and the demons is certainly to be understood in this context, hence the translation: "Leave me alone...."

10 sn Though it seems unusual for a demon to invoke God's name ("I implore you by God") in his demands of Jesus, the parallel in Matt 8:29 suggests the reason: "Why have you come to torment us before the time?" There was an appointed time in which demons would face their judgment, and they seem to have viewed Jesus' arrival on the scene as an illegitimate change in God's plan regarding the time when their sentence would be executed.

8 ἔλεγεν γὰρ αὐτῷ· ἔξελθε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκάθαρτον ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

8 (For Jesus<sup>11</sup> had said to him, "Come out of that man, you unclean spirit!")<sup>12</sup>

9 καὶ ἐπηρώτα αὐτόν· τί ὄνομά σοι; καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· λεγιῶν ὄνομά μοι, ὅτι πολλοὶ ἐσμεν.

9 Jesus<sup>13</sup> asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "My name is Legion,<sup>14</sup> for we are many."

14 sn The name Legion means "thousands," a word taken from a Latin term for a large group of soldiers. The term not only suggests a multiple possession, but also adds a military feel to the account. This is a true battle.

10 καὶ παρεκάλει αὐτὸν πολλὰ ἵνα μὴ αὐτὰ ἀποστείλῃ ἔξω τῆς χώρας.

10 He begged Jesus<sup>15</sup> repeatedly not to send them out of the region.

11 ἦν δὲ ἐκεῖ πρὸς τῷ ὄρει ἀγέλη χοίρων μεγάλη βοσκομένη·

11 There on the hillside,<sup>16</sup> a great herd of pigs was feeding.

12 καὶ παρεκάλεσαν αὐτὸν λέγοντες· πέμψον ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, ἵνα εἰς αὐτοὺς εἰσέλθωμεν.

12 And the demonic spirits<sup>17</sup> begged him, "Send us into the pigs. Let us enter them."

13 καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς. καὶ ἐξελθόντα τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἀκάθαρτα εἰσῆλθον εἰς τοὺς χοίρους, καὶ ὄρμησεν ἡ ἀγέλη κατὰ τοῦ κρημοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, ὡς δισχίλιοι, καὶ ἐπνίγοντο ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ.

13 Jesus<sup>18</sup> gave them permission.<sup>19</sup> So<sup>20</sup> the unclean spirits came out and went into the pigs. Then the herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake, and about two thousand were drowned in the lake.

20 sn Many have discussed why Jesus gave them permission, since the animals were destroyed. However, this is another example of a miracle that is a visual lesson. The demons are destructive: They were destroying the man. They destroyed the pigs. They destroy whatever they touch. The point was to take demonic influence seriously, as well as Jesus' power over it as a picture of the larger battle for human souls. There would be no doubt how the man's transformation had taken place.

### Dig Question 3

How was the response of the people? Why? (vv.14-17)

14 Καὶ οἱ βόσκοντες αὐτοὺς ἔφυγον καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀγρούς· καὶ ἦλθον ἰδεῖν τί ἐστὶν τὸ γεγονός

14 Now<sup>21</sup> the herdsmen ran off and spread the news in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.

15 καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ θεωροῦσιν τὸν δαιμονιζόμενον καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα, τὸν ἐσχηκότα τὸν λεγιῶνα, καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν.

15 They came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man sitting there, clothed and in his right mind – the one who had the "Legion" – and they were afraid.

16 καὶ διηγήσαντο αὐτοῖς οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐγένετο τῷ δαιμονιζομένῳ καὶ περὶ τῶν χοίρων.

16 Those who had seen what had happened to the demon-possessed man reported it, and they also told about the pigs.

17 καὶ ἤρξαντο παρακαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἀπελθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν.

17 Then<sup>22</sup> they asked Jesus<sup>23</sup> to leave their region.

#### Dig Question 4 (vv.18-20)

How might the change of witness in v.19, when previously Jesus ordered silence (1.43-44)

18 Καὶ ἐμβαίνοντος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον παρεκάλει αὐτὸν ὁ δαίμονισθεὶς ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ἦ.

18 As he was getting into the boat the man who had been demon-possessed asked if he could go<sup>24</sup> with him.

24 <sup>tn</sup> Grk “be,” that is, “remain.” In this context that would involve accompanying Jesus as he went on his way.

19 καὶ οὐκ ἀφῆκεν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ λέγει αὐτῷ· ὕπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σοὺς καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοι πεποίηκεν καὶ ἠλέησέν σε.

19 But<sup>25</sup> Jesus<sup>26</sup> did not permit him to do so. Instead, he said to him, "Go to your home and to your people and tell them what the Lord has done for you,<sup>27</sup> that he had mercy on you."

27 <sup>sn</sup> Jesus instructs the man to declare the Lord has done for him, in contrast to the usual instructions (e.g., 1:44; 5:43) to remain silent. Here in Gentile territory Jesus allowed more open discussion of his ministry. D. L. Bock (Luke [BECNT], 1:781) suggests that with few Jewish religious representatives present, there would be less danger of misunderstanding Jesus' ministry as political.

20 καὶ ἀπῆλθεν καὶ ἤρξατο κηρύσσειν ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ πάντες ἐθαύμαζον.

20 So<sup>28</sup> he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis<sup>29</sup> what Jesus had done for him,<sup>30</sup> and all were amazed.

#### Response Question 1

When you have felt like the townspeople, wishing Jesus would leave because he changes things so much?