



13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (James 1:13-15)

One may wonder at the title of this devotion and ask “*Why such a title for a DEVOTION?*” Well, there are devotional benefits in knowing what great blessings and treasures there are in God our Father as opposed to those paltry rags and sufferings which the Devil offers at bargain-basement prices. While it is true that we cannot blame the devil for our sins (only WE can lay claim to those), the devil is quite active in providing every lustful enticement to sin that the imagination of man can contrive. His dainties are fleeting, but the reward for tasting them is eternally vested.

This devotion can in nowise address the nature of Satan and his demons in detail, but we will touch upon on a few marks of his personality in the study. Let us examine the case of the young man possessed with devils and the Gadarene swine. Jesus has just passed over the Sea of Galilee during which, at His command, the sea and winds were calmed. Having stepped from the ship, our Lord encounters this man:

26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. 27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness. (Luke 8:26-29)

First of all, we might ask, “*Whence cometh these devils?*” You may recall the War in Heaven in which Michael the Archangel engages in victorious war against Satan: *7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev 12:7-9)* So, it is not only Satan who places lairs and temptations in our path, but his subordinate devils as well. The air is saturated with them. *2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the*

course of this world, according to the *prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*: (Eph 2:2)

There is never a great dearth of demons about. They are not divine, and they cannot know the future; but they have watched you, and they know to which sins you are both vulnerable and attracted. This man that Jesus met at Gadarene was possessed of many devils – in fact, LEGION. *And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.* (Luke 8:30) This figure (Legion) is given in context of the circumstances existing resulting from Roman rule in Judea and Samaria. In the Roman army, a legion was a sizable contingent of between 3,000 and 6,000 soldiers; so, the devils possessing the man were a great multitude. Sin loves partners, and the proponents of sin do as well.

Look at the pitiful condition to which these devils had brought the man. Remember when Adam sinned, God in His grace and mercy provided a covering for his nakedness by taking the hide of an innocent animal. But the Devil has deprived the man of our story of that covering and rendered him naked (*and ware no clothes*). For every blessing that the Lord grants us, Satan offers a deprivation thereof; moreover, the man bore the marks of brutal beatings on his body. The man had no home except the tombs (*neither abode in any house, but in the TOMBS*). His only prospect was a tomb of DEATH. See how this contrasts with the Christian's prospects: *"and I shall dwell in the HOUSE of the Lord forever."* ² *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.* ³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* (John 14:2-3) You are reminded of the vast difference between a TOMB which the Devil promises and a MANSION of the LORD! The unclean spirit cried out to Jesus at first sight: *"What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not."* You will note that even devils, and even those claiming atheism, know who Christ is, but prefer to deny and not to serve Him.

We are not told for what cause these devils entered into this man. Perhaps it was for a sinful disposition; but more likely, in my opinion, it may have been a means to bring him to Christ. Each of us has sufficient sins to warrant such a possession. Too often, the respectable and moral man will not come to Christ because he feels salvation already EARNED by his good works. But the desperate man will find he has no place else to turn. There may be more former drunks, gamblers, and womanizers in Heaven than the more respectable man. At any rate, this man was possessed of devils which had taken everything on earth that the man could have possessed. When we realize that the world offers no true riches, we, too, may be driven to Christ. This was true of the Woman Taken in Adultery who was dragged to Christ – the only One who could do her an immense good, by men who were prepared to bring the greatest harm to her. It was true of the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's Well who came for the putrid, physical waters at the bottom of a fifty foot well and left with the Waters of Life from that Divine and Heavenly Fountain of Life.

Confronting the Lord, the devils petitioned Him not to cast them into the lake – *And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep* (Luke 8:31) - perhaps it reminded them of that Lake mentioned in Revelations: *20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.* (Rev 19:20)

Demons need flesh-and-blood bodies to maximize their tortures on men. If not a human body, any old body will do – even those of SWINE. Just consider that your spiritual demons that inhabit the souls of the sinner have chosen your soul in the same way as a SWINE's body. Without Christ, we are no better than SWINE!

32 *And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.* (Luke 8:32) On this command, the devils entered into the swine. Never surrender your soul to the swine. 6 *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.* (Matt 7:6) What is the result, whether of man or beasts, when devils possess them? It is a horrible tragedy!

Demon possession ALWAYS leads to death in the deep unless cast out previously by our Lord. 33 *Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.* (Luke 8:33) Amazingly, some of us prefer the devils to the healing and grace of the Lord as we see in the continuing account.

First, observe the great good that the Lord performed: 34 *When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.* 35 *Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.* 36 *They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.* (Luke 8:34-36) They saw that the boy, tormented for a long period, was now healed, a cause for rejoicing is it not? But, secondly, see the depth of depravation of the human souls inhabiting the land of the Gadarenes. 37 *Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.* (Luke 8:37) They feared the loss of swine, but did not covet the miracle of the Lord's healing of a man who suffered so greatly! Man has not changed from that time. It may be true that he is even worse of heart today. Mammon is a strong allurement to many.

As we see in the last line of the text above, the Lord does not tarry where He is not welcomed. When the 911 Towers were felled by Islamic terrorists, Katie Couric was interviewing Ann Graham Lotz concerning the event. At the beginning of the interview, in her usual sarcastic manner, she asked, "Ann, when they consider the loss of so many innocent lives in the twin towers, many Americans are asking, "Where was God at this tragic moment?" Without a stutter, Ann responded, "God was where God always is – where He is welcomed. We have expelled God from our public schools and every public place. God does not abide where He is not welcome."

It is my prayer our Lord Jesus Christ is, indeed, welcome in your heart.