



And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, **Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.** And he asked him, **What is thy name?** And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, **Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.** And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel. (**Mark 5:1-20**)

This miracle is mentioned in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew as well as here in Mark.

Depraved minds are capable of great strength and capacity for evil. History is

replete with examples such as Herod, Tamerlane, Count Vlad Tepes (the source inspiration for Dracula) of Wallachia, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Hitler, Bin Laden, etc. The demoniac of the Gadarenes was an example of such. His strength seems near super-human. We often wonder at the capacity to perform evil of those who are of like mind with demons. Their evil schemes may seem ingenious to us and seem to prosper more than those of the righteous. Why is this possible? Evil knows no limits to its exploits for power and control. Any means will always suffice. This same proverb holds true to those who are adherents of Maoism or Communism –“the end justifies the means.” It may be said that the cruel and madly wicked are not in their right minds, and this is precisely the case, for no one is in their RIGHT mind apart from that Mind which was in Christ Jesus! It is interesting to observe that the people of Gadara cared more for their income-producing swine than they did for the well-being of the man who had been freed from the demon possession.

“And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.” Christ has come to a people who were either not knowledgeable of the Law of Moses, or who were openly disobedient thereto. The demons waste no time in confronting the power of God when such power invades their long-held regime! *“And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.”* This unclean spirit was even reflected in the unclean animals which was the source of livelihood of the Gadarenes. They were raisers of SWINE! This man was one *“Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.”* The works of the devil never stray far from his intent for his victim – the tomb! This man lived among the tombs and constantly faced death and its master every day. Demons have great power, if we allow it to them, and this possessed man exemplified that power in being beyond being chained and bound for his own protection. No man can tame an evil mind, but even the most evil of men may be tamed by God!

“And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.” My heart bleeds for the depth of despair that drives this man to such abject misery. He was always alone and deserted. He cried always in his pain and misery. He, in a single word, hated himself! He had only contempt for the person he had become. He even cut his body with stones. I have seen such misery among precious young girls of the Far East who were sold into prostitution and who would cut their bodies with broken glass in fits of rage against their predicament. It was a condition that would break the heart of any decent-minded person but one which is beyond real change without the Spirit of Christ working among those people. I still see those images vividly and I regret that I could not have said, or done, something to alleviate their sufferings. The innocence of the very young was sold for pittance into the hands of the devil by greedy and unrighteous men and women.

“But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?” Even the demons set a better example than many of those among us who neither love nor hate God, but are simply indifferent to His Sovereignty and Truth. At least the demons recognize, even at a great distance (which they shall always be from Christ), His Presence and Coming! Demon spirits are reprobate, having deserted their first love and followed Satan into that reprobation, yet still plead for a solution to their damnation. Their hope is forlorn. They certainly do, better than some ministers, in recognizing Christ for who He is! Should we not, at least, have the same presence of

mind to recognize Christ for who He is as do demons? "I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." Do you feel it strange that many false ministers can call upon the name and power of God while they are complete imposters? Look, the demons do it, too!

Unlike Eve before the damnable Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Christ does not engage in a dialogue with the devil except to identify him for what he is. "*For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.*" But Christ will always identify the evil that plagues our hearts: "*What is thy name?*" Let us, too, be knowledgeable of the evil with which we are dealing in purifying our spirits and the Church.

"And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many." Among men who are indifferent to God (as were the Gadarenes), the demons prosper just as they do among any people or nation that grow indifferent to God. . *"And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country."* This land of the Gadarenes was a land of unclean people, therefore, the unclean spirits felt well at home here. They desired to remain in this country. *"Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them."* A demon is not very particular about where it lives as long as it is a place of uncleanness. There are an abundance of unclean peoples in our world that are always vulnerable to such spirits. The unclean have not God's protection against demons: *"And forthwith Jesus gave them leave."*

"And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea." The very object of the devil and his demons is the destruction of his victims. The demons will never lead you into green pastures and beside still waters, but to certain destruction. The greatest amazement of this occasion is not the destruction of 2,000 swine (so there must have been at least 2,000 demons possessing the man), but the reaction of the Gadarenes at this great miracle of Christ! *"And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid."* Notice that fear of the Lord does not always lead to repentance. These people feared Christ for the wrong reasons – their profits from the filthy swine! *"And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine."* They should have rejoiced that one soul was saved from the power of the devil, but did they?

"And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts." These men prayed to the right person, but for the wrong purpose. *"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."* (James 4:3) It is a great tragedy that these men prayed, not that Christ would come to them, but that He might depart from them! They would prefer to live in the company of swine and demons than the Lord of heaven. Is America becoming like that?

"And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him." From the very moment that God casts the demons from our hearts, we immediately desire to be with Him always and rightfully so. This man had literally had his fill of demons and swine, now he desires, above all else, to the One who can grant complete Liberty! *"Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in*

Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel." We often experience a wonderful time of fellowship with God and His people at worship or during the Convention and we wish not to leave it and return home. We want to bask in the love and warmth of God in places that are full of His presence, but God will have us go to the place where the NEED is greatest – a mission field, a community without Christ, or a place of raising smelly swine where the people need daily reminders of the power of God. The place a Christian heart occupies will always be full of God's Presence regardless of the outward evils. Do you prefer swinely lusts to the presence of Christ?