

Chapter Eight (8:1-56)

THE SON OF MAN EXERCISING DIVINE AUTHORITY

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. How would women have “means” by which to contribute to Jesus’ needs (8:1-3)?
2. Why would the sower let most of his seed fall on unproductive ground (8:4-8)?
3. How can the word of God be the “seed” (8:11)?
4. If the disciples had seen Jesus raise the dead, how could they be afraid in the storm if He was in the boat (8:22-25)?
5. Why would Jesus allow demons to go into pigs and destroy them (8:26-33)?
6. Why didn’t Jesus let the healed man accompany Him (8:38-39)?
7. If Jesus was going to raise Jairus’ daughter from the dead, why didn’t he want a big crowd to witness it (8:51)?

SECTION 1

In Educating The Ego (8:1-21)

8 Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

⁴ And when a great crowd came together and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable: ⁵“A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell along the path, and was trodden under foot, and the birds of the air devoured it. ⁶And some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. ⁷And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it. ⁸And some fell into good soil and grew, and yielded a hundredfold.” As he said this, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

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9 And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, ¹⁰he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but for others they are in parables, so that seeing they may not understand. ¹¹Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. ¹²The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. ¹³And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy; but these have no root, they believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. ¹⁴And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. ¹⁵And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 "No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a vessel, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, that those who enter may see the light. ¹⁷For nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light. ¹⁸Take heed then how you hear; for to him who has will more be given, and from him who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away."

19 Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him for the crowd. ²⁰And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." ²¹But he said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

8:1-3 Dogma: Jesus went about from one city and village to another (Gr. *kata polin kai komen*) making proclamation (Gr. *kerusson*) and delivering a message (*euangelizomenos*) or evangelizing. The message was: "the kingdom of God" has come! This is the essential dogma for the education of the human ego or soul. God is Sovereign! He has never and will never be dethroned. That is good news! G. Campbell Morgan suggests a slight change in translation of the Greek phrase, *ten basileian tou Theou*, to read "the kingdom of God." There is no grammatical reason for objection to such a change. Actually, "kingship" is the primary meaning of the word *basileian*, (see Arndt & Gingrich, Greek lexicon, page 134). Territory is the secondary meaning of the word. The fact that God rules and He has made a way for rebellious man to be reconciled and receive citizenship in His kingdom, is what Jesus proclaimed. This is the Gospel—the "good news." God is in charge—history will ultimately be consummated under His sovereignty, and man has an opportunity

to harmonize himself to that absolute dogma and become the recipient of its consequences. No human mind or heart has been educated until it has heard the Gospel and no human being can be a citizen of the kingdom of God without surrendering to the kingship of Christ.

In the ministry of the women to Jesus and the twelve we have an example of the kingship of Christ taking root in the human heart. These women lovingly expressed their citizenship by participating in heralding the good news through their financial support of Christ's evangelizing. The Greek imperfect verb *diekonoun* indicates "they kept on deaconessing, or ministering" (RSV "providing") for Jesus and the twelve out of their own belongings. Supernaturally speaking, Jesus did not have to depend on anyone for physical subsistence. He could change water to wine and multiply bread and fish. He had the power to create or destroy. But if He is to capture the hearts of men and women for God He must, by humble grace, allow them to *share* in the work (kingdom) of God. G. Campbell Morgan writes, "I always see here for myself the grace of Christ, that He was content to be supported in that way, while He carried on His work. It is more blessed to give than receive, and it takes more grace to receive than it does to give. He was content to live on charity, while He carried on His mighty ministry."

Mary is from the Hebrew name Miriam (which means, "rebel") called Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons; Joanna (means, "dove") the wife of Herod's steward (Gr. *epitropos*, "one who looks after the king's financial affairs"); and Susanna (means, "lily"), who had also been healed of some infirmity. Barclay notes the significance that in this group of women are united such diverse backgrounds—Mary, with the dark past and Joanna, a lady of the king's court in one company. He says, "There is nothing which the Church needs more than to learn how to yoke in common harness the diverse temperaments and qualities of different people. If we are failing it is our own fault, for, in Christ, it can be done—it has been done."

It is also significant that the only mention of how Jesus was supported in His ministry tells of women leading out. Womanhood is glorified as it serves God:

- a. Jesus, the Messiah, was born of woman.
- b. Women supported His ministry. Lk. 8:1-3.
- c. Women stayed with Him in His agony at the cross, Jn. 19:25.
- d. Women were first to the tomb, Lk. 23:55.
- e. Women were prominent in service in the early church, Acts 1:14; 12:12; 16:13-15.
- f. Many women served in the church at Rome, Rom. 16:3-23.
- g. Women supported the apostle Paul's ministry, Phil. 4:3.

The glory of womanhood is in helping others serve Christ!

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8:4-15 Dynamic: The dynamic, the germinating power in the education of the human ego is the Word of God. Jesus makes this dramatically clear in His "parable of the sower." Actually, it is a parable of the soils. The word parable in Greek is *parabole* and literally means, "that which is cast alongside," or something deliberately placed parallel. Someone has graphically described a parable as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." The essential rule in interpreting parables is to find the one central truth which the parable intends to teach. Parables are mainly illustrative and many of the details in a parable are "window dressing" and have nothing to do with doctrine. Doctrine does not "lean on" parables; parables "lean on doctrine." In other words, parables do not constitute or give rise to the formation of doctrines—they simply explain and help apply doctrines already constituted.

At this very crucial point in Jesus' public ministry, it is apparent that He begins to make much more use of parables. This may be due to a number of circumstances:

- a. There is a growing opposition from the religious and political authorities toward His teaching (cf. Mt. 12:22-45, etc.).
- b. His own family and twelve disciples are expressing anxieties about His welfare (cf. Mt. 12:46-50; Lk. 8:19-21).
- c. Great multitudes are following Him but their minds are so enthralled with the materialistic aspects of the "kingdom of God" He is having difficulty penetrating that with any spiritual concepts (cf. Mt. 13:10-13, 34, 35).
- e. His own select group of twelve disciples have also manifested a need to have some truths concerning the kingdom more graphically imprinted on their minds.

Parables are enigmatic enough and require just enough self-honesty and effort to know the truth that they will conceal the truth from those who would oppose the truth and only use it for violent purposes. Parables have a way of stripping the human mind bare of all bias and rationalization and laying it open to reality so that those who hate the truth have their opposition intensified. Jesus now tells a parable to explain this about parables:

- a. the "way" (Gr. *hodos*) is more than a path (Gr. *tribos*). *Hodos* is translated "highway" in Mt. 22:10; Lk. 14:23 and means the hard, packed-down roadway. It is impenetrable. Some seed falls on such "soil" and because it cannot take root it never produces. It is vulnerable. Birds come and take the seed away.
- b. the "rock" (Gr. *petran*) is the ground which is underlaid with limestone. It is very shallow soil on top of hard rock which will not retain moisture. Seed sown on such soil may sprout but the young plant withers almost immediately.

- c. the "thorns" (Gr. *akanthon*) may be a generic term for the many thorns and thistles and prickly weeds which grow in Palestine. Seed falling in soil not thoroughly plowed and weeded will find thorns and thistles growing up with the young plants. The weeds are more prolific and hardier and will soon choke out the domestic plants. Soil must be constantly plowed and cultivated so the plants will grow.
- d. the "good" soil (Gr. *agathev*) is that which is prepared. It is "broken" up, plowed, fertile, retains moisture and is cleared of weeds and other hindrances.

Jesus concluded the parable with an admonition to "hear." In the Hebrew language the word *shema* means "hear and obey"; to the Hebrew mind to hear was to obey. The same is true of the Greek word *hupakouo* "obey" which comes from the root *akouw* which means "hear, hearken." The person who really "hears" the teaching of Jesus will obey it. Jesus came to accomplish man's salvation by His death and resurrection, but man must "hear and obey" to receive that salvation. When the Gospel is taught people are held responsible by God as to how they "hear." Those who teach the gospel have responsibilities to be faithful in proclamation, but those who are *taught* also have awesome responsibilities in hearing and obeying!

The disciples asked Jesus what this parable meant. He replied it was to teach the truth that proclaiming the kingship of God would not be easy. In effect, Jesus is explaining why He has suddenly intensified His use of the parabolic method of preaching. The truth of God's sovereignty may be widely disseminated but it will have limited reception—not because the truth has no germinating power nor because the proclaimer is inept but because the hearts of men refuse to receive it. This parable was to show the difference between His disciples who heard His proclamation that the kingdom of God had come and left all and followed Him and the self-righteous religious leaders and materialistic multitudes who heard but did not produce the fruit of repentance in their lives. Most of the time Jesus could speak plainly to His disciples and they understood. Of course, there were times when they did not understand because of their finite limitations, but they were good men and His teaching did not motivate them to want to kill Him as it did the rulers. The Greek word *mysteria* ("mysteries," KJV) is translated "secrets" in the RSV. The word in Biblical context means "revelation." It is not mysterious in that it *cannot* be known but in the sense that it is unknown until it is revealed. What Jesus is actually saying is He could *reveal* the things concerning the kingdom of God plainly to His disciples most of the time without fear of being misunderstood and opposed but for the rest of the people then He must speak of the kingdom in parables. So Jesus explained the parable to His disciples:

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- a. the "seed" is the word of God. The Greek is, *ho logos tou theou*. Jesus is the Logos in John 1:1-18 and Rev. 19:13. The word of Jesus is Life (cf. Jn. 6:63). The gospel of Christ is the seed by which men are "born again" (I Pet. 1:22-24) and it must be "obeyed" to produce the new life. This is of primary importance. The dynamic for eternal life is not religious systems or human traditions but faith in a Person, Jesus Christ, which is expressed by obedience to His commandments.
- b. the "wayside" soil represents people with hardened hearts. The word of God cannot bear fruit there because they do not love the truth but take pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thess. 2:9-12) and the devil is allowed to come and take the truth away and replace it with delusion and falsehood. This is the mind that has become calloused with continued rejection of truth (cf. Rom. 1:18-32; Heb. 3:7-13; II Pet. 3:5; Prov. 21:29; 28:14, etc.). This represents the coldly indifferent, close-minded, arrogant, self-righteous person, obstinately impervious to the historical reality of scripture because of the moral implications for his life-style. The disciple of Jesus who goes proclaiming the kingship of God will find that the Word can be absolutely resisted, that there is a real devil who will take away any word of God when a person does not want it, and, all who sow the "seed" of the kingdom will meet with some "hard" hearts.
- c. the "rocky" or shallow soil represents those who respond quickly and emotionally to the Word, but superficially. This person never really thinks about the hard historical realities of discipleship, stewardship, persecution, and self-control—they just "feel." These have no endurance when the "heat" of worldly opposition comes to their life because they have not allowed the Word of God to have root in their character. Their relationship to the Word is emotional but not mental and practical. The disciple of Jesus who sows the seed of the Gospel must understand that if the Word is to produce any lasting fruit it must be sown in minds characterized by stability, reality, endurance and depth.
- d. the "thorny" soil represents those who "want the best of both worlds" at the same time. It is the heart with potential (for if it will grow thorns, it will grow wheat) but it allows the weeds of worldliness to grow alongside the wheat of the Word. The desires and cares of this world, if allowed to go unchecked, will choke out desires and cares for the next world. If Jesus ever emphasized anything it was that Christian discipleship is impossible with divided loyalties. We must "set our minds on things above . . . not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2). The "rich young ruler" and "Demas" are examples of thorny soil.

e. the "good" soil represents people with "honest and good" (Gr. *kale, agathe*) hearts. They are fair-minded, know what is right when it is proclaimed and practiced, and desire the truth even though it may involve suffering in the flesh. They hold on to all the truth they know and are loyal to it because they recognize its value. They have patience (Gr. *hupomone*, "endurance"). They are not fickle, but steadfast. They are not shallow but deep. The seed of the gospel sown in their hearts grows automatically (Gr. *automate*, Mk. 4:28), or, of its own accord. No manipulation is necessary, it grows according to its own schedule.

Jesus revealed in this parable that the kingdom of God (God's rule in the hearts of men) is produced by the Word of God preached to men. Those who proclaim the Word must be warned that it will fall on four different types of hearts. The Word will produce the fruit of salvation in *only one* kind of heart, honest and good; in all others it will not produce. Thus, by implication, Jesus is also teaching that sowing requires caring, training, work, persuasiveness, honesty, humility, patience, and faith. The student should definitely study Matthew 13:1-53 and Mark 4:1-34 in conjunction with Luke 8:4-18. We also recommend the very fine comments of Harold Fowler in, *The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. III*, pages 14-172, pub. College Press.

8:16-18 Development: If the sower sows and the seed has automatic life in itself, then the ultimate responsibility for producing fruit lies with the "soil." Hearing is the ultimate responsibility! The disciples may have wondered about Jesus' statement, "but for others they (the revelations of the kingdom) are in parables, so that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand." Jesus' answer to their perplexity: Lamps are made for lighting and light may be seen unless one is "blind." Jesus is not going to refuse to reveal the kingdom to anyone. He will preach the kingdom to everyone He possibly can. He is not going to conceal the light of the gospel—He is going to let it shine. The light of truth, so far as it depends on Him and His disciples, will be made available to all who are willing to see it. But truth is perceived only to the degree of honesty, and desire which the mind has toward it. Truth will not be forced upon anyone. Jesus is using parabolic form to present truth simply because for those who refuse to let God tell them anything, the door to the kingdom of God must be closed. Take heed then how you hear (obey)! The truth about the kingdom has all been revealed in Jesus and the apostolic writings. Nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light. God has no more revelation about the kingdom than what the New Testament reveals. The Light is there! It is up to man to see it! Those who put the most faith in Jesus' words will understand them and profit from them

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most. Those who do not believe Jesus, even what little truth they have will soon become meaningless and lost. What a man does not use he will lose!

8:19-21 Disposition: Matthew and Mark (Mt. 12:46-50; Mk. 3:31-35) place this incident in a different position in their accounts. Most commentators think the incident should chronologically come before the sermon in parables and that Luke has placed it according to literary usage. Whatever the case, it is a classic example of the Son of Man exercising authority in the realm of the human ego. It also exemplifies the very thing Jesus warned against in the parable of the soils (the "thorny soil") that the word of the kingdom may be choked out by worldly-mindedness. Jesus' mother and brothers may have been altogether sincere in trying to call Him aside from the intensity of His present situation. Jesus had been so busy He had not even taken time to eat (cf. Mk. 3:20); the Pharisees were openly intensifying their attacks upon Him (Mt. 12:24) and saying He was demon possessed; they probably thought Jesus was so carried away with His cause that He had become oblivious to the dangers all about Him and they must take things in hand and give corrective guidance. At first, Jesus' answer seems flippant. But Jesus is not being frivolous toward family love at all—He is simply putting it in its proper place. Family relationships must come behind our spiritual relationship with the Heavenly Father. The true man of God is loyal to God and His work first. The old adage that "blood is thicker than water" (originally intended to advocate that family ties are stronger than the ties of baptism into the spiritual family of God) is wrong! The mother and brothers of Jesus needed to understand that they had no right to use their family relationship to hinder His spiritual mission. They were, in fact, dangerously close to becoming "thorny soil" by their worldly attitude toward His work. The ultimate criterion of our relationship to Jesus is not human family ties, or any other circumstance of human birth, but spiritual rebirth. As Jesus put it, our relationship to Him depends entirely upon whether we are doing the will of God or not. That is the kingdom disposition; Jesus wishes to exercise His authority through His word upon the human ego to produce that disposition.

SECTION 2

In The Elements (8:22-25)

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, ²³and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a storm of wind came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in danger. ²⁴And they went and woke him saying, "Master, Master,

we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even wind and water, and they obey him?"

8:22-23 Peril: The beautiful Sea of Galilee is 685 feet below sea level. It is surrounded by hills rising 2000 feet high which make the area resemble a huge "cup." Jesus apparently decided to go "across" the sea, away from Capernaum, in order to bring some moderation to the intense popularity of His ministry. The opposition to His popularity was becoming vicious and murderous. Jesus wished very much that the people would not seek Him simply for the physical things such as healing and "bread and fish" (cf. Jn. 6:26ff). So He went away from Capernaum to let that attitude cool. He also knew it was not His time to die at the hands of His enemies so His retirement to the region of the Gerasenes (v. 26) was to temporarily postpone that crisis.

As they were out on the sea, a storm of wind came "down" on the lake. Luke's use of the word "down" is minutely accurate! Storms to this day come "down" upon the Sea of Galilee because of its unique topography. Matthew, describing this same storm, uses the Greek words *seismos megas*, meaning "great shaking" (we get the English prefix "mega" and the noun, "seismograph" from these Greek words). Seismographs register the intensity of earthquakes. This must have been an awesome storm. Mark and Luke use the Greek words, *lailapsi megale anemou*, meaning literally, "a hurricane of great driving wind." Anyone who has ever been in a storm at sea in a large ship knows how utterly awesome and terrifying an experience it is. Jesus and his disciples were in a small fishing boat which could hold twelve men but not a "large" catch of fish. These boats were wide and solid, but not very fast— not much larger than a life-boat on modern sea-going vessels. The waves were already swamping the boat and it was dangerously close to sinking with all aboard. Luke indicates Jesus went to sleep almost immediately after they set sail, and He slept on while the storm raged. He was at perfect peace with His Father and had no fear whatever. But the disciples were terrified. Mark records that they woke Jesus and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" Luke tells us the disciples addressed Jesus, "Master, Master . . ." (Gr. *epistata, epistata*, means, "commander, commander,"). How could they doubt Jesus' concern? How could they doubt their eternal safety with Him as their commander? It is easy to believe in one's safety as long as one is safe! The test of faith comes when one faces death and all human power is useless. Of course Jesus cared! He had demonstrated His care for fearful, suffering,

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dying humanity many times over already. He demonstrated His power to do whatever He wished about any human predicament. So, as Matthew records, when Jesus was awakened He said, "Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?" Matthew uses the Greek word *oligopistoi* for "little faith." It could be more accurately translated "brief faith." Faith is not measured so much by quantity as by quality. The faith that pleases God is steadfast, enduring and stable. Faith that is here today and gone tomorrow or that vacillates with circumstances, "emotionally up" one day and "emotionally gone" the next day is unacceptable to God.

8:24-25 Power: All three of the synoptic gospel writers used the Greek word *epitimao* to express Jesus' action in "rebuking" the wind and the sea. *Epitimao* means "to lay honor upon." In other words, Jesus laid His honor (power and authority) upon nature and it obeyed Him immediately. As co-Creator (Jn. 1:1-18; Col. 1:16) and co-Sustainer (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3) He exercises His sovereign authority over the elements and they do His will. Jesus was not "scolding" nature: He was simply ordering it to do His will. Luke, like Matthew, indicates Jesus wondered where the faith of the disciples had gone, for he reports Jesus asking, "Where is your faith?"

Whereas before they were afraid at the raging of the storm, now they were awe-stricken with the power of Jesus over the elements. With simply a word He gave orders and was obeyed immediately. There is no possibility that this was a hoax. These men were fishermen by occupation. They had sailed this sea hundreds of times. They knew what storms were like. This was no ordinary storm—and it was real. The storm was stopped suddenly (not gradually) and at its apex. So these men said, "Who is this, that he commands even wind and water and they obey him?" Who is He indeed! He is Lord of all creation! What have you decided about Jesus? If we stand in awe before the almost unbelievable powers of nature (even of atomic power) how much more must we bow our wills to the absolute authority of His word!

SECTION 3

In Evil Spirits (8:26-39)

26 Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷And as he stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes, and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me." ²⁹For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a

time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert.) ³⁰Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him.

³¹And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss. ³²Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them leave. ³³Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

³⁴When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ³⁶And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. ³⁷Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so he got into the boat and returned.

³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but he sent him away, saying, ³⁹"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

8:26-33 Emancipation: Matthew says Jesus arrived across the Sea of Galilee at the "country of the Gadarenes." Both Mark and Luke make the place of arrival "the country of the Gerasenes." The Greek manuscripts vary here probably due to the fact that Matthew, writing mostly for a Jewish audience, used the name of the city Gadara (about 5 miles southeast of the seashore), which would be more likely used by the Jews, as a generalization for the whole area. Mark and Luke, writing mostly for a Gentile audience used the name of a city 50 miles south of the Sea of Galilee, Gerasa (the Roman capital of the whole region) as a synonym for the whole area. Both Gadara and Gerasa were cities of the Decapolis mentioned in the New Testament. Some ancient Greek texts read "Geresa" which may be a scribal emendation (attempting to correct what was thought to be an error in an earlier manuscript) since there apparently was a city on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee closer to the seashore than Gadara.

Matthew says there were two men possessed of demons. Mark says there was a man with an unclean spirit. Luke says Jesus met a man from the city who had demons.

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- a. Matthew, Mark and Luke are all correct. They are inspired. Our removal from the situation by 2000 years is the problem.
- b. Probably Mark and Luke were interested in recording the more dominant one (the more spectacular one) possessed of many demons.
- c. Mark confirms in his account that the man was possessed of more than one demon (Mk. 5:14-20).
- d. Modern-day news reporters vary in accounts just as these men did and no one accuses them of historical errors.
- e. There is no contradiction unless Mark says "there was *only* one demon-possessed man."

Luke records that when Jesus stepped out of the boat onto the land there met Him a man from the city (Gadara) who had demons. For an extensive discussion of demon possession in the New Testament see our comments on Luke 4:32-41. Modern archaeologists have excavated the cliffs around Gadara (today called, Um Keis) and found tombs measuring 20 feet square, with side recesses for bodies. Like the demoniacs, people still dwell in them today. Nearby there is a field of several acres strewn with stone coffins and their lids. Every demon possessed person Jesus met received compassion and pity from Him. This was an exceptionally pitiful case.

- a. The man had been naked for a long time.
- b. He lived in tombs among dead bodies.
- c. He was seized with fits of violence many times by the demons.
- d. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and leg irons by the people of the area.
- e. But he broke the chains and irons and the demons drove him into the uninhabited wild places of the area.

When the man saw Jesus, he prostrated himself on the ground before Jesus and (the demons, or one specific demon among many) cried out, "What have you do to with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me." Demons recognize their true sovereign! Jesus is Lord of *all*, and the demons know it. They know they have nothing in common with Jesus except that He is ultimately set to punish them in torments. When asked his name, the man said, "Legion." A Roman "legion" of soldiers numbered 6000, thus the word *legion* came to signify *many*. The word *abyssos* in classical Greek meant "bottomless," and was used to describe the ancient Greek cosmogony of a deep, limitless universe or space beyond this world. In the N.T. it is used to describe the "nether" world or the place of torments where the disobedient spirits are bound. It is translated "bottomless pit" in Rev. 9:1; 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1-3. The demons feared this "bottomless pit" more than anything else.

The demons begged Jesus to allow them to inhabit a herd of swine feeding near the tombs. Mark says there were approximately 2000 swine in the herd. There were strict prohibitions in Judaism against Jews eating, raising or touching swine. However, the Jews who lived east of the Jordan River often accommodated themselves to the culture of the Gentile majority and paid little attention to religious custom, especially if it involved economics. We do not really know if the herdsmen were Jews or Gentiles. The demons knew Jesus would not allow them to inhabit human beings—He cast them out at every opportunity. They knew they were doomed to return to the abyss if they had no physical body in this world to inhabit. Perhaps they also knew that since the swine had no will by which they could control them, they could destroy the swine and Jesus would be blamed by the populace and the demons would have some temporary victory over Him. The malicious, destructive rebellion of the devil and his cohorts is graphically illustrated here. They will grasp at any straw to destroy anything God has made!

They did not fool Jesus! He knew all along the outcome of this incident. He was not being merciful to the demons. He knew this would shock the materialistic-minded people of this country (which they proved to be, 8:37) out of their indifference later when the man who had been emancipated from this demonic enslavement testified among them how much God had done for him. Many people of this area later became followers of Christ and some of the earliest Christian churches were formed in this area. Anyone who finds occasion to denounce Jesus for allowing swine to be destroyed is as spiritually blind as the people of Gadara were. They see neither the salvation of the one pitiful demon-possessed man nor the subsequent discipleship of the whole area as important as the loss of private property. Foster comments, "How often this is the main thing which men consider—material loss—and not the rescue of human beings! . . . The perverted estimate of the value of material things and of a human soul must needs be corrected." The issue was really: which is more important, hogs or men?

8:34-39 Effects: This spectacular demonstration of divine authority over demons and the material creation resulted in a number of exciting consequences:

- a. When the herdsmen saw what happened, they fled, and told it in the city and country. Spontaneous evangelism!
- b. Then people went out to see what had happened. No one could remain indifferent to such stories—they had to see for themselves.
- c. The multitudes saw the man clothed and in his right mind and were afraid.
- d. When the story was told again of how the demons were cast out of the man and the swine ran down into the sea and drowned, the

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people were seized (Gr. *suneichonto*, grasped, gripped in, laid hold of) by great fear (Gr. *phobos*).

The impact of what Jesus had done, and Who He must be paralyzed them with fear at what He might yet do.

- e. The people of the area entreated Jesus to leave their area. They may have been concerned that more private property might be destroyed by this mysteriously powerful Galilean. More probably, they were afraid of Him because of their sinful guilt. Even Peter had earlier cried, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man" (Lk. 5:8).

Guilty, unforgiven sinners, in the presence of divine holiness and power are slain and destroyed with fear!

- f. The man kept on begging Jesus that he might go with Him:

- (1) His love and gratitude would make him ready to serve Jesus with his very life.
- (2) He could be sure of staying rid of demon possession if he remained at Jesus' side.
- (3) Everyone in this area knew him and would forever associate him with the loss of 2000 hogs.

But Jesus had a work for him to do right in the most difficult place on earth to live for Christ—one's own home area.

The emancipated man proclaimed throughout the whole region what Jesus had done for him. The record of this great demonstration of divine power had been proclaimed now for almost 2000 years and millions have believed Jesus is who He claimed to be and have been freed from an enslavement worse than 2000 demons.

SECTION 4

In Enfeebling Sickness (8:40-48)

40 Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. ⁴¹And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue; and falling at Jesus' feet he besought him to come to his house, ⁴²for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying.

As he went, the people pressed round him. ⁴³And a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and could not be healed by any one, ⁴⁴came up behind him, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased. ⁴⁵And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!" ⁴⁶But

Jesus said, "Some one touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." ⁴⁷And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

8:40-42 The Seeking: Jesus left the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee and sailed in a boat (Mt. 9:1; Mk. 5:21) back to Capernaum. The multitudes received Him back with gladness (Gr. *apedexato*) or "welcomed" Him. Mark tells us that the multitudes thronged about Him at the seashore (Mk. 5:21) and they continued to gather and press in upon Him until it became almost impossible for Him to move. Everyone was trying to touch Him (cf. Mk. 5:30-31 with Lk. 8:45). Luke informs us the multitudes had been waiting (Gr. *prosdokontes*, expecting, anticipating with eagerness) for Him to return. This was about the middle of the second year of Jesus' public ministry. It was the year of great popularity—conducted mostly in Galilee. Crowds followed Him wherever He went surrounding Him, begging Him to heal them or do some miracle for them to improve their physical and material situation. The scenes out in the streets and highways of Galilee would resemble the scenes of modern American cities when America's President walks their streets, except that Jesus had no bodyguards or roped-off areas to keep the crowds at a distance. In this teeming, pushing, chattering throng, there was a "ruler" of one of the synagogues by the name of Jairus. Matthew and Mark record that Jairus spoke to Jesus, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." Luke, always the precise physician, notes that she was his only daughter and she was twelve years of age. Jesus had apparently sat down and was teaching this clamoring crowd, for Matthew indicates Jesus "rose" and followed Jairus with His disciples. The great multitude went right along toward Jairus' house, continuing to press in upon Jesus and His disciples as they walked.

8:43-48 The Saved: On the way to the home of Jairus, in the midst of the clamoring crowd was a woman who had a "flow of blood" (hemorrhage) for twelve years. Mark records the woman "had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse." Some ancient manuscripts of Luke's gospel also note that the woman "had spent all her living upon physicians." Her infirmity was incurable by the physicians of that day (perhaps even by physicians of today). She must have been very emaciated and weak. The "fringe" of the garment is called *tzitzith* in Hebrew and *kraspedou* in Greek. It consisted of tassels of twisted cords fastened to the outer

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garments as borders on cloaks or coats to remind Israelites of their obligations to be loyal to Jehovah (cf. Nu. 15:38-39; Deut. 22:12). Later such "fringes" became distinct badges of Judaism and many of the Pharisees lengthened theirs to make a public show that they considered themselves more "righteous" than the common people.

Why did the woman want only to touch the fringe of His garment? (Mt. 9:21; Mk. 5:28). She was probably ashamed to approach Jesus face to face since her hemorrhage made her "unclean" ceremonially (Lev. 15:19-31). As a result she was banned from the public, banned from the temple worship services, and should she touch anyone else she would make them "unclean" (cf. Num. 19:22). Considering the woman's helpless, hopeless and shameful plight it is to her credit that she had not become bitter. She had heard the reports about Jesus (Mk. 5:27) and believed He could heal her even if all she could do was touch the fringe of His garment. Her faith was not based on mysticism or on her own feelings—but on reports from eyewitnesses to former healings by Jesus. Our faith that Jesus is who He claims to be and will do what He says is based on the very same kind of evidence—eyewitness testimony. Her faith in Jesus was, to some extent, born of desperation. This is the case with all of us. Ultimately none of us will trust in Jesus until we are convinced there is nothing else that can save us. We must all finally come to the point where we despair even of life itself before we learn to rely on God (cf. II Cor. 1:8-9). When we have come to that place, then the testimony of who Jesus is (historical evidence) and that He is able to save, is there in the Bible for us to believe and act (obey) upon.

Luke records precisely that when she touched Jesus her flow (Gr. *hrusis*) of blood ceased. Mark uses a less precise and more figurative description, literally, "and immediately was dried up the fountain of the blood of her . . ." (Mk. 5:29). The healing was instantaneous—not gradual. No need for her to return to Jesus for more healing sessions. We feel sure that Jesus not only knew someone had touched Him, but that He also knew who. Why then did he ask? Probably to (a) publicly prove the woman's cure so that she might return to worship in the temple and social fraternization; (b) to make sure she knew that the power to heal was with Jesus, not His cloak; (c) to give the woman an opportunity to express her gratitude and become a witness to those in that crowd of who Jesus was. When Jesus asked who had touched Him, all in the crowd denied it (probably afraid He was upset about it). Peter and His other disciples thought it rather odd that Jesus would suddenly become aware someone had touched Him when the crowd had been pressing in upon Him, undoubtedly jostling and bumping and touching Him all the way from the seashore. But Jesus was talking about an unique touch—a touch of faith. Jesus perceived (Gr. *epignous*, "knowing") that power

had gone forth from Him. The Greek word *ginosko* is *not* used to describe physical sensations but mental comprehensions. Jesus had no particular sensation that power had gone from Him, but he *knew* it. Even the woman's "feeling" in her body that she was healed (Mk. 5:29) is described by the Greek word *ginosko* and means she *knew* it mentally—not emotionally. It actually happened to her—she didn't just "feel" like it had happened.

The woman saw that she could not remain anonymous (ashamed because of her "unclean" condition). If Jesus had the power to heal her in such a miraculous way, He would surely know who had touched His garment. She came trembling (Gr. *tremousa*) and prostrated herself down before Jesus in the presence of that pushing, shoving crowd and declared (Gr. *apengeilen*, from *apangelo*, meaning, "to declare precisely, plainly and clearly") why she had touched Him and how she had been immediately cured. But Jesus spoke tenderly to her (she was probably expecting some rebuke from this great rabbi because she had touched Him when she was "unclean") and said, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." All three gospel writers use the Greek word *sesoken* (from *sodzo*, meaning primarily, "saved") which has been translated in the RSV, "well." The woman had been delivered and saved from her physical infirmity and thus made well. And then He told her to "go in peace." *Peace* in Hebrew is *shalom* and means, "well-being, integrated wholeness, goodness." Jesus meant for the woman to go her way also in spiritual well-being for her faith in Him had delivered her from her "uncleanness." She was restored to communion with God. She could now return to the temple to offer sacrifices and worship. This was the greatest aspect of her healing! Some day, she would become ill again and die, physically, but she had been restored to fellowship with God and that was what made her "well" in the ultimate sense. Jesus demonstrated His power over the ultimate disease—sin.

SECTION 5

In Eternity (8:49-56)

49 While he was still speaking, a man from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." ⁵⁰But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." ⁵¹And when he came to the house, he permitted no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. ⁵²And all were weeping and bewailing her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." ⁵³And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. ⁵⁴But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise."

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⁵⁵And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and he directed that something should be given her to eat. ⁵⁶And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.

8:49-53 Only Believe: Jairus had been following Jesus closely all the time. No doubt Jairus was growing more anxious for his daughter's life moment by moment. While Jesus was still speaking to the woman healed of her "issue of blood" Jairus was standing next to Jesus in the pushing, pressing multitude. Suddenly, pushing through the crowd, came someone from Jairus' house (he was the ruler of a synagogue in Capernaum and a very important man of the community) blurting out the shocking news, "Your little daughter is dead, do not vex the teacher any longer." There was no doubt on the part of the messenger that the little girl was dead for he used the Greek word *tethneken*, a perfect tense verb which indicates the child had died before he left the house and was even now dead. Jairus must have been "pestering" Jesus constantly to hurry up to this house for the Greek word *skulle* ("trouble") literally means "to flay off the skin of someone" and so in a figurative way means to "agitate, vex, annoy, distress."

Jesus, hearing the shocking announcement, spoke directly to Jairus (Gr. *apekrithe*, "answered him"), rather tersely, "Do not fear, only believe and she will be saved." The Greek word translated "well," is *sothsetai*, the future tense of *sodzo*, meaning, "to save, to make whole." It is the same word Jesus used with the woman with an issue of blood. Jesus did not explain how the child would be "saved" or who would do the saving—He implied that Jairus was simply to trust Him and all would be well. Arriving at Jairus' house, Jesus entered the house with only Peter, John and James, and Jairus and his wife (cf. Mk. 5:37). Inside the house was pandemonium; flute players (Mt. 9:23), a tumult (Mk. 5:38), and a crowd of people weeping and bewailing the child loudly (the Greek word, *thorubon*, translated "tumult" in Mk. 5:38-39, literally means, "loud, deafening noise, confusion"). Confusion, loud wailing, flutes playing funeral dirges, and rooms packed with curiosity-minded people was in no way conducive to the majestic, yet privately tender thing Jesus was about to do, so He "put them all outside" (Mk. 5:40), He commanded them (Gr. *anachoreite*, imperative mood), "You all withdraw" (Mt. 9:24) "for she is not dead but is sleeping."

Jesus knew He was going to clear the house of all the confusion and noise by ordering the mourners outside. What he was going to do needed to be done, for the sake of the parents and the girl, as privately as possible. This was no time for even more confusion and uproar, well-intentioned though it might be. At the same time, Jesus wanted eyewitnesses to the event whose personal involvement might not later be challenged as

it might if the father and mother themselves were the only witnesses. These three disciples would be impersonal and objective in their observance. Furthermore, it is evident from verse 56 that Jesus wanted as little publicity of this miracle as possible because it would simply attract more and more multitudes seeking *only* healing, and intensify official opposition, (cf. also Mt. 9:26). If people wanted to believe and trust Jesus for forgiveness and salvation, He had already done enough miracles. Jesus did not have to heal every single sick person in the world to establish His power and faithfulness to keep His promise to forgive. As a matter of fact, the more physical healing that took place, the more people tended to seek it and neglect the cleansing of their souls unto salvation.

Why would Jesus say the child was "sleeping" when it was plain to everyone present she was dead? As G. Campbell Morgan puts it, "From Christ's viewpoint that is not death which we call death. When the spirit has left the body, that is not death. Death is a deeper thing than that." Physical death is merely the separation of the spirit from the body. Jairus' daughter still lived, somewhere, in another existence, absent from the body of flesh. Jesus wants everyone to know that the child is very much alive somewhere else, and that He has the power to bring her back from there to her fleshly body if He wishes. For Jesus, "death" is separation from God. Sin brings death in all its terrible reality. Death is *separation* from goodness, truth, purity, loveliness, wholeness and guiltlessness. Separation from God is by choice. Men may choose death or life. Life is by faith in God and His son. This little girl was not "dead"—she evidently believed in God and was still alive somewhere else. So Jesus simply used a figure of speech to describe the state of her present existence as one of rest (cf. Rev. 14:13)—not unconsciousness. When He spoke to her, she heard and obeyed. Jesus has the power to speak to invisible spirits. But when Jesus said, "She is sleeping" the people laughed at Him. The Greek word is *kategelon*, literally, "laughed-down"—in other words, they scorned Him or ridiculed Him.

8:54-56 Overwhelmingly Blessed: This miracle, as recorded by the gospel writers, demands an absolute decision about Jesus one way or another. Either He did raise this little girl from the dead or He is the world's biggest fraud. The account precludes any possibility of mythology or figurative language. Taking the girl by the hand, in the presence of her parents and three disciples, Jesus said (in Aramaic, Mk. 5:41), "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." Surely her parents knew whether she was dead or not. If Jesus simply pretended to raise her from the dead and did not, what a cruel trick He tried to play upon the bereaved parents. If she was not dead, what a cruel trick Jesus has played upon millions of believers (including His own contemporaries).

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If either of these propositions be true Jesus should not be considered a teacher worthy of following no matter how eloquent His doctrines. But Jesus is no fraud! He actually raised the girl from the dead.

The gospel writers record that the little girl got up immediately and walked and Jesus directed that she be given food to eat. All this proves beyond any doubt that it was a real resurrection and not a symbolic one. This was no spiritist seance—Jairus' daughter was no ghost! The parents were "amazed" with great astonishment (Mk. 5:42). The Greek word *exestesan* is translated "amazed" but literally means, "stand out from." In other words, the girl's parents were "beside themselves" with astonishment at what Jesus had done.

Why would Jesus enjoin the parents to tell no one what had happened? We have already discussed the probable reasons above. Matthew notes that "the report of this miracle went through all that district" (Mt. 9:26) so someone told. In the very next chapter of Luke's gospel we see that Jesus' great popularity as a miracle-worker precipitates an official inquiry by the murderous Herod Antipas (Lk. 9:7-9) and poses problems for the further conduct of a public ministry by Jesus (Lk. 9:11-17; Mk. 6:31-44; Mt. 14:13-21). These are the fundamental reasons Jesus wanted to "keep a low profile" as a miracle-worker.

STUDY STIMULATORS:

1. What is the "seed" in the parable "of the sower"?
2. What is Jesus saying generally about evangelism or proclamation of the gospel in the parable of "the sower"?
3. How is the attempt of Jesus' mother and brothers to see Him an illustration of the parable of the "sower"?
4. How did Jesus evaluate the faith of His disciples during the storm at sea?
5. How many demon-possessed men came to meet Jesus on the other side of the sea?
6. Do you see a problem in the ethics of Jesus in allowing the demons to destroy a herd of swine? Why?
7. In such a clamoring, pushing multitude in Capernaum, why was Jesus concerned that someone had touched Him?
8. What implications, other than physical, did the woman's hemorrhaging have upon her life?
9. Why did Jesus command the mourners to leave the house of Jairus?
10. Why did Jesus say the little girl was asleep when she was dead?
11. Why did Jesus tell the parents to tell no one what had happened?

IS THERE DEMON POSSESSION TODAY AS THERE WAS DURING THE TIME OF CHRIST'S INCARNATE MINISTRY?

By Paul T. Butler

It is my opinion that there is no demon possession of human beings today in the precise manner such as manifested in the phenomenal way it was during Christ's incarnate ministry (and perhaps as it was during the remainder of the ascendancy of the Roman empire).

It is my opinion that the "binding of Satan" in Rev. 20:1-6 was initiated and resulted from the redemptive work of Christ in His Incarnation. It was completed when the "beast" of the 4th universal empire (as Daniel predicted), Rome, fell. At that time, it is my opinion, demon possession, as manifested in the Gospels and Acts apparently was to cease. All binding of Satan is relative. He has always been "bound" to some degree or other due to the fact that God is Almighty. God is the only being who is Almighty. It is my opinion a part of Satan's binding has to do with the restriction imposed by God that Satan's demons are no longer able to "possess" human bodies as they were during the time of Christ's incarnation.

1. To have this opinion does not mean I deny the power of Satan to deceive the minds of people today who deliberately choose to believe falsehood perpetrated by "lying signs and wonders." If the definition of demon possession means simply that Satan has captured the minds of men by unbelief, I would agree.

"Satan entered into Judas . . ." (Lk. 22:3 and Jn. 13:27) but he was not what other scriptures describe as "demon possessed."

2. Do the alleged demons possessing people today ever enter into animals? (See Mt. 8:28-34; Lk. 8:26-36; Mk. 5:1-16.)
3. Do the alleged demons possessing people today ever testify to the identity and deity of Christ or the messengers of Christ and what their work is? (See Acts 16:17; 19:15; Mt. 8:29; Mk. 1:24 and above references.)
4. Do the alleged demons possessing people today ever speak out as recognizable separate individuals—definitively separate from the human whose body they possess?
5. How may demons (alleged) today be exorcised? Is the exorcism always miraculous and always instantaneous? If not, is it simply a matter of conversion by the power of the gospel regenerating the mind through preaching and teaching? When there is an unsuccessful exorcism, or casting out, are those possessed by alleged demons doomed to suffer such possession until they die?
6. Only Jesus could give power to exorcise demons. That was a direct gift and a supernatural power. It apparently did not require being a "born again" believer to receive this power—Judas apparently was given this power—he was one of the twelve (cf. Mt. 10:1, 8).
7. On the other hand, many pseudo-faith-healers today, and "ministers" from all differing theological and doctrinal positions, claim they have

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cast out or exorcised demons. Whom are we to believe? Who has that power today among all who claim it? What are we to conclude from their claims? Who is to decide which are "real" demons and "real" exorcists? By what criteria?

8. Demons in the scripture were not "ecto-plasm"—they were (and still are, in the abyss) real persons!
9. The psychic powers of the human mind over matter have been well documented. What some think is demon possession could very well be such psycho-somatic phenomena. Voodooism, etc., may be classified under this heading.
10. The most destructive power of the devil is not possession of a human body but a mind or soul (cf. Mt. 10:28). It appears that while demons possessed bodies of some humans during Christ's incarnation—the mind or soul of that person was not possessed. Demons merely "troubled" humans (Lk. 6:18); they "drove" people to do, physically, what they did (Lk. 8:29).
11. Of all the miraculous gifts the Corinthian Christians were given, exorcism of demon possessed was not among them (I Cor. ch. 12-14).
12. How do we know when someone is demon possessed? What is the criteria by which distinction is made between demon possession and epilepsy, mental illness, perverted maliciousness and crazed murderousness (e.g. Hitler, de Sade, etc.)?
13. Is it not possible that all the mania for the occult and the practice of it is being used by the devil to get people to think he has powers which he does not really have (Rev. 13:13-15)?
14. If demon possession could only come to those who were willing—was the "little daughter" of the Syro-Phoenician woman a "willing" victim? In other words, demon possession had nothing to do with the willingness of the possessed. Therefore, exorcism was not done by "conversion" but by the exercise of divine authority in a miraculous way.
15. It seems apparent that only Jesus and the apostles, or specially endowed disciples (Lk. 10) could exorcise demons. This they did, not by "conversion" but by miracle. There is no evidence from the scriptures that this miraculous power could be given by any other than Christ Himself and that while He was in His incarnate ministry.
16. If miracles of healing, speaking in foreign languages, prophecy, including "discernment of spirits" (I Cor. 12:10), etc., ceased with the end of the New Testament era and the death of the apostles (or the ones to whom the apostles imparted these gifts), so that we can only be certain of the documented miracles of Scripture, then the same principle ought to be applied, for the same reason, to demon possession and exorcism.

IS THERE DEMON POSSESSION TODAY?

Otherwise, we are in a quandry to decide about modern claims of demon possession and exorcism among religious groups from one end of the doctrinal spectrum to the other. There are also pagan exorcists making claims.

17. There really is not any documentation of demon possession in the Old Testament such as occurred during the Incarnation (with an exception or two, e.g. King Saul).
18. It appears, then, that demon possession in the precise manner in which it occurred during Christ's incarnate ministry was uniquely for the purpose of affording historical evidence that Christ (and His apostles) possessed the Sovereign Spirit of God—that their message was one of victory and power over Satan and all of hell.
19. A recent case in point, excerpts from article in Joplin, Mo., *Globe*, 3-8-81:

Catholic priests were "attempting" to rid an 11 year old boy in Brookfield, Conn. of "demons." (The boy's name is unknown.)

A 19 year old friend was watching these sessions, challenged the demons "to take me on. Control me. Leave this boy alone," acc. to tape recordings of the sessions. Arne Johnson was the friend.

Johnson allegedly stabbed to death a co-worker (Alan Bono) after Bono had quarrelled at Bono's apartment.

Johnson is now pleading that "he is not responsible for his acts" because of "demonic possession."

Ed and Lorraine Warren, who worked on the Amityville Horror case were asked to help the boy who "appeared to be possessed" (the 11 year old boy). The Warrens said they found "movement of objects and frightening manifestations" in the house. The Warrens said "the boy was indeed possessed," and he seemed to be possessed "off and on, 24 hours a day," said one family member. Tape recordings the Warrens made of some of the sessions have the boy making guttural and hissing sounds, cursing his mother, and threatening to stab and kill those present in the room.

Photographs of the sessions show family members attempting to restrain the boy, who the Warrens said seemed to have superhuman strength.

A priest named Virgulak was called to investigate the case; he has made several reports to the bishop of the diocese, but no public reports. He has "declined to discuss the reports but said no formal exorcism has ever been requested or performed on the boy."

There were "prayer sessions" called "a deliverance" which is supposed to be "a lesser form of exorcism that does not require approval of the bishop."

The Warrens say Johnson's attempts to help the boy were amateurish

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because "the only way to order demons out of a person is by using the name of Jesus Christ."

Mrs. Warren said, ". . . (Johnson) he challenged what was within the child to take him on—and none of us ever do that, not even priests."

Problems with this account:

- a. Based on a number of "begging the question" statements such as, "appeared to be . . .," "seemed to be . . .," "seemed to have . . .," "no public reports . . .," "supposed to be . . .," "approval of the bishop. . . ."
 - b. "In the name of Jesus" means in the Bible, "by the authority of Jesus." Does Roman Catholicism have the "authority of Jesus" to exorcise? The "name of Jesus" is to be used in exorcism by only those authorized to use it (cf. Acts 19:13-16). Whom are we to believe now has that authorization? What credentials do they present for it? Do such exorcists agree doctrinally with the Word of the Holy Spirit in the Bible? If not, are we to believe they have the power of the Spirit?
20. There are two Old Testament prophecies, clearly Messianic, which predict the cessation of "sorceries and soothsayers" (Micah 5:12-13), and "unclean spirits" or demon-possession (Zech. 13:2). Homer Hailey, in his book, *A Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, pub. Baker, sums up Zechariah 13:1-6 in these words, "A fountain for sin and uncleanness will be opened for all the people. At that time the falsehood of idols will cease, prophesying will be discontinued, and the unclean spirits will pass out of the land." Mr. Hailey contends that Zechariah 13:1-9 is entirely Messianic and says, "Once the foundation was laid and the new revelation was complete, the need for prophets would cease. Daniel indicates the same in a strong Messianic prophecy, when he said of the anointed one, the prince, that He would bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up vision and prophecy. Likewise, unclean spirits, the antithesis of the prophets, would cease. In the conquest of Christ over Satan and his forces, unclean spirits have ceased to control men as they did in the time of the ministry of Christ and the apostles."
- Of course, these prophecies from Micah and Zechariah do not preclude the *attempts* of human beings and Satan to try to *deceive* the world that demon possession and sorceries are still supernaturally viable. We believe the Bible clearly indicates what is alleged today to be supernatural demon possession is no longer a possibility. *Lying* wonders and *deceiving* signs remain very much a possibility so long as men and women refuse to believe and love the truth and prefer to believe what is false (see II Thess. 2:10-12; II Tim. 4:3-4, etc.).
21. The crucial and ultimate question about modern (alleged) demon possession is: *Whose testimony is reliable?* Whose testimony is inerrantly, infallibly reliable besides the testimony of the Scriptures? None! Any man today, without the inerrancy and infallibility of the Holy Spirit to verify his experience and accredit his testimony may be either deceived or a deceiver.