

FEBRUARY 2, 2020

The storm outside...and inside

When Jesus travels from Capernaum to Gerasa, he is going from his (Jewish) home to an area settled by Gentiles. The very act of socializing with these people could be construed as a violation of Torah (law). But Jesus - as we have come to know - is *Lord of the Sabbath*. As such, he brings Creation under his authority *and* brings restoration of life. Here in these two stories, we see this authority exercised decisively. Creation obeys his word. Storms are “hushed.” Demons fear and submit. And in both stories, the people struggle to accept this new reality: *God is here*.

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- **The storm outside.** When you read the story about Jesus calming the storm and seas, what are you struck by? (vs. 35-41)
 - If the wind and waves obey Jesus, what does that prove?
 - In the ancient world, the seas (and storms-at-sea) were filled with mystery. They were seen as storehouses of darkness and judgment (i.e. the Great Flood). With this mythology in the mind of the disciples, how might that affect their fear and confusion?
 - Why does Jesus rebuke their lack of faith? (v.40)
 - Why were the disciples afraid after witnessing this? (v.41)
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- **The storm within.** Describe the possessed man. Why was he living among the tombs? How had the “demoniac” suffered (vs.3-5)?
 - What does this encounter teach us about the spiritual world that Jesus stepped into?
 - Do you believe spirits still inhabit and oppress people in this world?
 - Why were the people frighten when they saw the formerly-demon-possessed man sitting with Jesus? (v.15)
 - **Apply it.** Is there an external *or internal* storm rocking you at this moment? How might these encounters encourage us as we pray or help others?

³⁵On that day, when evening came, He **said* to them, “Let us go over to the other side.” ³⁶Leaving the crowd, they **took* Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. ³⁷And there **arose* a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. ³⁸Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they **woke* Him and **said* to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Hush, be still.” And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. ⁴⁰And He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” ⁴¹They became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

⁵¹They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. ²When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, ³and he had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; ⁴because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones. ⁶Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; ⁷and shouting with a loud voice, he **said*, “What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!” ⁸For He had been saying to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!” ⁹And He was asking him, “What is your name?” And he **said* to Him, “My name is Legion; for we are many.” ¹⁰And he *began* to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. ¹²*The demons* implored Him, saying, “Send us into the swine so that we may enter them.” ¹³Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand *of them*; and they were drowned in the sea.

¹⁴Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And *the people* came to see what it was that had happened. ¹⁵They **came* to Jesus and **observed* the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the “legion”; and they became frightened. ¹⁶Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and *all* about the swine. ¹⁷And they began to implore Him to leave their region. ¹⁸As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him. ¹⁹And He did not let him, but He **said* to him, “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and *how* He had mercy on you.” ²⁰And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.