



DEMONIC POSSESSION AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE NAME OF JESUS

GOLDEN TEXT

“The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.” (Luke 10:17)

USEFUL PRACTICE

The account of the Gadarene demon-possessed man shows the absolute sovereignty of Jesus Christ over the Devil and his demons.

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 5:2-13

2 - When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him.

3 - This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain.

4 - For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him.

5 - Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

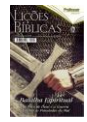
6 - When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him.

7 - He shouted at the top of his voice, “What do you want with me, Jesus Son of the Most High God? In God’s name don’t torture me!”

8 - For Jesus had said to him, “Come out of this man, you impure spirit!”

9 - Then Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” “My name is Legion,” he replied, “for we are many.”

10 - And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.



11 - A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside.

12 - The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them."

13 - He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To raise awareness of the authority of Jesus Christ over the demons

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- I - To highlight** demon possession and its harmonization in the biblical narrative;
- II - To conceptualize** legion
- III - To expose** the power of Jesus over demons;
- IV - To analyze** the behavior of the pig owners and the people.

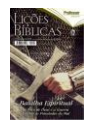
INTRODUCTION

The account of the Gadarene demon-possessed man is also found in Matthew and Luke, with some variations. The fact reveals information about demonic possession and the absolute power of Jesus over the whole kingdom of darkness. It is the harbinger of Christ's final victory over Satan and his angels. Not only that, but also living proof that we can trust Jesus.

I - DEMONIC POSSESSION

1. Harmonization in narratives.

Matthew states that there were two demon-possessed men (Matt. 8:28). But Mark and Luke record only one (Mark 5:2; Luke 8:27). The details described in Mark are of one, which is why the narrative is focused on him. Mark and Luke recorded only the most violent and wildest of them. The other detail is that Matthew presented only a summary of the episode, because his emphasis is on the authority of Jesus over the evil spirits. Matthew omits the fact that the mouthpiece of the demons identifies himself as "legion", and also the desire of the Gadarene man, after his



deliverance, to follow Jesus.

2. Oppression.

Demons appear as agents of Satan, doing harm, giving their victims typical characteristics, such as superhuman strength (Matt. 8:28, 17:15, Acts 19:16), power to foretell events (Acts 16:16), and supernatural knowledge (v.7). They attack their victims and, by possessing them, dominate their mental faculties, leading them to dementia (Matt. 4:24; 17:15) and sometimes incapacitating them to speak and see (Matt. 9:32, 12:22).

3. A shocking picture.

The Gadarene demon-possessed man lived in the tombs, naked, and was so violent that even shackles and chains could not stop him. He ran in the hills and wilderness, and cut himself with stones. The fact of seeking to live in the tombs was already a demonstration of his total anomaly. The violent and supernatural behavior of the Gadarene man, for his own destruction, and for the disturbance of his neighbors, reveals the destructive nature of Satan.

II - THE DEMONIC LEGION

1. A legion.

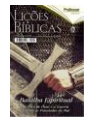
Jesus asked what the name of the unclean spirit was, and he replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many" (v.9). A Roman legion consisted of 6,000 soldiers. Although the number of demons is not exact, or that Legion is an identity, they were many. They are numerous and powerful, organized and fight under one banner, that of Satan.

2. To cast out, not to dialogue.

Some seek to establish a dialogue with demons because Jesus asked the unclean spirit what his name was. This is often seen in neo-Pentecostal movements by television media. "Cast out demons" (Matt. 10:8). This is the order we have received from the Lord, and not to dialogue with them. The devil is the father of lies (John 8:44). No one should believe or be impressed by the statements of demons, because they are liars. This happened because the demon was forced to confess publicly who was responsible for the misery of the Gadarene man.

3. The presence of Jesus.

The power and presence of Jesus bother the kingdom of darkness. The unclean spirit asked, "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?" (Matt. 8:29). This shows that the presence of Jesus is a



torment for the kingdom of darkness and also that this encounter served as a harbinger of the final condemnation of the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

III - THE POWER OF JESUS

1. Demons know who Jesus is.

The account of the possession of the Gadarene man and his deliverance is a demonstration of the absolute power of Jesus over all the kingdom of darkness. The demons themselves know who Jesus is (Acts 19:15) and know their origin: "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" (Mark 1:24). They are afraid of Jesus and shudder before Him (James 2:19). Jesus came to undo the works of the Devil (1 John 3: 8). The demons know that there is a set time for divine judgment on the hellish hosts and they fear for it.

2. The sovereignty of Jesus.

In this passage, we see that those demons, or at least their mouthpiece, begging for three things: for Jesus not to send them into another region (v.10), not to send them into the abyss before the appointed time (Matt. 8:29), and to allow them to enter the herd of pigs that was going by the place at the time (v. 11, 12). Demons are nothing before the Lord Jesus. Mark seems to show Satan and his demons as inconvenient, not as all-powerful beings before Jesus (Mark 1:23-26, 34; 3:11). The enemy of our soul cannot do whatever he wants (Job 1:12, 2:4-5). The demons made these requests because they could not resist the power of Jesus.

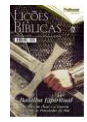
3. The deliverance of the oppressed man.

The extraordinary deliverance of the Gadarene man soon caught the attention of the people. Many people gathered around to see what had happened, because the sudden healing of the demon-possessed man was a dreadful thing. They found the man in his right mind, dressed and sitting at Jesus' feet (Luke 8:34-36). We glorify God when we see people oppressed by the evil one being delivered by the power of Jesus. He has delegated this task to us (Matt. 10:8, Luke 10:19, 20).

IV - THE PIG FARMERS

1. The location of the event.

According to Matthew, the fact happened in the "region of the Gadarenes" (Matt. 8:28); However. Mark and Luke speak of the region or land "of the Gerasenes" (Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26, NIV). Gadara was eight kilometers from the lake of Gennesaret, an alternative name for the Sea of Galilee; and



Gerasa, modern-day Jerash, in Jordan, was about 50 kilometers away. Both territories were part of the Decapolis region, east of Galilee (Mark 5:20). According to the historian Josephus, the territory of Gadara extended to the lake of Galilee. Coins from that time bear the name of Gadara with the design of a boat engraved on it.

2. About the herd of pigs.

The population of Decapolis was mixed, composed of Jews and Gentiles. The raising of pigs was not permitted to the Jews; therefore, it is probable that the pig farmer was a Gentile. The loss was great, since there were two thousand pigs (v.13). The pigs did not resist the oppression and rushed down a steep bank into the lake and were drowned (Luke 8:33). Jewish tradition said that demons and pigs make a good combination. The Jews considered the demons and the pigs to belong to the same order, and the pigs were considered the home of unclean spirits. This tradition seems to be expressed when the demons asked to enter the herd of pigs.

3. The strange request of the people.

Jesus was told to leave the land of the Gadarenes because of the loss of the pig farmers (Mark 5:16, 17). In those people's opinion, the pigs were worth more than human life. That strange reception makes us sad and astonished: Why should the hero have to be told to leave? Today is no different. There are those who replace Jesus with anything. It is very common to "objectify" people and impersonate things. For some, nowadays, animals are worth much more than humans. The news shows daily how many rulers treat immigrants as lower than animals. This spirit already existed in New Testament times (Luke 13:15-16). In the passage we have studied, that population rejected Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Demonic possession is a shocking phenomenon that can only be detained by the power of Jesus. The Lord Jesus manifested His power over the whole nature, over the wind, over the sea, over death, over diseases, over the power of darkness. The demons shudder before him. The power of Satan is very limited in the face of the power of Jesus. We all need Jesus, communion with Him, in order to receive power from him and thus cast out demons, for He has given us this authority (Luke 10:19, 20).