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The Demon Possessed

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### Luke 8:26-39 (NLT)

So they arrived in the region of the Gerasenes, across the lake from Galilee. <sup>27</sup> As Jesus was climbing out of the boat, a man who was possessed by demons came out to meet him. For a long time he had been homeless and naked, living in a cemetery outside the town. <sup>28</sup> As soon as he saw Jesus, he shrieked and fell down in front of him. Then he screamed, “Why are you interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Please, I beg you, don’t torture me!” <sup>29</sup> For Jesus had already commanded the evil spirit to come out of him. This spirit had often taken control of the man. Even when he was placed under guard and put in chains and shackles, he simply broke them and rushed out into the wilderness, completely under the demon’s power.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus demanded, “What is your name?” “Legion,” he replied, for he was filled with many demons. <sup>31</sup> The demons kept begging Jesus not to send them into the bottomless pit.

<sup>32</sup> There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding on the hillside nearby, and the demons begged him to let them enter into the pigs. So Jesus gave them permission. <sup>33</sup> Then the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, and the entire herd plunged down the steep hillside into the lake and drowned.

<sup>34</sup> When the herdsmen saw it, they fled to the nearby town and the surrounding countryside, spreading the news as they ran. <sup>35</sup> People rushed out to see what had happened. A crowd soon gathered around Jesus, and they saw the man who had been freed from the demons. He was sitting at Jesus’ feet, fully clothed and perfectly sane, and they were all afraid. <sup>36</sup> Then those who had seen what happened told the others how the demon-possessed man had been healed. <sup>37</sup> And all the people in the region of the Gerasenes begged Jesus to go away and leave them alone, for a great wave of fear swept over them. So Jesus returned to the boat and left, crossing back to the other side of the lake.

<sup>38</sup> The man who had been freed from the demons begged to go with him. But Jesus sent him home, saying, <sup>39</sup> “No, go back to your family, and tell them everything God has done for you.” So he went all through the town proclaiming the great things Jesus had done for him.

### A Quick Review

- Luke wrote his gospel to a specific person: Theophilus.
- We know two things about Theophilus
  - His Name: “Theo” = God; “Philo” = Love  
Theophilus means “Lover of God”
  - His Title: “Most Excellent” Theophilus
- Luke wrote to Theophilus, a ‘somebody,’ to make sure he knew that the ‘nobodies’ were somebody in the eyes of God, and that the somebodies knew they were to care for the nobodies if they were going to be a follower of Jesus.

### About Demon Possession in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century

- Demons, unclean spirits, and evil spirits were thought to be everywhere.
- Some were seen as malevolent and some as simply irritating.

- Illnesses that could not be explained such as epilepsy, mental illness or deep depression were believed to be the result of demon possession.
- Priests were primarily responsible for casting out demons.
- An example is found in the book of Tobit (Roman Catholic OT).

## About Our Story in Luke 8

Verse 22 *One day Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.”*

Verse 27 *As Jesus was climbing out of the boat, a man who was possessed by demons came out to meet him. For a long time he had been homeless and naked, living in a cemetery outside the town.*

Verse 29b *[The demons] had often taken control of the man. Even when he was placed under guard and put in chains and shackles, he simply broke them and rushed out into the wilderness, completely under the demon’s power.*

Verse 28 *As soon as he saw Jesus, he shrieked and fell down in front of him. Then he screamed, “Why are you interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Please, I beg you, don’t torture me!”*

Verse 30 *Jesus demanded, “What is your name?” “Legion,” he replied, for he was filled with many demons.*

Verses 31-32 *The demons kept begging Jesus not to send them into the bottomless pit. <sup>32</sup> There happened to be a large herd of pigs feeding on the hillside nearby, and the demons begged him to let them enter into the pigs.*

1. When the demons whisper in your ear, the result is that what they promise will suck the life out of you.
2. They promise something good, but it always leads to pain.
3. Even though they prefer to keep you alive in order to feed off of you, they are happy to cut your life short to keep you from experiencing God’s will from unfolding in your life.
4. They are happy when you hurt others and walk away from your faith altogether.

***The Spirit who lives in you is greater  
than the spirit who lives in the world.***

I John 4:4 (NLT)