



~ 1 John 3:8b "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work" ~

1. V1 "across the lake to region of Gerasenes". This story (and see Mt 8:28-34; Lk 8:26-29) – in fact the lake crossing and this whole 'saint Jude chapter' show Jesus' power over (seemingly) lost causes. Gerasa/Khersa, a small town with corresponding topography. ('Archeology: The Healing of the Demoniac' by Leon Mauldin on truthmagazine.com)
2. Vv2-5 "a man with an impure spirit...[that] lived in the tombs...[who would] cry out and cut himself with stones." A truly wretched man, "tormented every moment by the focused power of hell." (RC Sproul, *Mark: An Expositional Commentary*, 90-91)
3. V4b Nobody could "subdue" or "tame" him (a term used for wild beasts) – maybe reference to 'strong man' of 3:27. Defaced *Imago Dei*. Mental illness? Beware writing it off as passe as "satan is most successfully present where he is denied, forgotten, unexpected or unnoticed" (Carl Henry, *God, Revelation & Authority: God Who Stands & Stays*, 6:229)
4. V6 "saw...ran...fell at [Jesus'] feet...shouted." Four verbs that show his desperation. It "may indicate an involuntary submission of the demons to Jesus' greater power, or that the man himself longed to be free of the demonic influence, or some of both" (Hans Bayer, 'Mark', ESVBS, 1901)
5. Excursus I: Regarding satan
 - a. Some names: 'satan' (Job 1:6-12, 1 Chron 21:1, Zech 3:1, Mt 4:10, Lk 10:18), 'the devil' (Mt 4:1, 13:39, 1 Pe 5:1-11, Rev 12:9, 20:2), 'the serpent' (Gen 3:1, 2 Cor 11:3, Rev 12:9, 20:2), 'beelzebul/bub/boul' (Mk 3:22, Matt 10:25, Luke 11:15), 'ruler of this world' (Jn 12:31, 14:30, 16:11), 'prince of the power of the air' (Eph 2:2), 'the evil one' (Mt 3:19, 1 Jn 2:13, 4:19), 'the god of this world' (2 Cor 4:4), 'the thief' (Jn 10:10), 'the accuser' (Rev 12:10), 'the deceiver' (Rev 12:9), the great dragon' (Rev 12:7-9), 'the father of lies' (Jn 8:4)...
 - b. He and his demons are angels cast to earth for their pride and vanity (Lk 10:18, 2 Pe 2:4, Rev 12:4, Is 14:11-23, Ezek 28:1-19, 1 Tim 3:6-7)
 - c. He is a murdering thief who loves to bring death in all its forms (Jn 8:44, 10:10), and uses bitterness to create footholds (Heb 12:15, Eph 4:17-32, Deut 29:18)
 - d. He will be able to trick us if we are ignorant of his schemes (2 Cor 2:11)
 - e. Neither satan nor demons have any claim over followers of Jesus (Col 1:13-14)
 - f. We can command them to obey us, but *only in and thru Christ in our delegated authority* (Eph 1:18-2:7, Rom 16:20, Lk 10:19)
 - g. enemy-satan will "bait and hook" us (Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against satan's Devices*, 16). He uses *ordinary demonic work* (EG sex, \$, fame, gratification, anger, enmity), and at times *extraordinary demonic work* (EG possession, torment, physical harm, counterfeit miracles, curses)
 - h. The demonic will not acknowledge that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, but those of the Spirit will (1Jn4:2-3) – NG they abhor Christ's humility (Phil 2:1-10)
 - i. Ultimately satan and the demons' destiny is the eternal fires of hell (Mt 25:41, Rev 20:10)
6. Excursus II: the world and satan.
 - a. In the now-and-not-yet Kingdom "we know that we are children of God, [yet] that the whole world is under the control of the evil one" (1Jn5:19). So:

- b. WHILST Jesus is sovereign King and Lord Col 1: 16-20; God has power over all creation Ps 29; God rules both individuals Acts 17:24-27 and nations Rom 13:1-6; and Jesus defeated the 'powers' on thru the cross Col 1:14-15.
 - c. YET, satan is "ruler" (Eph 2:2), "prince" (Jn 12:31) and even "god" (2Cor 4:4) of our current world who has "blinded the minds of unbelievers." So "whilst satan is defeated, he is not yet destroyed" (*Warfare Prayer* by Peter Wagner). The demonic realm includes evil and sin, and that which we "absolutize" (*The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* by Lesslie Newbigin), the system that pervades human thinking – the "the spirit of the world" (1 Cor 2:12) – which undermines our security as God's beloved children; (Eph 1:5, Rom 8:17, and see 'The Spirit of the World' by Dean Sherman (YWAM Podcasts))
 - d. In short, satan's "limited power is prolonged only for the advancement of God's glory as His people contend with them" (*Concise Theology*, by JI Packer), for the Spirit "who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1Jn 4:4)
7. V7 "What do you want with me...In God's name, don't torture me"
 - a. Singular Vv2, 8; plural Vv9, 10, 12, 13; masculine and neuter.
 - b. Chaos, yet sneaky ploys of 1) Dissociation, 2) Special Knowledge, 3) Self-defensiveness, & 4) Petition
 8. Vv8-9 "come out...my name is Legion". Demons and hierarchy. 'Legion' was 5,600 soldiers but is likely just representative of a multitude.
 9. Vv10-12 "send us into the pigs" – Luk 8:26-37 parallel – they knew He could send them into "the Abyss" (underworld and judgment, see Rev 9:1, Matt 25:41b). Postpone their immanent destruction.
 10. V13 "rushed down the steep bank and were drowned" – freaky and expensive!
 11. Vv14-16 the pig-farmers "ran off and reported ...the man...sitting there, dressed in his right mind; and they were afraid" – satan defeated, *imago Dei* restored...so why afraid?!
 12. V17 "the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region", and V18 Jesus gives in – He does not remain with the unwilling.
 13. Vv18-20 the man "begged to go with [Jesus]" but Jesus sent him to his "own people" and in the Decapolis. "And all the people were amazed."
 14. SO, whether small or big, ordinary or extraordinary, against individuals or societies (systemic), evil is vanquished by Jesus!

FOR THE BRAVE OF HEART

- Do you notice evil forces at work against people as individuals, & societies as a whole?
- Fight, freeze or flight – how do you typically react to evil?
- When confronted or challenged, do you dissociate, claim special-knowledge, fall to self-defensiveness, or woefully petition (aka whine)? Ask your closest mates if in doubt!
- *Victor* or *victim*? How do you fundamentally conceive yourself?
- What demonic influence have you allowed to seep into your head, heart or home?
- Write down a practical plan to deal with it.