

Weaving the Word

Right in the Light

Part 68 – March 12, 2017

Welcome to where we're building our strength in the joy of God's Word!



We're wrapping up the story of the demon-filled Gadarene, who lived in the tombs, and was set free by Jesus, when Jesus calmed the storm and came to shore to establish His Kingdom in the land of the Gentiles.

Ever feel on your own and all alone?



There's a very real and raging spiritual battle being waged for your soul. Know where the frontline of this warfare is fought?

The battle of your life is waged at the entrance of God's Word.



Because, the enemy is fully aware of what'll happen if we become like children, and enjoy Dad's stories: **the joy of the Word will be our strength.**

And, he can't have that. So, **he positions the bulk of his forces to distract, misinform, and confuse us concerning God's Word.**

Anything to keep us out ... to keep us blind ... to keep us weak. Truth planted in our heart only grows in the Light and shrivels in the dark. Like the cowering villagers begging Jesus to leave.

They began to plead with Jesus pleaded with him to leave their region. So he got into the boat and left. As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus did not let him, Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return home "Go home to your family and tell them **how much GOD has done for you**, and how he has had mercy on you." So the man went away and told all over town and began to tell in the Decapolis [i.e. land of the Gerasenes] **how much JESUS had done for him**. And all the people were amazed. – Mat 8:34; Mark 5:15-20; Luke 8:37-39 NIV

The chain-busting Gadarene had been locked up *many times*; (Mk 5:3-5; Lk 8:29) he's infamous, notorious, dangerous, insane, and now *cured!* And, **he claims that God himself has done this, and His name is Jesus.** Which of these three groups of beggars do you belong to?

1. **The demons beg to run from the Light and to live like pigs.**
2. **The onlookers beg to be left in the dark, eyes shut tight.**
3. **The Gadarene begs to get in the boat, and join Jesus' team.**



Have you ever begged Jesus to act in some way as He rows away, leaving you seemingly on your own, all alone, in the dark? He's never *left-you-left-you*; because, He's left you with His Word.

To the disciples, it probably looks like He's refusing to let the Gadarene join the team. But, it's quite the opposite in fact. He adds the Gadarene to His team and sends him home to Gadara, in the former land of Gad (one of the twelve tribes) to take it back from the wicked one possessing *it* and *all those around it* (in the Decapolis).



In Jeremiah's O.T. story about the future of Gad (and those around it), God asks if Israel has no Son or Heir ...

"Why then has **Molech** [lit. "their king"; a false god and abomination (1 Kings 11:5; Lev 18:21)] **taken possession of Gad?** ... the days are coming," declares the Lord, "**when I** [as "Son" and "Heir" (Jer 49:1)] will sound the **battle cry** [In Isaiah's story, when the Lord arrives, He cries: "Here I am!" (Is 65:1-7)] ... and **its surrounding villages will be set on fire**. [In Amos' story, he says this comes on the day of the tempest and whirlwind (Amos 1:13-15)] Then **Israel** [one of the Savior's symbolic names] will drive out those who drove **her** [the Gadarenes] **out,**" [just as the Legion of demons dispossessed the Gadarene (Lk 8:29)] ... "I will bring terror on **you** [the Molech who takes possession] **from all those around you,**" declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty. "Every one of **you** [serving Molech] will be driven away ..." – Jeremiah 49:1b-5 NIV

Do you remember Jesus, in the story, *setting the place on fire*? **Why are demons so terrified of Jesus? "We know who you are!" How?** When Legion sees Him *from a distance*, how's he know He's the Son of God; and, **why's he think He's come to torture 'em?** (Mk 1:24, 5:6; Mt 8:29)

There's a great story in 2nd Kings, where a legion mounts up at night against God's people, alarming a servant of God's prophet.

"Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "**Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.**" And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and **he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.** – 2 Kings 6:15-17 NIV

Remember when Peter cut off a guy's ear, trying to protect Jesus? *Jesus said ...*



"Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and **he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?**" [So, how close are they?] – Matthew 26:53 NIV

The **angel of the Lord** [another symbolic name for the Savior] **encamps** [His legions] **around those who fear him,** and he delivers them. – Psalm 34:7 NIV

A quick search on God's "chariots" turned up this odd story.

A **mountain of God** is the **mountain of Bashan** ... This is the mountain which God desires to dwell in ... The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of thousands; the Lord is among them **as in Sinai** ... – Psalm 68:15-17 NKJ

Mount Sinai is where God established the Jews. So, what's up with Bashan? As I Googled "Bashan" I thought, *what are the odds? Sure enough!* **Bashan is where Jesus drives out Legion, establishes His Kingdom among the Gentiles, and sends out the Gadarene.**¹

After this brutal discipleship boot camp, there's no authority, principality, or demonic force the boys won't be able to face head on, when **He sends 'em out on their own ... but not alone.**

Earlier today, the boys were confused when Jesus was accused of being Beelzebub. (Mt 12:24; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15) Tomorrow night, the same accusation will be hurled at Him, but they'll *now* be thinking: "*Oh, you don't even know.*" (Mt 9:32-34)

Just this night before, in the boats along the shore, when the Gadarene came out, from the boys' perspective it was all night sky and crickets chirping. Whereas, from Legion's perspective it was raging flames blazing, horses pawing, and armor clanking! **The hills were ablaze with tens of thousands of horses and chariots of fire, champing and waiting for one word from their Commander, every head turned to the One all alone on the shore.**

This is the night, Jesus establishes His Kingdom in the land of the Gentiles, fulfilling so many momentous prophetic Scriptures! But, **to the eye and ear unfamiliar with His stories, it appears a failure. A fizzle.** He plants His Kingdom and nets *one convert*. And then the rest beg Him to go away. And, He *does*. He left.



And, **He left the Gadarene ... on his own, but not alone.** Wherever he went, **the hills were ablaze with his teammates.** How would you walk and talk and act if you could see what He commands all around you?



To the boys it looked like Jesus kept the Gadarene from joining them as *one of them*. But, turns out, he's just the *first of them* that Jesus sent out. And, he was *chosen* to go to the Gadarenes, in Gadara, in Gad. **It wasn't his choice;** but, **it was his created purpose!**

So, as instructed, he went home and told his family. But, he didn't stop there; he told the whole town, and then went throughout the Decapolis (the land of the Gerasenes).

¹ The mountain slope of the high plateau of Bashan drops almost vertically into the Sea of Galilee; broken only by the wadi Semak entering due east of Magdal (the ancient site of Gergesa was likely near Semak's mouth).

In fact, **when Jesus later returns, 4000 men are waiting for Him.**

He miraculously feeds their 4000 families on the hillside, by the shore, across from Magadan, (Mk 7:31; Mt 15:29, 38-39) where He'd been begged to go away ... on the night He lit the place on fire.

Months later, the Twelve return from ministering on their own in the Gentile villages around Caesarea Philippi, with this report:

“Master,” said John, “we saw a man [or: *that man*] driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because **he is not one of us.**” [John doesn't say they don't recognize him; just that they firmly believe he wasn't made one of them] “Do not stop him,” Jesus said, “for **whoever is not against you is for you.**” – Luke 9:49-50 NIV

Jesus only used that line one other time. The day He saved the Gadarene; when He spoke of robbing the strong man's possession. (Mt 12:29-30; Lk 11:21-23) Is *this* the Gadarene? Can't say.

But, somewhere along the way, he did tell them what he'd done, or it wouldn't be in the story.

And, whoever it is, *the boys couldn't stop him!*

When God deeply moves in our lives, we can't help but want to share it.

And, when you're so moved, don't stifle the urge.

Act on it, even when those lesser forces try to drive you to downplay the reality of God's presence and power in your life.

Because, if you don't want to share it, are you sure you found it?

It's so easy to roll out of bed, and roll through the day, without stopping to consider our created role in Dad's Kingdom. **Is His Kingdom expanding through you?**

A believer can drift through life as a functional atheist, if we don't open our eyes and realize where the big battle is being fought.

Next time you glance at God's Word and hear crickets, stop and recall what's really going on.