

# Weaving the Word

## *The Region of Legion*

February 2, 2020

*Welcome to where we're learning to live in the light ... in the dark!*



**Ever feel left alone, in the dark, and on your own?** Like, Jesus sailed away and you missed the boat? Sometimes it's simply self-imposed isolation from His presence and prayer and Word. But, often it's not.

You know what Jesus' big problem is?



**He's unwilling to *measure down* to our standards.**

And, **we're unwilling to *measure up* to His.**

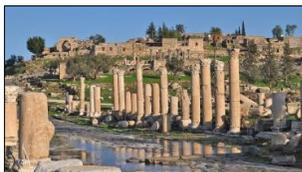


And, **we're ready to settle for far too little.**

And, that's a big problem ... *for us and Jesus.*



[When we left Jesus] Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, and went around in Galilee, down to the Sea of Galilee and along the Sea of Galilee [in His teaching boat, This 27', 15-passenger boat, dates to Jesus' day, and was preserved in the mud off the shores where He taught!] into the region of the Decapolis [i.e. land of the ten cities. He could row around the shoreline and speak to huge crowds, while being protected from overeager attempts to touch Him. And the water carried His voice really well] There some people brought to him a man who was deaf ... [Spoiler alert: He healed him; and] ... People were overwhelmed ... – Mt 15:29; Mk 7:31-32, 37 NIV



That's Gadara. It's one of the ten cities. It's in the former territory of Gad, son #7 of Jacob's 12 sons, and one of the Twelve Tribes, who let their piece of the Promised Land go to the pigs.



Remember the naked demon-possessed outlaw who broke his chains and escaped and seized a cemetery on the remote pig slopes along the sea, and attacked anyone who came by?

*Oh*, and he screamed night and day. *That guy* was a Gadarene. From Gad. In the Decapolis. Nobody messed with the screamin' Gadarene in the region of Legion!



Until Jesus. All alone. At night. On the enemy's turf. In a cemetery.

Giving the Prince of Darkness every home-court advantage.

But, the Gadarene fell at Jesus' feet and: oink, oink; splash, splash; game over!



There's only one stretch of hillside that qualifies as both remote and has a shoreline.

Now, back to that night. Remember when He cast out the demons, how they begged Him to leave?

Not the demons. *They* begged Him to let *them* leave. I mean the regular, idol worshipping, village people who saw the miracle.



[They were just as scared as the demons] They began to plead with Jesus pleaded with him to leave their region. So [Guess what He did] he got into the boat and left. – Mt 8:34; Mk 5:17; Lk 8:37 NIV

Classic Jesus. Giving us what we ask for, and the last thing that we need; so we can learn to stop trying to direct Him. Which just goes to show: **you can be right in the light and left in the dark.**

The Gadarene is free, and they're still in bondage.

**Our brain still contains all those neural networks of darkness.**

So, **after we reject, renounce, and repent, we must replace** our dark desires, beliefs, and motives with the light of God's Word. **Anything less is just asking Jesus to leave us alone.**

But, here's the classic Jesus twist:

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, [Wait. He didn't let him follow? Nope. Jesus just leaves him there, on the shore, in the dark, all alone, on his own, as Jesus and His boys sail away? Yep.] Jesus crossed over and came to his own town. – Mt 8:34-9:1; Mk 5:17-19; Lk 8:37-38 NIV

**He didn't just miss the boat, Jesus wouldn't even let him in!**

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?

**Jesus disappoints so many, so deeply, so often.** *Know why?*

**His failure ... to meet our expectations** – our subtle assumptions that He'll bless, protect, and answer us in our predetermined way.

But, it still feels confusing, unloving, and unfair. However, **the only time the Lord will ever let us down, is when we expect Him to be something He isn't, or to do something He won't.**

Even from the disciple's perspective this had to look like a big fizzle.

Jesus came to extend His Kingdom to the gentiles, and He nets *one convert*.

And the rest beg Him to go away. *And, He does.* And, it might look like He's refusing to let the Gadarene join the team. But, it's quite the opposite in fact.

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." – Mk 5:19; Lk 8:38-39 NIV

Did you know, the first time Jesus' name is declared, is in the OT when Jacob is prophesying over his twelve sons. Just after Dan, and leading into Gad, Jacob suddenly cries out:

I wait for thy salvation [Yěshuw'ah], O Jehovah. Gad [pronounced "god", and means Troop (Gen 30:11)]—troops [In Greek: legion] will rush upon him ["god"]; but he will rush upon the heel. – Genesis 49:18-19 DARBY

So the man went away ... – Lk 8:39 NIV

And, this is where our faith is so often derailed.

In our disappointment we feel abandoned, afraid, and alone; yet, **instead of seeking what He would have us do next, we abandon Him.**

And, **instead of seeking to realign our narrow mind by His Word, we tend to try to hold Him accountable to our skewed perspective.**

But, **faith isn't trusting God to meet our expectations.**

**Faith trusts God to accomplish our eternal best in spite of 'em.**

... and [he] told all over town how much Jesus had done for him. [It wasn't his choice; but, he soon realized that it was his chosen purpose] and [he] began to tell in the Decapolis. And all the people were amazed. – Mk 5:20; Lk 8:39 NIV

And, what a difference a year makes!

Then during those [three] days [of teaching along the shore, on His boat tour, in the Decapolis (Mt 15:32)] he went up on a [shoreline (Mt 15:39)] mountainside [in an uninhabited wasteland (Mt 15:33)] and sat down. [to heal those who followed along the shore, listening to His teaching regarding the Messiah] another large crowd gathered. [On the hillside, so Jesus could heal them in an orderly fashion] Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, [possessions; addictions; etc.] and laid them at his feet; [because that's where you deal with that. Surrender. Listen. Learn. Wait] and he healed them. – Mt 15:30; Mk 8:1 NIV



Just before Jesus' big night with Legion, Matthew (12:16-18) quotes Isaiah (42:1-4) about God's Servant being sent to the Gentiles.



Behold! My Servant ... He will bring forth justice ... as a light to the Gentiles, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners ... those who sit in darkness ... I will make darkness light before them, and ... they shall be greatly ashamed ... who say to the molded images, "You *are* our gods." Hear, you deaf; and look, you blind, that you may see. – Isaiah 42:1-18 NKJ

The Gadarene was just the beginning. The Lord set His sights on commissioning all the Decapolis Gentiles as His witnesses.

I was found by those who did not seek Me. ... a nation that was not called by My name ... a rebellious people ... who sit among the graves, and spend the night in the tombs; who eat swine's flesh ... who say, 'Keep to yourself, do not come near [Sound familiar?] ... I will bring forth descendants from Jacob [Gadzooks!] ... Behold, My servants shall eat [He's about to feed 4,000 families right here on the hillside!] ... My servants shall rejoice [Why? Well!] ... before they call, I will answer; – Isaiah 65:1-2, 4-5, 9-10, 13, 24 NKJ

[So] "Bring out the *blind people* who have *eyes*, and the *deaf* who have *ears*. Let all the nations be gathered ... Let them bring out their [eye] **witnesses** [who now see] ... or let them *hear* and say, 'It is truth.' 'You *are* My witnesses,'" says the Lord, "And My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God *formed*, nor shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the Lord, and besides Me there is no savior. – Isaiah 43:8-11 NKJ

The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel. – Mt 15:31 NIV

And, you know who was just *beaming*? That screamin' Gadarene!

So, hear this loud and clear: **if He's left you in the dark, it's because you're a light. And He expects you to act like a light.**

**Plug in.**

**Power up.**

**Recharge.**

No dim-wit-nesses allowed.

You're His light. Like it or not.

**So, show your region how to trust, when darkness does its worst!**