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## A Man Named Legion.

(2013)

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## A Man Named Legion.

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### Topics.

- A man named Legion in Mark.
  - A man named Legion in Luke.
  - A beautiful true story of courage and compassion.
  - God's great love.
  - Two men, possessed with demons in Matthew.
  - Demons, devils and sickness.
  - Two universal super powers.
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**INTRODUCTION:** this Story is also found in (Matt 8:28-34) (Luke 8:28-34). The following is not a dogmatic interpretation in every detail, but hopefully will give an overview of the story as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke and aid the reader in discovering even greater detail within the three different biblical author's writings.

**Mark:** says a man called Legion immediately a man came from the tombs to meet Jesus, his focus is on this man (Mark 5:1-20).

**Luke:** says a man from the city who lived in the tombs met Jesus, his focus is on this man (Luke 8:26-39).

**Matthew:** says two men came out of the tombs (or caves) to meet Jesus, his focus is on these two men (Matt 8:28).

Mark and Luke are speaking about the same man who even though he was from the city is at this moment living amongst the tombs, while Matthew is telling the same story but is focused on two men who lived at the tombs (or caves), this is the reason Mark says from the tombs and Luke says from the city. Luke and Mark are focused on the same man (called Legion) so there are actually three men in the story recorded in Mark Matthew and Luke.

Two who are living in the caves on the mountain that see or meet Jesus when he gets off the boat and another man also with demons who is coming from the city to meet Jesus. The expression, "immediately meet" (Mark 5v2) can simply mean the man coming out from the tombs immediately ran toward Jesus when he saw him. Near the end of the story all three men are in front of Christ.

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**Demons:** (a brief overview) at the time of the apostles and the early church Jews, pagan religions and many others who had some form of religious belief were still heavily influenced by the ancient belief that certain people were inhabited by evil gods called demons. Both Gentile and Jewish nations (especially those involved in religion) believed blindness, deafness, mental illnesses, diseases; sickness and physical disabilities (especially those they did not understand) were caused by evil gods called demons living inside the sick person. Jesus having all power over all sickness (mental and physical) and being possessed with all the fullness of wisdom spoke to the people according to what they believed rather than go into lengthy detail explaining that what they believed and hoping they would believe what he said, he instead showed them the power of God and of course after seeing such awesome and breathtaking power it was pointless for them to continue in their mistaken belief that evil gods were the cause of deafness, physical disabilities and blindness etc.

**Ponder for a moment:** multitudes (especially the religious leaders) who did hear Jesus speak never believed what he said, so it is certain had Jesus simply told the people (without any miracle) that they were holding fast to a false belief they would not have believed him especially since most had probably been heavily indoctrinated with this belief since childhood.

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### **A Man Named Legion in Mark.**

Mark 5:1-5 ----- <sup>1</sup>Jesus and his disciples (Mark 4:33-41) came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. <sup>2</sup>And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man (named Legion) (v9) with an unclean spirit <sup>3</sup>Who had his dwelling among the tombs and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: <sup>4</sup>Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. <sup>5</sup>And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs crying, and cutting himself with stones.

Jesus with the disciples has sailed across the Sea of Galilee and has now arrived on the shores of the country of the Gadarenes (also called Gerasenes). It is possible this was a mountainside of caves where people or guards put chains on these people with such extreme mental disorders or those believed to be possessed with demons and gave them water and food while they lived in the caves during the time of their seizures much (like our modern day homes for the mentally ill) especially since in this story there are three so called demon possessed men all in the same region and it is quiet possible that there may have been other mentally ill people present, but just not recorded in the story.

**NOTE:** this man is not an evil man as some may tend to think Mark tells us that he is not only crying and therefore obviously in deep sorrow, but also cutting himself with stones which means he is suffering from a sense of deep self-loathing. It is most likely that people during Jesus generation believed that those who had demons dwelling in them would receive the wrath of God at judgement and that those who had a consciousness of God and believed they had demons punished themselves now believing by doing so they would not be punished by God latter. Even today because of this mistaken reasoning some religious people, set about deliberately hurting themselves thinking it will somehow appease God from tormenting them in eternity.

**Sixty Minutes T.V Program:** in (2003) did a story on people cutting themselves the reporter stated that one-hundred thousand teenage youth suffer serve mental depression and cut themselves. The parents of these teenager's and the kid's interviewed said that it is another world of hell they lived in. The parents were good parents who cared about their children and the teenagers were not taking drugs or morally bad kids in fact many of them were doing well at school and had good friends.

### **Unclean in the context of this story carries the following two ideas: -**

1. Under the Levitical law the man was not considered clean to enter into the temple of God.
2. The man has some type of mental illness that the people of Jesus generation did not understand.

The words, "He had been often bound" indicate that this man had periods were his life was OK, but every so often he would be attacked with some type of physical seizure. The fact we are told that this man dwelt among the 'TOMBS' does not mean that he lived in the cemetery all his lifetime, but always during the time of his madness.

During the New Testament era a person suffering any kind of mental disorder that causes a seizure or a fit would not only be seen as a person that is totally mad, crazy, dangerous and out of control, but also treated as one.

There is probably some amount of exaggeration or overstatement being used to colour the picture of this man's madness as was common for the Jews to do especially since the people of this generation believed children and men and woman who had any form of sickness they did not understand were possessed with evil gods called demons dwelling inside their bodies. The following are three biblical illnesses that are similar to the sickness of this man named Legion: -

1. **A Greek woman's daughter:** a Greek Syrophenician woman asked Jesus to cast forth a demon out of her daughter and Jesus said the demon is gone out of thy daughter and when she went to her house and she found the demon gone out of her daughter (Mark 7:23-30). This is a woman's young daughter, a child she would not be evil or morally bankrupt. In this story the girl's sickness is credited to an unclean spirit and to a demon, this is because the Jews (and pagans) believed at this time demons (powerful evil gods, though inferior to the power of the Almighty God) were the cause of every sickness they did not understand.

The woman's child was not possessed by an unclean spirit or an evil god called a demon as the Jews believed, but suffered a mental disorder that the people of Jesus generation did not understand. In the New Testament any sickness the people did not understand are referred to as evil gods dwelling within called demons or an unclean spirit

2. **A man's only child:** a man asked Jesus to consider his son his only child and tells him that a spirit takes hold of his child and causes his son to have some type of physical seizure during which the boy cries out (no doubt in fear) and suffers bodily harm. As the man drew closer to Jesus with his son we are told the demon threw the boy to the ground and caused him to go into convulsions and that Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. (Luke 9:37-42). This is a man's only son, the child would not be evil or morally bankrupt. In this story the boy's sickness is credited to an unclean spirit and a demon.
3. **A man with a son who is called a lunatic:** a man came to Jesus and asked him to have mercy on his son and tells Jesus that his son is lunatic, and often has very bad fits that sometimes seriously harm the boy (Matt. 17:14-18) (KJV). Lunatic means to be moon-struck the Greeks believed bodily seizures could be caused by the moon this is why the man told Jesus his son was a lunatic, this clearly shows that just because people believe something, does not mean that it is true. In this story the boy's sickness is credited to the moon and to demons. Today we would say this child had an illness called epilepsy or something similar and was having an epileptic fit, but during these early era's the Greeks and the Jews knew nothing of epilepsy or the like.

The people of Jesus generation believed every sickness they did not understand was caused by unclean spirits or evil gods called DEMONS such as blindness, deafness, leprosy, epilepsy and any other sickness, illness or disease they did not understand. Today many of these sicknesses can be cured or controlled by chemical drugs developed and manufactured by secular medical scientist which are given to the patient by secular doctors. For those who hold to the traditional concept of demons this raises the following three questions concerning modern day chemicals. Are these tablets and drugs: -

1. Subduing these evil spiritual gods living inside the sick.
2. Killing the demons living inside the sick.
3. Creating such fear in the demons that they flee the instant they see the tablet descending down the sick person's throat.

**Jesus did not come to teach medicine:** just because people believe something does not mean it is true, if the Bible were being written today it would contain words like virus's, bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, epilepsy, melancholy, insanity and seizures etc., which are all called demons in the New Testament, but these evil gods called demons are also credited in the New Testament for entering a human body and causing blindness, deafness, loss of speech paralysis and any other sickness the people did not understand.

Jesus did not try to explain the scientific or medical causes of all these sickness, he did not need to as he was the ultimate doctor. Jesus did not need hospitals and scalpels to heal people so there was no need to give them a university degree on medicine, he just spoke according to what the people believed and they were instantly healed by his word. Once the people saw the awesome, breathtaking and miraculous healing power of God flowing through Christ it was not only clear that he was who he claimed to be, but also that the God he proclaimed was the one true God. Jesus by his miraculous healing power showed that it was foolish to follow the weak and powerless gods they believed in. Jesus ministry wasn't to raise doctors, but to reveal God; he did this by showing all who came to him the majestic and awe-inspiring healing power of his God.

Jesus rather than setting up schools or sitting on the mountain side or on the shores of the seaside in a boat teaching the crowds the causes of illnesses of the mind; diseases caused by bacteria and germs; physical disorders of the body and any other sickness the people did not understand instead showed the people that he was from God by demonstration of power in healing all of these sickness by his spoken word or a touch of his hand.

**The medical classroom of Jesus:** how fantastic must it have been for Jesus twelve apostles to be sitting in the medical classroom of Christ, never having to study every bone of the body, no theory, no sitting in classrooms year after year and no surgery, just a touch from the teachers hand and they had all the power they needed to heal every manner of sickness and disease.

#### **The Man named Legion continued: -**

Mark 5:6-9 ----- <sup>6</sup>But when he (the man named Legion) (v9) saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, <sup>7</sup>And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. <sup>8</sup>For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean' spirit. <sup>9</sup>And he asked him What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is legion for we are many.

From these verses we see that this man had obviously heard of Jesus and believed he was the Son of God and worshipped the Lord. Clearly this is not an evil man, but one who has a serious mental illness that affects him physically.

**Legion:** is of Latin origin and refers to a Roman regiment, army or battalion between three-thousand to six-thousand men and figuratively to a large force or multitude, which means the man in this story believed he had many thousands of demons controlling him. This man believed Jesus was the Son of God so it is most likely he believed Jesus had come to judge, condemn and punish him before the time of his natural death because he was possessed of demons (or at least believed he was), but just because a mentally disturbed person believes such a thing does mean that what he believed is a true fact.

Mark 5:10-13 ----- <sup>10</sup>And the man besought Jesus much that he would not send them (the unclean' spirits) away out of the country. <sup>11</sup>Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. <sup>12</sup>And the demons besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. <sup>13</sup>And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

We can only speculate at the reasons the man did not want Jesus to send the unclean spirits out of the country, some suggest the man was asking Jesus not to send him out of the country they say the word "them", should be "he" but this would not fit with (Mark 5:12) which has the demons begging Jesus to let them enter the pigs and Luke says, the demons begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss (a bottomless pit) (Luke 8:31). Maybe verse twelve could mean, "And the man asked for all the demons to be cast into the pigs" because he believed he had thousands of demons dwelling within him and feared that they would possess his family and friends and other humans and believing this ask Jesus to cast the demons into the pigs, but this once again is only human reasoning and speculation. Perhaps Jesus wanting to show God's great mercy and that he has power over what they believed to be demons transfers the mental disorder over to the pigs.

## Naaman the King of Syria and a Gehazi.

This transference of disease is also seen in the story of Elisha the prophet and Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-27). Naaman was the king of Syria and an honorable and mighty man of valor, but he was a leper. Elisha the prophet after hearing of Naaman's leprosy sent Gehazi his servant to tell Naaman to go and wash in the River Jordan and he will be healed, Naaman obeyed and he was healed. Gehazi saw an opportunity to get rich, but Elisha said, "No we will not take money for God's free gift." Gehazi sneaks off after Naaman and lying, asks for a reward and Naaman gives Gehazi a reward. When Elisha asks Gehazi if he has received a reward Gehazi lies to Elisha so Elisha transfers Naaman's leprosy onto Gehazi saying: -

- The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever (2 Kings 5:27).

Gehazi went out from presence of Elisha a leper as white as snow. This story shows that even the word of a prophet can transfer a sickness onto another. Jesus rather than try to prove to these Gentile people that they are holding onto a false belief shows by his power that he is the Son of God and had power over all other gods people believe to be real. Remember there was no global television in the days of Christ.

There are many stories in the Old Testament that dramatically impact on the mind and get people talking about God. It almost appears that one of the methods God uses to bring peoples focus on His plans and purposes it to use dramatic and shock tactics that impact on the human mind and leave a lasting impression. This story certainly had that effect people all around the region were not only talking about the man named Legion, but also about the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice demons and unclean spirits are interchangeable terms.

Mark 5:14-15 ----- <sup>14</sup>And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. <sup>15</sup>And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the demon and had the legion sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind and they were afraid.

The people believed the man called legion was possessed with thousands of demons and now they see the man is in his right mind maybe they were afraid that the demons might enter them much like we can catch invisible flu bacteria and harmful virus' from others. It is certain the people of Jesus era believed these types bacteria and virus' were demons.

Mark 5:16-20 ----- <sup>16</sup>And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the demon and also concerning the swine. <sup>17</sup>And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts. <sup>18</sup>And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the demon prayed him that he might be with him. <sup>19</sup>Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. <sup>20</sup>And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

When the people hear what had happened they plead with Jesus to leave their region probably fearing they might lose all their pigs so Jesus and the disciple begin climbing into the boat, and as they do the now healed man begs to go with them, but Jesus tells him to go back to his home and his friends.

This shows that as mentally disturb as this man was he still had friends and a home and certainly shines a spotlight on the truth that he was not an evil man. So it is reasonable to suppose that he may not have been out of his right mind all the time, maybe he escaped to the hills during the period of his illness and stayed there until his seizures or fits had passed to escape the city folk mocking and jeering at him.

He departs from Jesus and goes into the city of Decapolis and tells the whole city about the compassion and mercy the Lord has shown him and of the great things Jesus did and all who heard marveled.

**The great message of this story:** the people in Jesus era would have considered that this man called Legion was a waste of space or an idiot they would have viewed the man as less than human and mocked and laughed at him while their children probably teased him or made fun of him, added to this because they believed people in this tragic condition had evil gods called demons possessing them they would have had him cast out of the city. But Jesus comes to this suffering, lonely, man society considered a reject and shows him God's great mercy and compassion.

**A final comment:** clearly this is a difficult chapter to understand even for those holding to the conventional belief, of an evil powerful god called SATAN that controls a global spiritual army of hundreds of millions of lesser evil gods called demons and sends them out into the nations to torment innocent adults and harmless children.

If demons were real spiritual entities or gods that cannot die what would be the point of Jesus casting them into pigs knowing that when the pigs drowned in the ocean and died the demons would be free to go and possess and destroy thousands of other innocent men, woman and children surely it would be better to leave them dwelling in the one man.

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### **A Man Named Legion in Luke.**

For an introduction to the story see the introduction at the beginning of Mark (above). This story is also found in (Matt. 8:28-34) (Mark. 5:1-20).

Luke 8:26-27 ----- <sup>26</sup>And they (Jesus and the disciples) arrived at the country of the Gadarenes (also called Gerasenes) which is over against Galilee. <sup>27</sup>And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man (named Legion) (v30) which had demons long time, and wore no clothes neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

It is unlikely the statement he wore no clothes means he was completely naked it is more likely he was naked from the waist up. During this era a man was considered to be naked if the upper half of his body was revealed in public, unless he was working. Consider in the King James Bible the apostle John says, "When Peter saw Jesus after fishing girt his fisher's coat unto him, for he was naked," and the English Standard Bible says, "When Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work" (John 21:7). No one believes fishermen during Jesus era went about their work completely naked.

Here Luke says that the man named Legion was coming out from the city when he cried out to Jesus, yet Mark said the man was coming out of the tombs. Some might think this a contradiction, but it is easily harmonized, the man was living at the tombs and Jesus was walking toward the tombs while the man happened to be strolling out of the city, the man sees Jesus, cries out and runs to meet Jesus in the region of the tombs. Mark begins his story at the tombs while Luke begins his story from the city. The fact the man named Legion was strolling out from the city shows us the following three things: -

1. That he was not a criminal or an evil or wicked man doing harm to others since he was able to enter the city.
2. He was a good man who happened to have some type of mental problem, very much like our mentally disabled people today who need our care.
3. He wasn't always bound in chains and locked up in the place of the tombs.

**Ponder for a moment:** almost every man, woman and child that suffers with a mental disability or epilepsy and Tourette's syndrome or any other type of medical disorder that causes periodic sudden loss or impairment of consciousness or convulsions that makes the body shake violently because of irregular electrical discharges in the brain and many of the men and woman who enter the global Para-Olympian Games today would have been spoken of as having an unclean spirit and being demon possessed during Jesus generation.

This is because people of Jesus generation believed every sickness and illness that was outside of what is commonly considered normal and that they did not understand was caused by evil gods called demons (also called and unclean spirit) dwelling inside the body of the sick person whose sole intent was to control and destroy those they inhabited.

Luke 8:28-29 -----<sup>28</sup>When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.  
<sup>29</sup>(For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the demon into the wilderness.

**NOTICE:** the demons are now called unclean spirits these two titles are interchangeable terms. Demons are primarily used in relation to sickness, because the Jews believed demons to be a powerful evil deity or god though inferior in power to the Supreme Almighty God.

The words, "For oftentimes it had caught him" shines a spotlight on the fact that this man named Legion wasn't always out of his right mind, but every so often. Thousands of people even today suffer with these types of illness where for most of their life they live a normal life and hold secure jobs, but every so often are attacked by a seizure. Today we have medications that can limit and control these types of illnesses. Added to this in most western countries those who are seriously affected by these seizures are cared for in medical homes by professionals, but in certain other countries they are removed from society and locked up in brick and concrete rooms.

**A beautiful true story of courage and compassion:** during the time of Jesus and the apostles any sickness the people did not understand they believed to be caused by inferior evil demonic gods they called demons. In 2005 an English blind girl about twenty-five years old pioneered schools for the blind in Tibet because she cared for the blind in that country and was angered at the way they were treated, because the people still believed the blind were possessed with demons. Her schools would take the blind in and show them love, kindness and care in contrast to the rejection they experienced by much of Tibetan society, because of their belief that blindness was a result of demon possession.

Just because people believe a thing to be true does not mean that it is true. For Jesus to heal the people they did not need to understand what caused virus's, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, epilepsy, melancholy, insanity, seizures, blindness, deafness, loss of speech and paralysis all called demons in the New Testament.

Jesus primary reason for healing was to show that his power was greater than any false god the people believed in, proving that he was the Son of God and sent from God. The people seeing that Jesus power was greater should have forsaken their false gods and turned to the Lord. If they did their false belief in evil gods called demons would be forsaken and consequently the evil gods held in their minds by a strong belief in them and held on the imagination of their mind would cease to exist.

Luke 8:30-31 -----<sup>30</sup>And Jesus asked him saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion because many demons were entered into him <sup>31</sup>And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep (abyss in KJV).

**Abyss:** (the Deep in KJV) means depthless and carries the idea of a bottomless pit.

The word, Legion is of Latin origin and means a Roman regiment, army or battalion between three-thousand to six-thousand men, figuratively it carries the idea of a large force or multitude, which means the man in this story, believed he had many thousands of demons living inside of him. Since this man believed Jesus was the Son of God it is certain he believed in God and most likely believed he would be judged, condemned and sent to the bottomless pit because of the thousands of demons living within him, but just because a mentally tormented person believes such a thing does mean that what he believed is a true fact.



Luke 8:32-33 ----- <sup>32</sup>And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they (the demons) besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. <sup>33</sup>Then went the demons out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

The thousands of so called demons dwelling in this man named Legion beg Jesus to allow them to enter into the pigs. Often when men and woman suffer these types of ailments they take on the speech and voice of another personality much like a person suffering with schizophrenia does. In most cases these types of illnesses can be controlled by medical tablets. The reasons Jesus allowed the pigs to enter into the pigs can only be speculated on (see the notes following Mark 5:10) (above).

The important thing to keep in mind here is that though this man is said to have had thousands of demons dwelling in his body he is not an evil man and believed that Jesus was the Son of God from the stories he has heard of Jesus. Clearly though this man appears to the society he lived amongst to be demon possessed he was on the inside of far better character than the religious leaders of his generation (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) who appeared righteous on the outside, but were prideful, hypocritical pretenders on the inside so much so that Jesus said: -

- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (Matt. 23:25-28)

How amazing is this, Jesus the Son of God comes to the religious leaders who believed they had the favour of God and strongly rebukes them, and comes to a man society considered possessed with demons and not only shows him compassion and mercy, but also heals him.

Luke 8:34-37 ----- <sup>34</sup>When they (the herdsmen) that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. <sup>35</sup>Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the demons were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. <sup>36</sup>They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the demons was healed. <sup>37</sup>Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

When the herdsmen saw the herd of pigs rush over a steep bank and drown they of course race and tell everyone in the city and surrounding region, people from the country and city come out and even though they see the demon possessed man is in his right mind they ask Jesus to leave. The following could be two possible reasons for this: -

1. They may have thought the thousands of demons that had come out of the man would possess them. Even today certain religious families worldwide who believe in demons cast their own mentally ill children out of their homes for fear of being possessed by the demons themselves.
2. They may have feared losing their own livestock in the same way.

Luke 8:38-39 ----- <sup>38</sup>Now the man out of whom the demons were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, <sup>39</sup>Return to thine own house and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

The healed man on seeing Jesus leaving pleads with him to take him, but Jesus tells him to go to his home and testify of what the Lord has done for him.

The fact the man named Legion had a home indicates that the man was not always out of his mind, but at times lived a normal life while in his right and normal mind.

### **Two Possible Reasons for this Story.**

1. Jesus from his heartfelt compassion simply wanted to heal a man that was in great suffering and mental torment.
2. Jesus may have wanted the knowledge and awareness of him and his disciples to spread throughout the surrounding region so that people's curiosity would be aroused and they would begin talking about all they had heard and seen concerning Jesus and come out to see and hear him speak.

There is no-doubt the transference of the man's illness into the pigs was so spectacularly dramatic that people not only instantly began talking about the Lord, they raced to tell their families and friends (who wouldn't after having witness such a spectacular event). This event was so dramatic that the story of Jesus and the man named Legion quickly spread throughout the surrounding region.

In the days of Christ there was no global radio, newspapers, worldwide news TV or internet etc. At various times throughout the Bible God did something so extreme and out of the ordinary that it had such a dramatic and lasting impact on the human mind that it not only caught people's attention, but remained impacted in the memory of the mind. This glorious miracle certainly had this effect on the minds of those who witnessed it they literally ran to the cities and the country and with great excitement told the story to everyone they met.

### **Jesus told the man named Legion: -**

- To return to his home and declare how much God had done for him (v39).

Some in the Christian faith use this verse to support the theory that the Lord Jesus Christ is actually God the Father, but this is reading far more into the verse than what Jesus is saying. It simply means that it is God the Father's power working through Christ the Son that has healed this suffering and torment man, this is the reason Jesus gives all the credit and glory to his heavenly Father.

**Words of comfort and encouragement:** since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states: -

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim: -

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say: -

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

**For further information see the title: -**

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**God's great love:** even though the people who witnessed this glorious miracle would not have fully understood it they recognized that God's mercy and compassion through Christ had healed a man that many considered demon possessed and only fit for the caves amongst the dead. This story shines a brilliant floodlight on the truth that God the Father cared for a man that society considered, demon possessed and a waste of space. The central message and important point of this story is not the detail of knowing exactly what happened, but recognizing as the people did that the Lord does not withhold his compassion or his mercy from anyone who asks no matter what their condition in this mortal life is. God the Father cared for a man called legion and two others that lived in caves that society considered, demon possessed and a waste of space and the Lord came and healed them.

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### **Two Men, Possessed with Demons in Matthew.**

Matthew 8:28 ----- 28 And when Jesus was come to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes there met him two possessed with demons coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

The Gadarenes (also called Gergesenes) were the descendants of Canaan, and one of the nations' living east of the Sea of Galilee when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. This is the same story as the man named legion, but Matthew focus is upon another two men who like the man called legion were believed to be possessed with demons and living amongst the tombs. It is most likely these three men knew each other and escaped to the tombs during the time of their seizures rather than face the mocking and jeering of the city folk.

**Demons, devils and sickness:** the King James Bible unfortunately translates the Greek word diabolos which is our English word devil and the Greek word daimon which is our English word demon both as devil in the Bible instead of translating them to devil and demon accordingly. This over the years has led to confusion between the different meanings of the two words and a mistaken understanding. This is because the Greek word diabolos (devil) means an accuser and slander so it relates to behavior and never to mental or physical healing or sickness of any kind whereas the Greek word daimon (demon) which means a god, especially and evil one almost always relates to sickness. Most modern Bibles have translated this correctly.

The words possessed and demon both mean to be under the power of an evil god, spirit or deity. During the New Testament era it was believed that the blind, the deaf, those who suffered with paralysis and diseases and severe mental sickness such as epilepsy, melancholy, insanity, etc., and any other illness the people did not understand at that time were a result of evil spirits and gods called demons dwelling inside the sick person and destroying their bodies or their minds.

The Jews and the pagan world of Jesus generation believed demons had entered the bodies of those afflicted and held possession of them. Not only to afflict them with ills, but also to dethrone the reason and take its place themselves. They believed the possessed were used by the demon to express the mind and consciousness of the demon dwelling in them; and their only cure was thought to require the expulsion of the demon.

In the days of the New Testament any force that was destructive to human nature and was beyond the control of man's free will was believed to be the result of demons, but today we still have no medical or scientific evidence to say this is the case. It is important to notice that the people that Jesus delivered from these demons were not evil as Hollywood portrays demon possessed people, but ordinary decent and moral human beings and some of them were young children who were loved by their parents and certainly not corrupt or morally bankrupt.

Today many of these illnesses can be controlled and some healed with certain types of medical drugs or treatments. Jesus arrives in the country of the Gadarenes and sees two men coming out from a cemetery. We are told that these two men had dwelling within their bodies evil gods called demons and that they were exceeding fierce it is most likely that they seemed to be fierce because they had fits and seizures of some type and because those who saw them believed they had evil gods called demons living inside of them and controlling their mind and actions.

Matthew 8:29 ----- <sup>29</sup>And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

This shows that the men had heard about Jesus and that they believed he was the Son of God. How stunning is this, Jesus Israel's Messiah the Christ the Son of God and Saviour of the world came to the people of Israel and their religious leaders (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) who believed they were favoured by God not only disbelieved that Jesus was the Son of God, but plotted his murder and had him killed.

Now in this story we are presented with two so called demonically possessed men who not only believed Jesus is the Son of God, but also believed that they were unworthy of God's favour because they believed they were possessed with evil gods called demons and therefore would be judged by Christ before their time (meaning before the time of their natural death). This shines a spotlight on the truth that though these men appeared to be possessed by demons on the outside on the inside they were good men who had a faith in God, but sadly because they were convinced their bodies were full of evil gods called demons they also believed they were unworthy of God's love and God's grace and would therefore be judged, condemned and cast into the abyss (a bottomless pit) (a symbol of eternal darkness and eternal death) (i.e., total extinction).

Matthew 8:30-32 ---- <sup>30</sup>And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. <sup>31</sup>So the demons besought him, saying, If thou cast us out suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. <sup>32</sup>And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

The expression, "Cast out" is a perfect and very appropriate term for any illness that affects a person's outward behavior and speech because when a person is healed from this type of illness the seizures cease giving the appearance that something has gone out of them. Jesus shows by his word and his power that he is the Son of God and has power over all other gods people believed in. This transference of disease is also seen in the story of Naaman the leper when his leprosy was transferred onto Elijah servant Gehazi. For further information concerning this see the notes following (Mark 5:10) (above) under the title: "Naaman the King of Syria and a Gehazi."

**The following Scriptures show that John the Baptist and Jesus where also accused of being possessed with demons: -**

- Jesus said, "John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' (Matt. 11:18-19).
- Jesus said: "John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' (Luke 7:33-34).
- John states: "There was division among the Jews and many of them said, "Jesus has a demon and is insane why listen to him?" Others said, "These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon can a demon open the eyes of the blind?" (Jn. 10:17-21).

Since the Jewish religious leaders and many others believed that John the Baptist was possessed by a demon and that Jesus was not only possessed by a demon, but was also a glutton and a drunkard why should we believe the two men in this

story were possessed by evil gods called demons when they were not evil men and believed Jesus was the Son of God especially since the Jewish religious leaders diagnosis and testimony of John the Baptist and of Jesus was so wrong. No one today believes Jesus or John the Baptist had demons, so why should we believe that their accusations of the common people, having demons was true?

**NOTE:** when a baby is born it has the potential to grow into a healthy adult with all its mental faculties intact and all their bodily members fully and wholly developed, but sadly there are children born with outward disabilities and physical abnormalities. This same sadness also applies to the mental condition of certain new born children. Some are born with a lack of certain chemicals, DNA genes or chromosomes that are needed for the mind to function in a manner that the general society considers normal. Both children and adult men and woman who have these mental disabilities are referred to today as being mentally disabled. This mental disability does not mean that these good living children and well-adjusted happy men and woman have an evil god called a demon dwelling within them and possessing and controlling them as the generation of Jesus era believed.

Matthew 8:33-34 ----- <sup>33</sup>And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city and told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the demons <sup>34</sup>And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.

How amazing it this, no mobile phones, no internet or global communication yet in a matter of a few hours the entire city is talking about Jesus and coming out to see him. Perhaps this is one of the reasons Jesus allowed the pigs to race over the cliff, since it was such a dramatic event you can guarantee the entire region will be talking about it over the next few days and weeks and whoever hears of this story will want to come out and see Jesus and his disciples when they arrive in their region.

Today we have to drop thousands of flyers, spend hundreds of dollars on advertising to get people to come out and hear the word of the Lord, in contrast to this Jesus just did something spectacular and dramatic and everyone was talking about him. It is true the people of this city asked Jesus and his disciples to leave their city perhaps out of fear he might do the same to their own livestock, but there is no doubt they would be talking about him to their families, friends and everyone they knew and met and Jesus name would have spread throughout all the surrounding regions and those who heard the testimony of this story would have marveled at the miracle though they would not have understood it, but when he did arrive in their towns and villages they would certainly have gone out to see who this man called Jesus was.

**CONCLUSION:** even though we may not fully understand the miracle and the need for the so called evil gods called demons to enter the pigs the central focus of the story is very clear. Jesus healed a man named Legion who people believed was possessed with thousands of evil gods called demons and two other men who were also said to be demon possessed and therefore driven to live outside the city amongst the dead (at least during the time of their seizures). This story shows that God the Father cared for men that society considered, demon possessed and a waste of space. The central message and important point of this story is not the detail of knowing exactly what happened, but recognizing that Lord does not withhold his compassion or his mercy from anyone who asks no matter what their condition might be in this mortal life. God the Father cared for three men that society considered demon possessed and a waste of space.

**NOTE:** perhaps everything regarding demons is not quite as black and white as I have attempted to explain, even the best doctors and scientist in the world today still don't fully understand the cause of many of these illness, but one thing that is very clear and is black and white is that those in the Bible who were said to be possessed by demons were not evil wicked people as Hollywood presents them in fact some were children greatly loved by their parents and others humbly fell at the Lords feet and desired to follow him and God through the Lord Jesus Christ showed them great compassion and mercy.

## Two Universal Super Powers.

The primary understanding of demons amongst today's generations mostly comes from Hollywood and not New Testament or spiritual thinking because of this to speak of someone having a demon today is highly offensive since it immediately conjures up in the mind a picture of a grossly evil and wicked person, but those in the Bible who were spoken of as having demons were not mentally, physically or spiritually evil, wicked or corrupt people, they were simply adults and children who had an illness the people of Jesus generation didn't understand. There are only two universal super powers that influence the world today one influences to good and the other influences to wickedness and evil. These two super powers are called God and sin (sin flows from self, ego, pride and greed). In the following verses Jesus and James shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that every evil and sin manifested in the world today abides in the human heart and the human mind and flows out from them.

Jesus said:

- For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander (Matt. 15:19).
- For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery
- For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within (Mark 7:21-23).

James wrote: -

- Each person is tempted when they are lured and enticed by their own desire, then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death (James 1:14-15)

The people of Jesus generation and the people during the era of the early church did not understand the depth and power of evil and of sin dwelling in the human heart, but also had a mistaken idea and understanding of many sicknesses (i.e., they believed blindness and deafness was caused by evil gods called demons dwelling inside the body of the person).

**The titles:** devils, satan, foul spirits and unclean spirits in the widest sense are all of the same family and the same entity. They are all symbols and personifications of the many different aspects of the sin and wickedness that ascends up from the depth of the bottomless pit of evil that resides in the human heart and is outwardly and globally manifested on the face of the earth in all forms of corruption and in all that is opposed to God and contrary to His will and His ways.

In many Scriptures of the New Testament unclean spirits and demons are interchangeable titles. It should always be kept in mind when reading these particular verses that the word unclean does not always relate to moral corruptness, but can refer to a person who is considered unclean according to Levitical ceremonial and religious rites and laws. To the Jews mind any person that was considered ceremonially unclean was spoken of as having an unclean spirit which is also an interchangeable title for having a demon.

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**For further information see the titles: -**

- Devils.
- Demons.

Both titles are in, Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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