

Opening Hymn: 164 Hear the Call

Closing Hymn: 244 Thy Will Be Done

### **Three Battles that were won with Words**

The chief priests, the scribes and Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Herodians all asked Jesus questions to try to show to the people that he was not the heir to the throne of David.

They tried to prove that Jesus was **not God's anointed king of Israel**. But, with every question, Jesus' answers only confirmed what his teachings and miraculous healings already proved to the people - he was the Messiah, God's anointed king of Israel.

These questions can be compared to the questions asked in a confirmation hearing for those appointed to the Supreme Court or high positions in government.

The **questioners** ask hard questions to find out if the appointee is capable and qualified for the high position they will fill.

In Jesus' day, the religious rulers saw him as a threat to their positions and were not asking questions to confirm that he was the Messiah, but to try to prove that he was **NOT**.

To their frustration and sometimes even to their **shock** and **amazement**, Jesus answered their questions with the wisdom he received from his Father in heaven proving he was more than competent and skilled to perform the duties of the king of Israel.

The Pharisees plotted how they might entrap Jesus in his words in order to turn him over to the Roman governor.

The Pharisees came up with a plan to send their disciples, along with the Herodians to entrap Jesus into responding to a controversial question of the day.

The **question** to Jesus would be, "**Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?**"

They reasoned if Jesus said it was lawful to pay the poll-tax to Caesar, then he would receive condemnation from the people for the taxes were unpopular.

If Jesus said it was not according to God's Law to pay taxes to Caesar, then **the Herodians** would take him into custody to the Roman governor for sedition to Roman law. The penalty for sedition was death. In the minds of the religious rulers there was no way out. Whichever way Jesus answered the question, he would lose.

The religious rulers were **not** treating Jesus as their brother and fellow countryman, but as an enemy of the state.

Rather than have the courage to ask the question themselves, the Pharisees would send their **young** disciples to try and catch Jesus off guard.

They set up their question by pretending to respect Jesus as an authorized teacher of the Law by saying, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for you are not partial to any." They then spring the trap, "**Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?**"

The young students of the Pharisees were probably very pleased with themselves.

They believed they had Jesus cornered. There would be no way out of this one.

Mark 12:15 tells us Jesus perceived their hypocrisy and asked them "Why are you testing me?"

Have you ever thought about **HOW Jesus answered them**? Do you think he looked on them with anger?

Do you think he had a harsh tone?

Do you think he screamed at them in frustration or exasperation – "Why are you testing me?"

Jesus could see they were being led by others. He knew the competing religious factions behind the question as well as the underlying motivation. With such knowledge and the holy spirit without measure, Jesus could look at them with a soft and gentle look, **as a father to his child**.

His tone, it would have been loving, thoughtful, and kind -

"Why are you testing me?" "Bring me a denarius to look at."

The disciples of the Pharisees are looking for a confrontation. That loving look and tone wasn't the response they were expecting. It would be **so disarming**.

There was no hesitation in Jesus' response, no fear, **no stress**, only a **calm**, gentle question which told them **he knew** what they were up to and then an unusual request for a denarius.

They were probably flustered when Jesus calmly asked for a denarius.

“Why does he want a denarius?”

The **denarius** was the census coin used to pay the poll tax. The denarius was also equivalent to a day’s wages.

The disciples of the Pharisees didn’t know why he asked for the coin, but they gave him one any way.

They may still have thought he was trapped into answering “**yes**” or **no**” to paying taxes to the Roman government.

Jesus then turns his answer into a **spiritual lesson** for his questioners, his disciples and all the people watching and listening.

Jesus asks them a **question** about the coin, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” And they said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Jesus said to them, “**Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.**” Mark 12:17

Matthew says that when the disciples of the Pharisees heard his answer, they were amazed and left him. Luke’s description seems to capture the essence of their response, “and being amazed at his answer, they became silent.” They were **speechless**.

Their plot was foiled.

Jesus masterfully answered their question. Not only did he **not fall** into their trap, but he gained even more respect from the people for his answer **elevated God** far above the day’s wage due to the earthly Roman government.

The Herodians would agree. There was no sedition in commending the people to give back to Caesar, his denarius. Jesus not only foiled the Pharisees’ plot to condemn him, but used the question as a teaching opportunity to all those listening, that when they give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, **the single denarius**, that they give to God, all else - **their hearts, and their vows**, to God. Their daily conduct and their lives were to reflect the only true and holy, living God of Israel.

Jesus was asked this question to prove he was not the promised Messiah and king of Israel. Instead, it became a confirmation question for a king. The wisdom of Jesus’ answer confirmed they were in the presence of the promised Messiah, God’s chosen King of Israel.

With only sixteen words from Jesus’ mouth, the walls of the inescapable trap were lying at his feet.

**"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."**

What a depth of wisdom is in that answer!

The wolves surrounded Jesus and were ready to pounce.

The Herodians would put him in prison and then **to death** for teaching the people not to pay taxes to Rome

**OR**

the Pharisees would **incite the people** against him and possibly **stone him to death** for teaching that it is God's law to pay the hated taxes to the occupying Roman government.

**Jesus' words** kept both of these jealous groups of religious leaders at bay.

In this question, **Jesus' life and possibly the lives of his apostles** were in jeopardy. The disciples of the Pharisees were used of the Pharisees and Herodians who were being used of the Adversary in an attempt to destroy **the Lord's anointed**.

This **battle of words** shows the great power of words to teach and to change ideas held close to the heart - particularly the power of God's Word to change the heart. The Apostle Paul describes its power in Hebrews 4:12.

**Heb 4:12:**

For the word of God is **living and active** and **sharper** than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions **of the heart**. - **NASU**

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In a **previous attempt** to take **Jesus' life and his apostles' lives**, the Adversary used a sudden storm on the Sea of Galilee. This is in **Mark 4:36 – 41**.

The Sea of Galilee is a large fresh-water lake fed by the Jordan river.

According to Easton's Bible dictionary, the lake is **80 to 160 feet deep**. The lake itself is nearly **13 miles long** and **8 miles wide** at the point of its greatest width."

"The lake is surrounded, except on the southern side, by steep cliffs and sharply rising mountains. On the east, these mountains rise to the Golan Heights...**as high as 2,700 feet**. As a result of this formation, cool winds frequently rush down these slopes and unexpectedly stir up violent storms on the warm surface of the lake."

Another interesting point from Easton's Dictionary is that Jesus performed **18 of his 33 recorded miracles** on and around the Sea of Galilee.

**Back to Mark**, Chapter 4, verse 36:

**36** And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him **other little ships**.

**37** And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

**38** And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and **they awake him**, and say unto him, Master, **carest thou not that we perish?**

**39** And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, **Peace, be still**. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

**40** And he said unto them, **Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?**

**41** And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, "**What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?**" KJV

Once again, Jesus' words are few, "Peace be still." With just **three words**, he calmed the sea and the wind.

OR more precisely, Jesus, full of faith in God, **without an ounce of stress**, calmed the winds and the sea to preserve the lives of those in his boat and also those in other small boats caught in the sudden storm.

In this way, Jesus, **thwarted** the Adversary's attempt to destroy him and the apostles before God's appointed time for him to voluntarily give his life a ransom for all.

This is such an amazing event in the Gospel accounts of Jesus life, because of the **power of God that Jesus exercises** to control both the wind and the sea with only the words of his mouth.

It is equally amazing because of the contrast between Jesus' **faith-filled responses** and the predictable or natural responses of the apostles to the same storm or physical stimuli.

The apostles' response to their small ship being battered by terrifying winds and waves is fear and panic. This is an extraordinary storm because several of the apostles are experienced fishermen on the sea of Galilee and they are terrified. Their natural response is fear.

Jesus' response to **exactly the same stimuli**, after being awakened from a **sound sleep** and confronted with **terror-inspiring** winds and waves, are **three words**, made up of **12 letters**, "**Peace be still.**"

Have you ever thought about Jesus' reaction? How **calmly** he assesses the situation?

When you think of "stress management" in these events, Jesus is the **epitome** of stress management. This would certainly be a great qualification for a king. What country or nation would not want their king, their president, or prime minister to always think clearly, remain calm and maintain focus while under extraordinary pressure?

Jesus is awakened from a sound sleep and sees the waves crashing into and over the boat. He hears the winds howling. The natural physical response is fight or flight, but Jesus calmly and quickly assesses the situation. On the surface, all appears to be lost. The small boat is no match for the wind and the waves. The boat is filling with water, so what is the solution?

To Jesus, it's a simple and doable one - turn off the winds and stop the raging sea. The underlying physical mechanics of how this is accomplished is not important.

Jesus, full of faith in God, knowing that his work is not yet completed and this is not how he is to die according to God's sure word of prophecy, confidently and calmly gives the command, "**Peace be still,**" and it was so.

What spiritual powers were then brought into action, we do not know. Perhaps an army of holy angels were called in to stop the wind and the seas.

Jesus' words to Peter when he allowed himself to be taken into custody to be tried by the Sanhedrin, may provide a glimpse into the power that God gave Jesus to command.

Matt 26:53 and 54

**53** "Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal **more than twelve legions of angels?** **54** "How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, *which say that it must happen this way?*" NASU

That said, there were differences between Jesus and the disciples in that **Jesus was begotten of the holy spirit** and the apostles were not yet begotten of the holy spirit. Jesus was perfect and the apostles were not. Jesus had the memories of his life as the Logos - experiencing the love, power and wisdom of God, His father, over eons of time.

Notwithstanding these differences, Jesus **gently asks** them two questions,

**Why are you so fearful?** and

**How is it that you have no faith?**

Jesus wants them to think about these questions. He wants them to reason together. He wants their faith to grow stronger. He could have said:

“Since we’re doing God’s will and you’ve seen the miracles I’ve performed, there’s nothing in heaven or on earth that can prevent us from completing the work our God has given us to accomplish. So don’t be afraid of tremendous storms, earthquakes or anything else that you experience with your physical senses.

Using your **spiritual vision**, not relying on your physical senses, **trust in God** for he created the heaven, the earth and the sea.”

The apostles’ response to the winds and the sea becoming calm at Jesus’ command, was one of amazement. They were astonished at how Jesus’ words had the power to control even the powerful physical elements of the wind and sea.

With the great faith Jesus had in his God and Father in heaven, his response to the great storm stopping at his command was one of surety and confidence.

This was **to be expected** since he was **doing the will of God**.

Right after Jesus calms the wind and the sea, Jesus and the apostles get out of the boat on the **east side** of the Sea of Galilee. The apostles were probably very thankful to be back on land again and still in awe of the power Jesus just exercised.

Surely Jesus was the king of Israel.

This was another strong corroboration for the apostles that Jesus was the Messiah, the prophet like unto Moses – as Moses also controlled the wind and the sea – by parting the Red sea and delivering Israel from Pharaoh (a type of Satan). – Exodus 14:21 and 22.

Exodus 14:21 and 22:

**21** Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD swept the sea *back* by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. **22** The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

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Mark 5:1 tells us, They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes.

We're going to spend the rest of our time talking about Jesus' time in the country of the Gerasenes.

The east side of the Sea of Galilee was a region known as the country of the **Gerasenes**. Easton's Bible Dictionary says of the area that, "From the base of the great plateau of Bashan, **2,000 feet or more overhead**, the ground slopes down steeply, in places precipitously, to the shore."

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia indicates that in this same area, "Many ancient tombs are to be seen in the face of the hills."

Nelson's Bible Dictionary says this area was part of the "Decapolis" or ten cities which had a large Greek population.

When Jesus gets out of the boat on the east side of the Sea of Galilee, Mark, chapter 5, verses 2 and 3 tell us he is met by a man with an **unclean spirit** who lived **among the tombs** nearby.

Continuing in Mark 5, verse 3,

**3** ...And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; **4** because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and **the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces**, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. **5** **Constantly, night and day**, he was **screaming among the tombs** and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones.

Stopping there in the account, it is clear this man was in a wretched condition. His mind had been overcome by demons - the fallen angels that had lost their first estate - their heavenly and holy condition before the flood.

Being under the control of these fallen spirit beings they gave him greater physical strength than he already had, so he was able to break chains and shackles and overcome those who tried to restrain him.

In Luke 8:27-29 we're told the man was not wearing clothes, and it had been a long time since he had worn clothes. He also was not living in a home, but was driven into the desert by the demons. So the man had no protection from the elements - no coat, no house and living among the tombs and in the mountains.

He must have been crying out because of the conflict with these beings. He had great energy because of them which allowed him to scream throughout the day and night.

It appears he tried to injure himself with stones so that the demons would leave him alone or possibly so that he could be put out of his misery.

You could imagine the man taking a stone and trying to hit himself in the head with all of his might, but the demons prevented him from a fatal injury. They used his mind and body to experience life through his five senses.

Have you ever wondered how this man got into this horrible condition?

From the account, it appears he was a strong man and probably tall as he was an imposing figure. He is said to be a man, so over thirty years of age.

He was probably a very bright man and very good looking, **being proud** and lacking in wisdom.

He was probably brighter and stronger than most of his contemporaries, so felt he was powerful enough, smart enough or clever enough to contend and outwit demons through contact with mediums or other approach to evil. Somehow he opened the door of his mind to them.

Of course he was not able to contend with **fallen spirit beings that had thousands of years of experience. They took all that he had** – his mind and body. He was then overcome by them and his mind and body enslaved.

What a lesson this is for the followers of Christ to stay clearly on the narrow way of sacrifice, in humility, denying self, taking up our cross and following Jesus.

We should never become egotistical thinking we can fight against Satan or other evil forces using our finite reasoning powers. We would surely lose the battle.

It is only when we humbly trust in God through faith in Christ that we will be victorious in our fight against sin.

**The town's people** may have tried to help the man at first, then just tried to chain him and when that didn't work, just left him to wander the tombs where the demons drove him.

There was no real hope for him afterward. What a miserable existence. You could see why he wanted to hurt himself. He probably hated himself for his foolishness to get involved with spiritual wickedness. He wanted to drive the demons out of his mind, but with all his strength and will, he was powerless to drive them out.

Every day he struggled with them, he couldn't break their grip.

**Then Jesus comes to his shores.**

In Mark 5:6 - 8 it reads,

**6** Seeing Jesus from a distance, **he ran up** and bowed down before Him; **7** and shouting with a loud voice, he <sup>\*</sup>said, "**What business do we have with each other,**

**Jesus, Son of the Most High God?** I implore You by God, do not torment me!" <sup>8</sup> For He had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"

We're not told what Jesus' tone was, but I believe **it was very firm**. It was a tone that conveyed,

"Leave him alone. Stop bullying this man. His mind and body are not yours to control anymore."

Jesus knows how the demons were afflicting the man and he could see the man's struggle within, for Jesus could read his heart and had **compassion on him**.

Could it be that it wasn't the demons that ran to meet Jesus, but the afflicted man? Wouldn't the demons run the other way after having just seen Jesus' power over the physical elements?

When the man runs to Jesus, the demons bow down in respect and reverence for Jesus, the one they formerly knew as the Logos.

Perhaps the demons became very afraid when they saw Jesus stop the sudden storm **raised by Satan** with just three words, "**Peace, be still.**"

The man, a prisoner in his own body, may have sensed their fear and took the opportunity to run to Jesus for help...for deliverance from the demons.

But that's all the man could do. The demons were too powerful for him by himself.

The demons speak through the man. **They ask Jesus a question,**

"What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?"

This question says a lot. It tells us that Jesus has no connection with the devils or darkness or any evil. There is a clear distinction between their unholy conduct and Jesus' holy conduct. They also spoke a great truth that Jesus is the son of the Most High God, but this truth was not to be spoken from unclean lips as a witness of who Jesus was. In another place, Jesus earnestly warned and rebuked the unclean spirits not to tell who he was when they spoke this truth. – Mark 3:11 and 12; Luke 4:41

They're next statement,

"I implore You by God, do not torment me!"

indicates that they are subject to Jesus' authority because he is the son of God. It is through Jesus, they were created. Colossians 1:16 tells us, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, **visible and invisible...**"

Mark 5, verse 8, tells us that Jesus **had been telling the demons** to "Come out of the man" **before** they asked their question. Jesus **had already perceived** the man's deplorable and humbled condition and had compassion on him to deliver him from his tormentors.

It makes one think of the father's response to his returning son in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Jesus spoke the parable sometime after his visit to the region of the Gerasenes. The Prodigal son had **wasted** his father's inheritance on riotous living and ends up a servant feeding **swine** in a far country.

He finally came to his senses realizing that his father's servants had plenty to eat and here he's starving, glad to eat what the swine were eating.

So he travelled back to his father to tell him he had sinned and was not worthy of being his son, but would request to be one of his servants. While he was still a long way off his father spotted him returning.

His father must have been **anticipating his son's return**. His father must have looked twice, is that him? And began to run to him, **having compassion for him**, he embraced him and kissed him. This son of his who was dead... was alive!

This parable beautifully illustrates a father's compassion for his child and how a father so wants the best for his child. As weeks turned into months and then to years, his father must have been praying for his son that God would protect him and overrule his experiences the whole time he was gone. He never lost hope in his son.

**On a higher level**, this parable demonstrates the compassion of our heavenly Father.

Some of the words of a contemporary worship song based on the Parable of the Prodigal Son express our heavenly Father's compassion so well,

The day I left home I knew **I'd broken His heart**  
 And I wondered then if things could ever be the same  
 Then one night I remembered His love for me  
 And down that dusty road ahead I could see  
 It was the only time – it was **the only time I ever saw Him run**

And then He ran to me, He took me in His arms  
 Held my head to His chest, said "My son's come home again"  
 Lifted my face, wiped the tears from my eyes  
 With forgiveness in His voice He said,  
**"Son do you know I still love you?"**  
 He caught me by surprise as He brought me to my knees  
 When God ran – I saw Him run to me

I was so ashamed, all alone and so far away  
 But now I know **He's been waiting for this day**

In this encounter with the man possessed of many demons, it appears God sent Jesus to the east side of the **Sea of Galilee** for the primary purpose of restoring this man's life.

It's ironic that the demons ask Jesus not to torment them when they've been tormenting the man. Perhaps they recognized that true justice would be that they would receive some torment for the torment they inflicted on the man, when considering the justice of God's Law - [an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and a life for a life](#) – Deuteronomy 19:21.

Matthew 8:29 says the demons asked a question, "[Have you come to torment us before the time?](#)"

The demons once again reveal much with this question in that they know there is an appointed time for their judgment. In 1 Corinthians 6:3, the Apostle Paul asks the question, "[Do you not know that we will judge angels?](#)"

Jude also confirms this in Jude 6:

**6** [And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.](#) KJV

The Greek word for **torment** here has the first meaning to test metals. It will certainly be a time of distress for them if they do not turn from darkness to light, from cruelty to kindness.

Jesus asks the demons a question in verse 9.

**9** [And He was asking him, "\*\*What is your name?\*\*" And he \\*said to Him, "My name is Legion; for we are many."](#)

This question may have been asked by Jesus for the benefit of those witnessing this event because Jesus could already recognize there were many unclean spirits tormenting the man. According to Smith's Bible Dictionary, the term Legion is

[the chief subdivision of the Roman army, containing about 6000 infantry, with a contingent of cavalry. The term does not occur in the Bible in its primary sense, but appears to have been adopted in order to express any large number...](#)

Possibly the fallen angels used the term, **Legion**, to indicate they were warlike or ready for a battle. This is consistent with their agitating the man's mind and battling to take control of the man. They were clearly **bullies**, as many of them took control of the one man. The Matthew account says the demons possessed **two** men. They were so fierce that no one passed by that way – Matthew 8:28.

It's possible Mark and Luke do not mention the second man because he may not have been afflicted by the demons as long, OR he may not have turned to follow Jesus - similar to when Jesus cleansed the ten lepers and only one returned to give thanks.

The fallen angels, about 2,000 of them, called themselves Legion, as those that would **go to battle** against Jesus, **but now** cowered before him.

Perhaps there were now **twelve legions** of holy angels surrounding the man possessed of the many fallen spirits. They were no match for the **72,000** holy angels at Jesus' command, just as the wind and the waves were no match for **Jesus' faith**

Continuing in Mark 5, verse 10,

**10** And he *began* to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. **11** Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. **12** *The demons* implored Him, saying, "Send us into the swine so that we may enter them." **13** Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, **about two thousand of them**; and they were drowned in the sea.

It's an interesting fact in this account, that the demons request permission to go into the swine. It appears that they could not have gone into the swine without authorization from Jesus. Jesus let them go into the herd of swine, possibly because the swine were not to be eaten by the Israelites as part of the dietary restrictions of the Law and were a temptation to the children of Israel to break the law or possibly worse – the swine were being sold as **contraband** within the borders of Israel and **should** be destroyed.

When the legion of demons attempt to control the minds of the pigs, they panicked and stampeded down the mountain into the Sea of Galilee and were destroyed. It's possible that the demons purposely drowned the pigs knowing the Gerasene people would suffer financial loss.

In verses 14 to 16, it reads,

**14** Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country. And *the people* came to see what it was that had happened. **15** They came to Jesus and **observed the man** who had been demon-possessed **sitting down, clothed and in his right mind**, the very man who had had the "legion"; and they became **frightened**. **16** Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and *all* about the swine.

What an amazing thing they are seeing with their own eyes. Was this really the same man?

This wild and uncontrollable man who could not be chained, who terrified people passing by the tombs, was now sane and peaceful. They could see it in his eyes, in his face and demeanor. He sat calmly and respectfully, fully clothed, next to Jesus, his deliverer.

Verse 17 tells us

**17** And they began to implore Him to leave their region.

What a disappointing response. Were 2,000 pigs more valuable than the restoration of one of their citizens back to his right mind and life?

The answer to this question for the Gerasenes, was “Yes.” For the Jewish people, eating of pigs was illegal as an unclean animal under the Law, but it appears they were very profitable and a large part of the economy of that region.

Instead of being filled **with faith** and wanting to learn more about God after seeing how Jesus healed the man, the Gerasenes wanted him to leave their country.

From the account, Jesus had only been in their country for a few hours and he was being asked to leave. More than this, they **implored or urged him** to leave. Instead of being filled with faith, they were filled **with fear**.

If word got out about the pigs of their region being possessed by demons, they may have thought that nobody would buy their pigs.

They were afraid of possibly more economic loss, rather than spiritual loss. They were interested in **financial profit** and **not the prophet like unto Moses**.

**Rather than rejoicing** in the miraculous healing before their eyes, and learning the good news of God’s Kingdom, they chose economic preservation and requested to be left alone.

Jesus did not force his teachings on them but departed as requested. Verse 18 says,

**18** As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him.

The man who had the demons driven out of him by Jesus, had the **opposite reaction** from the Gerasene people. He wanted to go with Jesus wherever he was going. He may have said something like, “Oh master, please let me go with you. How can I ever thank you for restoring my mind and body to me? I could never repay you for having compassion on me and giving me my life back? So, let me be your servant for as long as I live.”

But, in verse 19, Jesus did not let him go with him, nor did he take any payment, for he “came not to be served, but **to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.**” – Matthew 20:28

Jesus did say to him,

**19** ..., "Go home to your people and report to them **what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.**"

Jesus released the man from any obligation to him. What a contrast between Christ and the demons, between truth and deception. The demons took away all the man's freedoms and enslaved his mind and body. Jesus restored all the man's freedoms.

Jesus returned the man's mind and body to him freely. He could now go home to his people as one released from prison, as one who was dead, but now is alive.

As Jesus always did, **he gave glory to God**, and told the man to give a report to his people on what great things the LORD had done for him, and how He had mercy on him.

When the man heard these wonderful words from Jesus, he must have had tears of joy. I can return home to my people and to my family. I can bless them and not be a burden to them. His attitude must have been, "Oh master, you restored my life to me and you ask no payment and no service.

You only ask me to open my lips and speak a few words? **Oh, I can do that.** I'll speak those words with all my might. I'll tell what great things the LORD has done for me and how he had mercy on me. I'll tell everyone who will listen about your compassion on me."

And that he did.

#### **Verse 20 tells us**

**20** ...he went away and began to **proclaim in Decapolis** what great things Jesus had done for him; and **everyone** was amazed. NASU

What power these words had, as he told how he was under the control of a legion of demons until this meek and godly man named Jesus stepped ashore to save him. By his authority he evicted them and they went into a herd of pigs which ran down the steep embankment and drowned in the Sea of Galilee.

For his rescue, Jesus asked **no payment**, but only to tell what great things God had done for him. This account amazed everyone in Decapolis – which means “the ten cities.” So the man didn't just go back to his own city to tell of how he got his life back, but to **all ten cities** of the region.

One reason why Jesus may not have allowed the man to follow him was that it is likely this man was a gentile, and Jesus was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. – Matthew 15:24.

But after Jesus' death on the cross, then after Pentecost, when the call to follow Jesus was opened to the gentiles, doesn't it seem to follow, that in God's providence, this man would have heard and denied himself, took up his cross and followed Jesus?

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Could the eviction of the demons from this man possibly picture God's deliverance of mankind from **the power of Satan, sin and death**?

- The man being overcome by the demons may picture the Devil's deception of Eve in convincing her to disobey God and eat of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the garden of Eden.

Adam then disobeyed by eating the forbidden fruit as well, but fully recognizing they were now going to die. This fall into sin and death could not be reversed by Adam and Eve.

- There is nothing that mankind can do in their own strength to break free from sin in their thinking or to overcome sin in their actions, just as the man could not break free from the demons.
- The human race is powerless against sin and the power of the grave. The soul that sins will die. – Ezekiel 18:4

We were and are a dying race as pictured in the **tombs where the man cried out because of his condition and the torment of the demons.**

**But**, thanks be to God, he sent his son to **our shores** –

- As Jesus left the boat on the waters of the Sea of Galilee to land on the **opposite shore** to restore the man's life back to him, Jesus left heaven to come to earth, that he would restore life back to mankind as a ransom for all. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. – 1 Corinthians 15:22
- The destruction of the pigs as they ran down the steep embankment into the water may picture the judgment of those fallen angels that do not turn from evil, **AND** the devil being fully bound. – Rev. 20:2

The man **clothed** and in his **right mind** may picture Christ's righteousness applied to the world of mankind during the Kingdom of God when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." – Isaiah 11:9 AND when God will pour out his spirit on all mankind. – Joel 2:28

- Mankind will go up the highway of holiness described in Isaiah 35:8 and 9. The unclean shall not pass over it. **No lion** or **ravenous beast** shall be there. Satan and the fallen angels will not be there to deceive. But the redeemed will walk there. Whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely. – Revelation 22:17
- The man proclaiming **in Decapolis** what **great things** God had done for him; **and everyone** being **amazed**, may represent what is described in Isaiah 35, verse 10.

Isa 35:10

**10** And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion **with songs and everlasting joy** upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. - KJV

In the resurrection, mankind shall give glory to God in the Kingdom for what great things he has done for them. Through his compassion, he sent his only begotten son to die a ransom for all, that all might choose life and live.

**In summary**, let us take **these five lessons** from the King of Kings' masterful use of words when confronted with anything, that would oppose our carrying out God's will, in our lives.

1. **First**, Let our words be few and in harmony with the Word of God.

Jesus masterfully answered the Pharisees' unanswerable question, "**Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?**" with sixteen words, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Jesus was asked the question to prove he was not the promised Messiah. Jesus' answer confirmed he was the promised Messiah, God's chosen King of Israel.

2. **Second**, Make your responses a learning experience for those that are listening, as Jesus turned his answer into a spiritual lesson for his questioners, his disciples, and all the people watching and listening.

Jesus's answer **elevated God** far above the day's wage due the earthly Roman government.

3. **Third**, Consider your tone. Is our deep underlying motive – Love? **How** we answer a question may have more of an impact than **what** we say. Our tone can make all the difference between someone listening OR just opposing us, **regardless** of how strong our Scriptural arguments may be.
4. **Fourth**, Exercise **faith** in God and his promises.

Through faith and familiarity with God's Word, our responses can be without fear and without stress. Knowing that our experiences are filtered through the wisdom of God should give us great peace in any stressful experience.

5. Finally, **be humble** – stay close to God in prayer and always give the glory to God.

Let us never think we can win the battle in our own strength. It is only when we humbly trust in God through **faith in Christ** that we will **more than overcome** in our individual **fight of faith**.

To that end, and to close, our final scripture is Romans 8:38 and 39, the great Apostle Paul's words of encouragement still reaching us down to this end of the age.

Rom 8:38-39

**38** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, **nor angels**, nor principalities, **nor powers**, nor things present, nor things to come,

**39** Nor height, **nor depth**, nor **any other creature**, shall be able to separate us from **the love of God**, which is **in Christ Jesus** our Lord.

Amen.