

## **Luke 8:26-39 – The demon-possessed man**

Here, we meet a demon-possessed man. Much is said about demon possession today. Many claims are made. But there is little true understanding. What should we really learn from such a case? Jesus and his disciples had crossed the lake, and now were in another territory. They had come to meet a man in a terrible condition – to deliver him.

### **1. The terrible condition of the lost (v26-29)**

They place they went to was outside of Israel – outside of God's chosen land. The people there were Gentiles; not worshippers of the true God; people who lived in darkness. They were cut off from the truth. And here was a man who was in a terrible situation; possessed by many demons. They controlled his body and even his words. Demon possession meant that a demon took over control of you like this – it is not just when someone is tempted by evil. We see this very little today, because Jesus greatly reduced Satan's power when he died on the cross (Colossians 2:15). No demon can ever live inside a Christian, because the Holy Spirit lives there (2 Timothy 1:14). The Bible never tells us how to drive out demons – but it tells us about preaching the gospel, through which people are saved. But, many people still live the way that pleases Satan – they do not pray for their salvation, they do not seek after salvation in Christ, they are careless about going to hear God's word; they do not repent of their sins or love Jesus. This man lived in tombs – away from other human beings. In the same way, the unsaved cannot live with God or his people. He had no peace. Nothing the people did could drive the demons away or stop them. In the same way, unsaved people are powerless and helpless to know God or please him. We are dead in sins, powerless; only Jesus can deliver us.

### **2. The great power of Christ (v28-37)**

Before Jesus, demons tremble. They had no power to stop him. They were terrified. Satan is very powerful; but a Christian does not need to fear him, because Jesus has much more power. On the cross, Jesus defeated sin; it is only because of sin that men are under Satan's power. With just a word, Jesus sent the demons away. They could not fight but only beg. Though the disciples and people had not fully realised who Jesus was, the demons knew – and trembled (James 2:19). Jesus sent them into the pigs. (We must not say that this means we cannot eat pork – Jesus said that we can, Mark 7:15-19). They destroyed the flock – perhaps a sign that Jesus had come to cleanse the land (as pigs were not clean under the Old Testament law which then applied). The people could all see the great change in the man – they could not deny it. Has this great power come into your life? Are you changed by the grace and power of Jesus? If you are not changed, then you are not yet saved, because Jesus changes people.

### **3. The wonderful change in those that Jesus saves (v34-39)**

The man was fully restored. In his right mind, he was given his life back – Jesus does this. No matter how awful; he gives you a new start and a new power to follow him. Now, he wanted to join God's people and become Jesus' disciple – do you? Jesus commands us to be baptised and join the church family. But Jesus had another work for him – to go to his own people and show them God's greatness. It was a hard work; to be the first to take the gospel into a new place; but a wonderful work. Jesus sends most of us to our own places, to shine the light for him there. But the others of the area did not want Jesus; they wanted a quiet life. How about you?