

GOOD NEWS FROM THE KING
A Study of the Gospel According to Mark
Mark 5:1–20

Holy Bible, New International Version ©2011

"Tell...how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." Mark 5:19

Pray for the Holy Spirit to open your heart to his word.

Read through this week's passage and jot down any thoughts and questions you may have.

Read Mark 5:1–20.

1. After a harrowing nighttime journey across the lake (4:35–41), Jesus and his disciples arrive on the other side—the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, “the region of the Gerasenes” (v. 1). Why is it surprising that they venture into this territory? (v. 11; Leviticus 11:7–8; Acts 10:28a)

**The Region of the Gerasenes
(JEHR-uh-seens) (v. 1)**

Gerasa was one of the ten cities of the Decapolis, which “were under the administrative control of the Roman governor of Syria and were distinguished from their surrounding environment by their Greek way of life, in culture and religion.” Other writings “suggest that their relations with Jews was one of hostility....”¹

The man with an evil spirit “is a microcosm of the whole of creation, inarticulately groaning for redemption (Rom. 8:22). He is condemned to live out his days alone amid the decaying bones of the dead, with no one who loves him and no one to love. Malignant spirits always deface humanity and destroy life.”²

2. When Jesus steps out of the boat, a man immediately runs “from a distance” (v. 6) “to meet him” (v. 2). Based on verses 3–5...
 - a. ...describe the man's physical condition.
 - b. ...describe the man's spiritual condition.
3. Think about what you were like before meeting Jesus. What parallels do you see between your condition then and the man's condition at the beginning of this week's passage?
4. Without even being asked, Jesus immediately commands the impure spirit, “Come out of this man...” (v. 8).
 - a. What does this tell you about Jesus?
 - b. How does the man react to this command? (vv. 6–7)

5. Though it is the man who is “shout[ing] at the top of his voice” (v.7), it is the impure (evil) spirits who are verbally resisting Jesus’ command.

a. What do the evil spirits recognize about Jesus? (v. 7; Mark 1:24b; 3:11)

b. What do they fear? (vv. 7–8; Mark 1:24a)

c. What do they request of Jesus? (vv. 10, 12)

6. What happens as a result of the demons’ request? (vv. 11–13)

7. 1 Peter 5:8 issues a warning: “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” What assurances does Scripture give to God’s people?
John 10:10; 1 John 3:8b

John 14:16–17

Ephesians 6:10–17; James 4:7

“It was a popular belief in the first century that evil spirits were not content to wander aimlessly about. They abhor a vacuum and want to inhabit something. A human host is best; wanting that, a bunch of pigs will do.”³
📖* Luke 11:24-26

8. The man has been healed by Jesus. Based on verses 15, 18–20...

a. ...describe the man’s physical condition.

b. ...describe the man’s spiritual condition.

9. Read Ephesians 2:1–10 and Romans 8:5–11. Describe how the healing of the demon-possessed man illustrates the spiritual healing that God brings to his people.

10. Reread Mark 4:35–41. What similarities do you see between Jesus calming the storm at sea and his healing of the demon–possessed man?

11. Word of the miraculous healing spreads and people come to see Jesus for themselves. Why are they afraid and asking him to leave? (vv. 14–17)


12. After being healed, the man “begs” (v. 18) to go with Jesus. Why do you think Jesus responds the way he does? (v. 19)

13. Obedient to Jesus, the man goes home and tells others “how much Jesus had done for him” (v. 20). How do “all the people” respond? (v. 20)

Verse 17 says, “Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.” Of this commentator R. Alan Cole writes, “The saddest thing in the whole story is that Jesus granted their request, and left them. There are times when the worst possible thing for us is that the Lord should grant our prayer (Ps. 106:15, ‘He gave what they asked’). The Gerasenes wanted only to be left alone by this frightening supernatural Jesus. It was to be their judgment that Jesus did leave them, to return no more, for there is no evidence, in Mark at least, for any later ministry by Jesus in this area.”⁴

14. Consider all that Jesus has done for you and how he has had mercy on you. With whom might God be calling you to share your story? Pray that you would have boldness to be obedient to this calling.

This lesson on Mark’s Gospel is adapted from “Life of a Servant” by New Life Glenside Women’s Bible Study, 2002–2003.

* indicates the passage is for further study.

¹ David E. Garland, *Mark*, The NIV Application Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 207, (footnote 15).

² *Ibid.*, 203.

³ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁴ R. Alan Cole, *Mark*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 162.