

Jesus Delivers from Demons

Luke 8:26-39

Last week we saw how Jesus has power over the forces of nature. This account tells us that Jesus has power and authority over the forces of evil.

The reality of Evil

First, some ground work to help us think right:

1. The existence of personal evil (satan and demonic powers), is a given in the Bible.
2. The Bible is never dualistic. There is only one God. Satan is under God's authority; the demons have to ask permission to enter the pigs; they know their end is coming.
3. The Bible never sees a 'demon under every dewdrop'. It doesn't diagnose demonic influence as the root of all our problems.
4. The Bible does not suggest demonic influence is binary: there is a spectrum of influence of evil over our lives, from temptation at one end to a state like this man's at the other end.
5. We don't understand it all. The Bible doesn't tell us everything we might want to know, but it does tell us everything we need to know.

The Destructive Power of Evil

From how evil destroys this man's life we can learn something of how it can affect ours. The man was naked – and satan continues to expose and degrade and humiliate. The man lived alone and isolated – and satan continues to turn men away from families and tempt all of us to individualism and self-centredness. The man was strong and yet a slave: satan offers us freedom or power and in the end it enslaves us. The man is reduced to a number – legion. And satan would persuade us that we don't matter, just one of billions lost in a meaningless universe. This man is a prime example of how satan mangles lives. But it was to set such people free that Jesus came.

Jesus – more powerful still

It is one against a thousand, yet with a word Jesus delivers this man. He doesn't need to call on any higher power: he is that higher power. And in all the commotion the man is restored to fullness of life. How can we know similar freedom in our lives? – By surrendering to Jesus and by understanding his love for us, and the deliverance he has purchased for us, at the cross.

What will you do with this Jesus?

As the children in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, discovered about Aslan, Jesus is anything but safe. And the townspeople are afraid and want him to leave. Gentle Jesus meek and mild is easy to accept – the unsafe Jesus who confronts evil is another matter. The man responds differently: he wants to go with Jesus, yet Jesus makes him stay. When Jesus says 'no' he does so for a reason, and this man becomes a witness to Jesus' redeeming power. The same can be true for us as we allow Jesus unhindered access to our lives.