

**“Lessons from the Miracles of Christ”:
The Two Demoniacs at Gadara**

in *The Youth’s Instructor*, Vol. L, Nos. 5, 6, 7
(Jan. 30, 1902; Feb. 6, 1902; Feb. 13, 1902)

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**Sources for Healing the Centurion’s Servant,
in the order in which they first appear**

- (1) Wm. Arnold Stevens and Ernest DeWitt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels for Historical Study: An Analytical Synopsis of the Four Gospels in the Version of 1881* (Boston: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1893)
- (2) William M. Taylor, D.D., LL.D., *The Miracles of Our Saviour, Expounded and Illustrated* (New York: A.C. Armstrong & Son, 1891)
- (3) Mrs. E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Assn., 1898)
- (4) Richard Chenevix Trench, D.D., *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord, Revised, with Additions* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1883)
- (5) Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Plain Words with the Careless” (1867)

Note: Spurgeon delivered this sermon in London on Oct. 13, 1867 and it was published in Vol. 13 of *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (1868). I have been unable to access this volume, so have used *The Treasury of Spurgeon on the Life and Work of Our Lord, Vol. IV, The Miracles of Our Lord, 2*, published by Baker Book House in 1979. This source is coded **Spurgeon1.**

- (6) Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Christ’s Curate in Decapolis” (1890)

Note: Spurgeon delivered this sermon in London on Aug. 30, 1890 and it was published in Vol. 36 of *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (1891). This source is coded **Spurgeon2.**

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the Sadlers pointedly differ from one another.
- (e) **Red** indicates an obvious mistake.
- (f) **Gold** points out words and themes that will be treated in a later discussion.

THE TWO DEMONIACS AT GADARA

INTRODUCTORY

0.1 *Preceding Events*.—The healing of the two demoniacs in the country of the Gadarenes was the next important event in the Saviour’s life immediately following the stilling of the tempest.

0.2 *Main Reference*.—Mark 5:1-20.

0.3 *Other References*.—Matt. 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39.

0.4 *Bible Story of the Miracle*.—

[*Note*: Luke and Matthew are used as much as Mark.]

XVII: A DAY OF MIRACLES BY THE SEA OF GALILEE. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 88)

§59. THE GADARENE DEMONIACS. Matt. 8:28-34. Mark 5:1-20. Luke 8:26-39.

Mark 5:[1] And they came to the other side of the sea,

Matt. 8:[28] into the country of the Gadarenes,

Luke 8:[26] which is over against Galilee.

[27] And when he was come forth

Mark 5:[2] out of the boat

Luke 8:[27] upon the land,

Mark 5:[2] straightway there met him

Matt. 8:[28] two possessed with devils [ARV. txt.: demons], coming forth out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way.

“And they came over unto the other side of the sea,

into the country of the Gadarenes,

which is over against Galilee.

And when he was come forth

out of the boat

upon the land,

straightway there met him

two possessed with demons, coming forth out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way.

SOURCE

Luke 8:[27] and for a long time he had worn no clothes, and abode not in *any* house, but

Mark 5:[3] had his dwelling in the tombs:

Mark 5:[3] and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain;

4 because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: and no man had strength to tame him.

5 And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones.

[6] And when he saw Jesus from afar, he

[Luke 8:[28] cried out,]

ran

[Luke 8:[28] and fell down before him,]

and worshipped him;

7 and crying out with a loud voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?

[Matt. 8:[29] art thou come hither to torment us before the time?]

I adjure thee by God, torment me not.

8 For he said unto him, Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man.

“ LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

And **one of them** for a long time had worn no clothes, and abode not in any house, but

had his dwelling in the tombs,

and no man could any more bind him, no, not with a chain;

because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been rent asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces, and no man had strength to tame him.

And always, night and day, in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones.

0.5 “And when he saw Jesus from afar, he

cried out,

and ran,

and fell down before him,

and worshiped him;

and crying out with a loud voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?

Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

I adjure thee by God, torment me not.

For he said unto him, Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man.

SOURCE

Luke 8:[29] For oftentimes it had seized him: and he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters; and breaking the bands asunder, he was driven of the devil [ARV. txt: demon] into the deserts.

30 And Jesus asked him, What is thy name?

Mark 5:[9] And he saith unto him, My name is Legion; for we are many.

[Luke 8:[30] for many devils [ARV. txt.: demons] were entered into him.]

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

Luke 8:31 And they intreated him that he would not command them to depart into the abyss.

Matt. 8:30 Now there was afar off from them

[Mark 5:[11] on the mountain side]

a herd of many swine feeding.

Matt. 8:31 And the devils [ARV. txt.: demons] besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine.

Mark 5:[12] that we may enter into them.

[13] And he gave them leave.

[Matt. 8:32 And he said unto them, Go.]

And the unclean spirits came out,

[Luke 8:[33] from the man]

and entered into the swine:

“LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

For oftentimes it had seized him, and he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters; and breaking the bands asunder, he was driven of the demon into the deserts.

And Jesus asked him, What is thy name?

And he saith unto him, My name is Legion; for we are many:

for many demons were entered into him.

And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country,

and rentreated him that he would not command them to depart into the abyss.

Now there was afar off from them

on the mountainside

a herd of many swine feeding.

And the demons besought him saying, If thou cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine,

that we may enter into them.

And he gave them leave.

And he said unto them, Go.

And the unclean spirits came out

from the man,

and entered into the swine.

SOURCE

Matt. 8:[32] and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep into the sea, and perished in the waters.

Luke 8:34 And when they that fed them saw what had come to pass, they fled,

Matt. 8:[33] and went away into the city, and told everything,

[Mark 5:[14] in the city, and in the country.]

and what was befallen to them that were possessed with devils [ARV. txt.: demons].

[34] And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus:

Luke 8:35 And they went out to see what had come to pass; and they came to Jesus, and found the man, from whom the devils [ARV. txt.: demons] were gone out, sitting, clothed and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus:

Mark 5:[15] *even* him that had the legion: and they were afraid.

Luke 8:36 And they that saw it told them how he that was possessed with devils [ARV. txt.: demons] was made whole.

Mark 5:[16] and concerning the swine.

Matt.8:[34] and when they saw him,

Luke 8:[37] And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes round about

Matt. 8:[34] besought *him* that he would depart from their borders.

Luke 8:[37] for they were holden with great fear; and he entered into a boat, and returned.

“LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

And behold the whole herd rushed down the steep into the sea, and perished in the waters.

And when they that fed them saw what had come to pass, they fled,

and went away, and told everything

in the city and in the country,

and what was befallen to them that were possessed with demons.

And behold all the city came out to meet Jesus,

and to see what it was that had come to pass; and they came to Jesus, and found the man, from whom the demons were gone out, sitting, **and** clothed, and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus;

even him that had the legion: and they were afraid.

0.6 “And they that saw it told them how he that was possessed with demons was made whole,

and concerning the swine.

And when they saw him,

all the people of the country of the **Gadarenes** round about

besought him **to** depart from their borders;

for they were holden with great fear; and he entered into a boat, and returned.

SOURCE

“LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

Mark 5:[18] And as he was entering into the boat,

But as he was entering into the boat,

Luke 8:[38] But the man from whom the devils [ARV. txt.: demons] were gone out prayed him that he might be with him:

the man from whom the demons were gone out, prayed him that he might be with him.

[Mark 5:[19] And he suffered him not,

And he suffered him not,

but he sent him away, saying,

but sent him away, saying

[Mark 5:[19] unto him, Go]

unto him, Go,

Luke 8:[39] Return to thy house

return to thy house

[Mark 5:[19] unto thy friends,

unto thy friends,

and declare how great things God

and declare how great things God

Mark 5:[19] the Lord hath done for thee, and *how* he had mercy on thee.

the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee.

20 And he went his way, and began to publish

And he went his way, and began to publish

[Luke 8:[39] throughout the whole city]

throughout the whole city

and

in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.”

(The foregoing is an interwoven story of the miracle, gathered from Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; and Luke 8:26-39.)

0.7 *Place.*—XV: THE HEALING OF THE
GADARENE DEMONIAK. (Taylor 212)

[contd] After commanding the storm into a calm, ... our Lord landed with his disciples on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee,

[... Capernaum is in full view, a little to the north on the opposite shore ... (T 213).]

in a locality which is called by Mark and Luke “the country of the Gadarenes,” and by Matthew that of the Gergesenes, or as the Revisers have it, Gerasenes.

Gadara was a city of some importance, about six miles southeast of the Lake of Tiberias ...; but that could not be the place of the miracle which we are now to consider, because it was too far from the lake for the herd of swine to run into it precipitately in one short sport (T 212).

[Quoting Dr. Wm. M. Thomson:] “On the south bank” (of the Wady-es-Semak) “and near the shore of the lake, is the site of a ruined town ...

and my Badawin guide told me that the name of that prostrate town was Gersa I identify these ruins with the site of Gergesa, ... In Gersa we have a position which fulfils the requirements of the narrative ...” (T 212-13).

Northeast coast of the sea of Galilee,

not a great way from Capernaum.

Given by Matthew as the country of the Gergesenes; by Mark and Luke as Gadara.

0.8 *Circumstances.*—This miracle was performed the morning after stilling the tempest on the sea of Galilee, and immediately upon reaching the shore.

Gadara was not near at hand, but lay some distance back from the coast.

At present there are certain ruins of a town near the shore,

which are thought to be those of Gadara.¹

SOURCE

[In the early morning the Saviour and His companions came to shore, and the light of the rising sun touched sea and land as with the benediction of peace (White 337).]

“LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

It was in the early morning

that these two men of the tombs met Jesus and his party as they landed. Immediately associated with the working of this miracle, is the episode of the devils entering into the herd of swine, and driving them into the sea. The loss of the swine so greatly alarmed their keepers and the inhabitants of the city near by, that they earnestly besought Jesus to depart out of their coast; this he did.

0.9 *Great Lesson*.—Very often the Lord, in delivering us from the power of evil habits and the spirit of devils, finds it necessary to destroy some of those things through which the devils work,—to deprive us of some indulgence of the flesh. We can not hope to rid ourselves of Satan and at the same time retain those things in our experience through which he always works—and through which God can never work. Our unwillingness to part with physical and moral uncleanness will mean to us what it meant to the Gadarenes,—the loss of the presence of God.

W. S. SADLER.
(*To be continued.*)

THE TWO DEMONIACS AT GADARA (Continued.)

STUDY OF THE MIRACLE

1.1 *Immediately There Met Him a Man out of the Tombs.*—

XV: THE HEALING OF THE GADARENE DEMONIAC. (Taylor 212)

Another difficulty in the narrative arises from the fact that Matthew speaks of the presence of two demoniacs, whereas Mark and Luke mention only one ... But this is hardly a contradiction, and the explanation may perhaps be, that

only one of the two came into prominence, and that therefore the other is not mentioned (T 214).

[Note: Sadler again borrows from White's description; see 0.8, above.]

Perhaps the reason that but one of the gospel records mentions the two demoniacs, is that

either before or after the healing,

only one of them acquired any special prominence.

This beautiful morning shortly after sunrise,

as the disciples of Christ landed, they saw the two men issuing from the tombs; but instead of recognizing in this occurrence an opportunity for the working of a great miracle by their Master, they became frightened. A **lesson** is to be found here for every **Christian worker**. We are often in danger of fleeing from the openings of divine Providence, regarding them as dangers, rather than recognizing their possibilities for good. The disciples seemed to forget that he who could still the sea could quiet the tempest of sin.

[?]

1.2 It was probably the need of these two men that called Christ, through storm and tempest, across the lake. What a remarkable illustration of the value that he places upon the souls held captive by sin!

V: THE DEMONIACS IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES.
(Trench 160)

The evening before the working of this remarkable miracle,

The connexion is very striking in which this miracle stands with that other which went immediately before. Our Lord has just shown Himself as the pacifier of the tumults and the discords in the outward world ... (Tr 175).

Christ had shown himself to be Lord of nature, the great Pacifier of its tumults.

On this beautiful morning,

And Christ will accomplish here a yet mightier work than that which He accomplished there; He will prove Himself here also the Prince of Peace ...

he is to show himself Master of man,

He will speak, and at his potent word this madder strife, this blinder rage which is in the heart of man, will allay itself, and here also there shall be a great calm (Tr 175).

and the Pacifier of storms of vice and passion that rage within.

1.3 *Man with an Unclean Spirit.*—

XV: THE HEALING OF THE GADARENE DEMONiac. (Taylor 212)

The healing of these demoniacs, perhaps as no other similar miracle performed by the Saviour

[A]s this is, perhaps, the most remarkable instance of demoniacal possession referred to in Scripture, it may be well, once for all, to devote some little time to the consideration of this malady (T 214).

brings up for consideration the question of demoniacal possession.

V: THE DEMONIACS IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES. (Trench 160)

Thus, no doubt, the Jews unreasonably multiplied the number of the possessed, including among cases of possession many lower forms of disharmony in the inner life (Tr 174).

Undoubtedly the Jews had come to attribute many cases of physical disease to the possession of demons;

but notwithstanding this error on their part, it can not be presumed that all cases of demoniacal possession were circumstances of mere physical derangement.

It is, of course, easy enough to cut short the whole inquiry, and to leave no question at all, by saying these demoniacs were persons whom we at this day should call insane—epileptic, maniac, melancholic (Tr 160-61).

No doubt many persons whom to-day we call epileptic, lunatic, and melancholic, would at that time have been considered possessed with a devil.

1.4 *Cutting Himself with Stones.*—

XV: THE HEALING OF THE GADARENE DEMONIAK. (Taylor 212)

These deluded and possessed men had cut themselves with stones.

Talk of men as sinking themselves to the level of the brutes! ... How many there are in this very city [*i.e.* New York]! Go through the streets and lanes, and see how in their reeling helplessness they **inflict injury on themselves**, as serious often as those here described in the phrase “cutting himself with stones” (T 225).

How often we find degraded men and women day after day **inflicting further injury on themselves**

by the use of drugs and in other ways, in the vain hope of thus relieving their condition.

The demoniacs, it would seem, still possessed sufficient reasoning power to seek to drive the demon out of themselves.

V: THE DEMONIACS IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES.
(Trench 160)

[T]hese tombs of the Jews afforded ample shelter, being either natural caves, or recesses artificially hewn out of the rock, often so large as to be supported with columns ... (Tr 177).

1.5 The tombs, or ancient burial-places, were often large excavations supported by columns,

sometimes being hewn out of a rock,

and were seldom visited.

Being without the cities, and oftentimes in remote and solitary places, they would attract those who sought to avoid all fellowship of their kind (Tr 177).

Thus they proved a suitable place for the abode of men who sought to avoid the association of their fellows.

[Source?]

1.6 *He Ran and Worshiped Him.*—These poor men, notwithstanding their terrible condition of mind and body, could see something in Jesus that even his disciples failed to recognize. They ran to him, and worshiped him. They may have been insane; but their insanity was not such as to render them unable to recognize Christ.

“PLAIN WORDS WITH THE CARELESS” (Spurgeon1 157)

They besought Christ that he torment them not.

SOURCE

The first thing to which I shall call your attention is a mischievous misapprehension: there are many foolish people who imagine that Christ comes to torment them,

and that his religion would make them miserable ... (S1 158).

Many, many think that they have nothing to do with religion, nothing to do with Christ, and they ask ... “What have *I* do do with thee Jesus, thou Son of God Most High?” (S1 158)

“LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

It is a foolish notion, entertained by many a sin-burdened soul, that Christ comes to torment;

that the life of the Christian is one of discouragement and despair;

and yet Satan has gained such control over the human mind that he is able to lead

many men and women thus to look upon the Saviour of the world.

W. S. SADLER.

THE TWO DEMONIACS AT GADARA (*Concluded.*)

V: THE DEMONIACS IN THE
COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES.
(Trench 160)

And, first, He demands of him his name,—

some say, to magnify the greatness of the deliverance and the Deliverer, by showing, through the answer, the power and malignity of the foe that should be overcome. But, more probably, the question was directed *to the man*.

2.1 *What Is Thy Name?*—

The question that Jesus asked, “What is thy name?”

may have been directed either to the demons

or *to the man* himself,

SOURCE

It could calm him, by bringing him to recollection ... that he was a person,

having once been apart from ... those spiritual wickednesses which had dominion over him (Tr 180).

But if so meant, either the evil spirit snatches at the answer and replies for himself,

or the unhappy man, instead of recurring to his true name, ... declares his sense of the utter ruin of his whole moral and spiritual being (Tr 180).

XXXV: "PEACE, BE STILL" (White 333)

Upon a mountainside not far distant a great herd of swine was feeding.

[... St. Mark, with his usual punctuality notes that they were 'about two thousand' ... (Tr 182).]

Into these the demons asked to be allowed to enter,

and Jesus suffered them. Immediately

a panic seized the herd.

They rushed madly down the cliff, and, unable to check themselves upon the shore, plunged into the lake, and perished (W 338).

"LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST"

perhaps with the intent to bring him to realize that he was an individual

with an independent will, capable of acting for himself.

However this may have been, the evil spirit seized the question, and answered it.

Again: it may have been that the question was asked to show the one possessed what a great deliverance he was about to experience.

2.2 *A Great Herd of Swine Feeding.*—

On the mountainside, not far from the scene of this restoration, a herd of swine was feeding.

(Mark, with his usual fullness of detail, gives their number as "about two thousand.")

It was this herd of swine that the demons asked Jesus' permission to enter.

When this request was granted,

panic seized the animals,

and they rushed down over the cliffs, and into the sea.

2.3 And They That Fed the Swine Fled and Told It.—

From the cliff the keepers of the swine had seen all that had occurred, and they hurried away to publish the news to their employers and to all the people.

From the cliffs near by, the keepers of the swine observed all that had occurred, and hurriedly went to publish the news.

The two demoniacs had been the terror of the country (W 338).

The demoniacs had been the terror of the country,

and their fear was upon all.

Now these men were clothed and in their right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus ... (W 338).

Now, clothed and in their right mind, they were sitting at the feet of Jesus;

but a greater fear seized these wicked people.

They had been in fear of the demons, but now they were in fear of him who had power over demons, and they besought him to depart from their coast.

2.4 “Sitting at the feet of Jesus” is what is said of the demoniac.

[*Contrast:* Not one sermon from His lips had ever fallen upon their ears (White 340).]

He heard but one sermon from the Saviour;

but this, with the wonderful work that had been wrought for him, was sufficient to make him a messenger of the gospel's glad tidings to his countrymen.

But the people “began to pray him to depart.” Let us beware how we bid Jesus leave our coasts, depart from our hearts. Let us welcome him, even when he comes as a destroyer of those things which have kept us from glorifying and honoring our Father's name.

In bidding Jesus depart from their coasts these Gadarenes were but types of thousands upon thousands who seem more anxious to escape from salvation than to receive its blessings.

2.5 Besought Him That He Might Be with Him.—

The petition of the sinful Gadarenes, that Jesus would depart out of their coasts, seemed to be answered, as was also that of the evil spirits; and yet the request of the restored demoniac was not granted. He prayed to go with his Master, perhaps because of fear of what the people would do to him, when he saw how hostile they were to the One who had cured him; or perhaps he feared that without the presence of Jesus the evil spirits would again take possession of him.² But it was possible for this poor man, although he was denied the privilege of going with Christ, to work for Jesus in his home country.

“CHRIST’S CURATE IN DECAPOLIS”
(Spurgeon² 169)

What is better than being with Christ?

Why, to be working for Christ! (S2 175)

It is good to be with Christ,

but far more blessed is our privilege of working for him.

2.6 Tell How Great Things the Lord Hath Done for Thee.—

XV: THE HEALING OF THE
GADARENE DEMONIAIC. (Taylor² 212)

In sending the demoniac to his own people, Jesus would give a lesson to every Christian.

SOURCE

Let us learn, in the third place, that in working for Christ, we should begin **at home** with those **nearest** and **dearest** to us (T 227).

Thus Andrew's first work was done with his own brother, Simon.

Philip brought his friend Nathanael to Christ, and Barnabas was not content until he had preached the gospel in his native Cyprus (T 227).

[Christ] left a representative behind him who would act the part of a **missionary** among them ... (T 224).

V: THE DEMONIACS IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES. (**Trench** 160)

He was Himself quitting those who had shown themselves so unworthy of his presence;

but He **would not leave Himself without a witness** among them (Tr 188).

"LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST"

Let us begin our work **at home**, with those **nearest**.

As Andrew first went to work with his brother Simon,

and Philip with his friend Nathanael,

let us begin with those **dearest** to us.

This liberated soul was commissioned to go home to his friends, and to them tell the story of his personal experience,—his bondage and his salvation. He wanted to go with the Master, but Jesus had a better thing in store for him than the immediate answering of his prayers.

He was to be made a **missionary**,

to go and tell his friends what great things the Lord had done for him.

While Christ himself was to leave these shores,

he **would not leave himself without a witness**.

W. S. SADLER

1. Sadler ignores the problem of Gadara's distance from the sea, as well as the fact that Gadara and Gersa are in different locations. The name 'Gersa' is similar to Kheresa, the name the Urantia Book gives to the village in which Jesus healed the demoniac. (See my parallel chart for Paper 151.)

2. Trench (Tr 187), Taylor (T 223-24), and Spurgeon (S 171) all speculate that the man feared he'd be re-possessed if he couldn't stay with Jesus.