

## A LEGION OF DEMONS

– *MARK 4:35; 5:20* – *AUGUST 11.* –

**Text: "God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be changed, and though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea."**

– **Psalm 46:1,2.**

THE FOREPART of today's study is an account of a very severe wind storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, tired from His teaching and healing, in which vitality went out of Him for the relief of the people, had gotten into one of the boats formerly used by some of His disciples in the fishing business and still owned by them. The purpose was to cross the lake for a season of rest and refreshment. The Master in the hinder part of the boat on a cushion was soon fast asleep. Suddenly a terrific storm set in which appalled even those accustomed to such scenes. The winds were blowing and the waves were tossing over the gunwales. It was an emergency; they could not bale out the water fast enough, and they wondered that the Master slept through it all. They came to Him and aroused Him saying, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" and He awakened and rebuked the wind saying, "Peace, be still." And immediately "there was a great calm."

The experience was a valuable lesson to the Apostles, showing them the wonderful power of God exerted through their Master. And the same lesson comes down to us today. There are storms of life which sometimes sweep over ourselves and the brethren and over the whole household and imperil us, and which seem sure to sink us in despair. Then is the time for us to exercise faith in Him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then is the time to remember the Master's words, "My grace is sufficient for you; My strength is made perfect in your weakness." Whoever can by the exercise of his faith take hold upon the Lord will find a great peace, a great calm come into his heart and into all of his affairs. Then he can remember the Master's promise

that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, and who have been called according to His Purpose." – Rom. 8:28.

The text at the head of this study draws to our attention another storm. It pictures the great storm of trouble which in the close of this Age will suddenly burst upon the whole world of mankind and in which "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots," "like a great millstone will be cast into the midst of the sea." This same "time of trouble," in some Scriptures, is spoken of as a "whirlwind," the result of letting loose "the four winds of heaven," that will be held until that time. – Rev. 17:5; 18:21; Jer. 25:32; Rev. 7:1.

Again, this trouble is symbolized by a "fire" which will burn not only the earth (symbolical of organized society), but also the heavens (symbolical of ecclesiasticism). This symbolical fire, this great anarchistic blaze, will leave present institutions in "ashes." Upon the ruins, the ashes, of the blasted hopes and ambitions of society, political, scientific and religious, will arise the glorious Kingdom of Messiah to bless the world; and it will be as prophesied: "The desire of all nations shall come." It is really what all nations desire, although they do not realize how their desires are to be accomplished by Divine interposition **[R5059 : page 216]** through Messiah's Kingdom.

Our text pictures that coming "time of trouble" as a great "storm," which will entirely remove, or change the earth, or the present construction of society, and carry the "mountains," the kingdoms of this present time, into the sea of anarchy. God's people will to some extent be associated with all of these troubles; but they are not to fear, they are to realize that God is at the helm. "When all around their souls give way, He then will be their Hope and Stay." Although sharing with others in the great disaster, the troubles will not invade their hearts. With them will dwell faith in God and in the glorious promises of His Word, and they will be kept in peace thereby.

**"JESUS GAVE THEM LEAVE"**

In the heading we have connected this study with the demons, because the Scriptures intimate that the demons will have considerable to do with stirring up the great "time of trouble" and discontent with which this Age will close and Messiah's Kingdom be established.

On the other side of the Lake, as they landed, a man came running toward them, having seen them afar off. He was obsessed – that is to say, demons, the fallen angels mentioned by St. Jude (Jude 6) and St. Peter (2 Pet. 2:4) had gained access, and were in control of him. It was these that recognized Jesus and that spoke through the man's lips, saying, "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure Thee by God that Thou torment me not." This was the answer to the command of Jesus that the fallen spirits should come out of the man. It transpired that not merely one demon had gained access, but many of them, a legion.

The demons realized that they were subject to the commands of Jesus and requested that they be allowed to enter into the swine – to obsess them. The Bible's explanation of how some angels fell from their original perfection and harmony with God, and of why they seek to gain control of humanity and commune with them through mediums, and why they personate the dead, we have not the space to present in this study; but as there are many today more or less under the influence of demonism – spiritism – we will send further information upon postcard request.

Jesus gave the demons the privilege they requested, of passing from the man into the swine, of which there were about 2,000. The swine, like the man, were crazed by the strange outside influence which took possession of their brains. They ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. Meantime, the man, released from his obsession, was again in his right mind, and praised God for his deliverance. He desired to go with Jesus to become one of his disciples. He wanted to preach to others of the great deliverance which he had experienced and to tell them of this further proof that Jesus was the

Messiah. But this was not in harmony with the Lord's judgment of the Father's will, and He refused his company, instructing him to go unto his own house and to tell his friends what great things the Lord had done for him.

He did so, and the people from all the region around who had known him as a crazy and obsessed man, marveled at his recovery and took note of the fact that Jesus had healed him. Those familiar with such matters claim that probably one-half of all the inmates of our insane asylums are persons obsessed by evil spirits, demons, without any organic disease of the brain. And alas! we see evidences on every hand that these evil spirits are paving the way for a great onslaught upon humanity.

Under the title of Psychic Phenomena spiritism is being examined by some of the prominent college professors of our day. They, like other spiritists, are deceived in [R5059 : page 217] supposing that the manifestations which come to them are from their dead human friends. The Bible alone makes the matter perfectly clear. It assures us that the dead have no power to thus communicate, and that all such communications come from the demons, who do not dare to tell who they are, for if they did, humanity would be on guard against them; and they, desiring to come closely in contact with humanity, personate and represent variously the dead.

Hypnotism, mesmerism, clairaudient power and clairvoyant power are all part and parcel of the same great deception.

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