

25-0316p Transcript

25-0316p - *The Storm Within, Part 2, Jim Lokenbauer*

Bible Reader: John Nousek

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The Storm Within, Part 2

Transcript (0:03 - 33:18)

Scripture Reading

Bible Reader: John Nousek

Isaiah 26:3-4

(0:03) Good evening. This evening's reading from God's Word comes to us from Isaiah 2[6], verses 3 and 4, which reads,

(0:19) The steadfast of mind you will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord we have an everlasting rock. Amen. (0:36)

Transcript

Preacher: Jim Lokenbauer

(0:41) Well, good evening, everyone. (0:43) Good evening.

(0:44) Back for part two. (0:47) Okay, this morning's lesson, we have the storm without. In other words, the storm raging outside of our control that we go through.

(0:59) And this morning's lesson took place on the Sea of Galilee, and it demonstrated how Jesus was able to calm a sea that calmed many souls. (1:11) In his disciples' eyes, they were in danger of losing their lives because of the abnormally violent wind and waves that caused their boats to fill up with water. (1:23) In a fearful state of hysterics, they woke their sleeping master, who was on the back of the boat, asleep.

(1:33) And they accused him of not caring for their lives. (1:40) Jesus rebuked the wind and calmed the sea, and there was instant peace. (1:47) Jesus then chastened his disciples for giving in to fear, which was evidence of their weak faith.

(1:58) After this event, the disciples were in awe of him because of this great miracle of calming a raging sea. (2:07) It was demonstrated to the disciples that even when things outside of our control

create trouble in our lives, (2:15) we need to faithfully and patiently appeal to our God for help. (2:22) And now we're going to look at how Jesus can calm the storm within us.

(2:28) I'm using these stories to illustrate that Jesus can solve all of our life's problems, no matter what form of trouble they may appear as. (2:40) As I did this morning, I've combined the three Gospel writers' versions of this story that we're going to be going over. (2:49) And it's what happens when Jesus and his disciples land on the other side of the sea.

(2:58) And by combining, we're going to get a larger picture of what's going on. (3:04) So this evening's text will be from Matthew 8, Mark 5, and Luke 8. (3:10) And each of these writers add unique aspects to the story. (3:16) For example, Matthew is the only one of the Gospel writers who mentions that there are two men possessed by demons.

(3:26) All the others only wrote about one. (3:29) And so you would think that there was some kind of discrepancy in their stories. (3:36) But the other guys who only wrote about the one didn't say there was only one.

(3:43) It happens that there was a spokesman. (3:50) Demons and angels all have rank. (3:53) And there's a chief demon within legion, and he did all the speaking on behalf of them all.

(4:06) So there was no discrepancy at all. (4:09) So the chief of these demons who possessed these men was their spokesman, who talked with Jesus, (4:15) even though at times they were all shouting and screaming and pleading with the Son of God. (4:23) We're going to see that legion wasn't an individual demon's name, (4:31) but it was a collective name for all of them, for they were many.

(4:43) A Roman legion was the largest division of soldiers in the Roman army. (4:50) There could be as many as 5,000 soldiers, quite often 3,000 soldiers on foot and 3,000 soldiers on horse. (5:00) Actually, there could be up to 6,000, but quite often the number was 5,000 in the Roman legion unit.

(5:09) So if the chief demon referred to their number as a standard military unit, (5:15) those unfortunate humans, they had no chance of becoming healed except without the Savior's help. (5:27) Only the Savior could take care of their state they were in. (5:32) This event is what happened right after this morning's lesson of the storm.

(5:38) And here's the combined story, so I'll read that. (5:41) If you try to read along, it's not going to sound the same, because I cut and pasted it all together. (5:48) Sit back and enjoy.

(5:51) When Jesus arrived at the other side in the region of the Gerardines, (5:56) two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. (6:02) These men lived in the tombs and no one could bind them anymore, (6:09) not even with a chain, for they had often been chained hand and foot, (6:15) but they tore the chains apart and broke the irons on their feet and the fetters broken in pieces. (6:23) Nobody had the strength to tame them.

(6:27) Night and day among the tombs and in the hills and in the mountains, (6:31) they would cry out and cut themselves with stones. (6:37) They were so violent that no one could pass that way. (6:42) For a long time they had worn no clothes and they did not live in a house, but in the tombs.

(6:49) When they saw Jesus from afar, they ran and bowed down to him. (6:54) They shouted at the top of their voice, (6:56) What do you want with us, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? (7:02) We

adjure you, swear to God that you won't torture us before the appointed time. (7:11) Jesus then asked him, What is your name? (7:14) He said, My name is Legion, for we are many.

(7:19) For many demons had entered him. (7:20) They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss. (7:27) Now there was at a distance from them a herd of many swine feeding, (7:32) and the demons began to entreat him, saying, (7:36) If you are going to cast us out, send us into the herd of swine.

(7:40) At once Jesus gave them permission, and he said to them, (7:44) Be gone, come out of the men, you unclean spirits. (7:47) And they came out and went into the swine. (7:50) Behold, a herd of about two thousand rushed down the steep bank into the sea, (7:57) and they were drowned in the water.

(8:01) Those who fed them fled, and told it in the city and in the country. (8:06) The people came to see what it was that had happened. (8:09) They came to Jesus and saw those who had been possessed by demons (8:15) sitting clothed and in their right mind, (8:19) even him who had the Legion, and they were afraid.

(8:23) Those who saw it described to them what had happened (8:27) to those who were possessed by demons and about the pigs. (8:31) They began to beg Jesus to depart from their region, (8:35) for they were seized with great fear. (8:40) As Jesus was entering the boat, (8:43) he who had been possessed by Legion begged him that he might be with him.

(8:49) Jesus didn't allow him, but said to him, (8:51) Go to your house, to your friends, (8:54) and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, (8:57) and how he had mercy on you. (9:01) He went his way and began to proclaim in Decapolis (9:05) how Jesus had done great things for him, (9:08) and everyone marveled. (9:12) So let's break this story down.

(9:14) We'll take it chunk by chunk. (9:17) First, when Jesus arrived on the other side of the region of the Gadarenes, (9:23) two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. (9:29) Gadara is the closest city in the Gerasenes country area of the Decapolis, (9:36) and both of these areas are mentioned in these gospel accounts.

(9:41) This is the modern-day Golan Heights that I mentioned this morning, (9:46) which is on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. (9:51) Matthew mentions that the two demon-possessed men came and met him. (9:58) There was something about Jesus that they recognized him (10:02) as the son of the Most High God, (10:05) and this was no chance meeting on Jesus' part.

(10:10) Jesus is omniscient and one-third of the Godhead (10:17) and is aware of all demon-possessed people. (10:23) Demons cannot just willy-nilly enter into any living creature (10:28) without God's express permission. (10:31) Jesus was there to free these men from their spiritual bondage.

(10:37) They came from the tombs because they actually haunted these tombs. (10:42) That's where they lived. (10:44) That's where the demons chose to be among the dead.

(10:50) Continuing on, (10:52) these men lived in the tombs and no one could find them anymore, (10:57) not even with a chain, for they had often been chained hand and foot, (11:02) but they tore the chains apart and broke the irons on their feet (11:05) and the fetters broken in pieces. (11:09) Nobody had the strength to tame them. (11:12) Night and day among the tombs and in the hills and

in the mountains, (11:16) they would cry out and cut themselves with stones.

(11:21) They were so violent that no one could pass that way. (11:26) For a long time they had worn no clothes (11:28) and they did not live in a house but in the tombs. (11:37) This shows the utter cruelty of these demons.

(11:44) They would make these men injure themselves with stones (11:50) and they would just scream out like the banshee of lore. (11:57) They no longer wore any clothing, shameful before all who passed by. (12:03) Like angels, these demons had supernatural power.

(12:08) They could have just willed those chains and fetters to fall off, (12:14) but instead they chose to make these men yank and pull (12:21) and then with the demon's strength break those fetters. (12:31) You can imagine what that did to their skin and their bones. (12:38) We see heavenly angels helping the apostles often.

(12:41) In the book of Acts chapter 5, when the apostles were arrested, (12:47) an angel from God willed open the locked gate to their prison cell (12:53) and set them free to go back and preach in the temple. (12:57) Also in Acts 12, when Peter was arrested and put in prison, (13:02) he was chained hand and foot and put in between two guards. (13:07) At nighttime, an angel from the Lord came to Peter (13:11) and he made Peter's shackles just fall off on their own.

(13:15) And then as he was walking, taking Peter out of the prison, (13:20) the angel made the locked gates open on their own. (13:25) But these cruel demons supplied the possessed men with the strength (13:29) to physically break those shackles. (13:34) So you could imagine how bloody and raw the wounds were from doing that.

(13:43) They must have looked a mess. (13:45) They had to struggle and tear at those chains, flesh versus iron. (13:51) Even though the iron shackles were broken, (13:53) it was probably done with great damage to these men.

(13:59) These men were so violent to other people (14:03) and the people of that region knew of the great danger of passing by that way. (14:11) One evil spirit in a man can wreak havoc on people, (14:17) such as what happened in the book of Acts, chapter 19, verses 11 through 16. (14:24) God worked special miracles by the hand of Paul, (14:29) so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, (14:36) and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out.

(14:41) But some of the itinerant Jews, traveling Jews, (14:45) they were exorcists and took on themselves to invoke over those who had evil spirits (14:52) the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, (14:55) We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches. (15:00) You can imagine what happened. (15:04) There were seven sons of Sheba, a Jewish high priest, who did this.

(15:11) The evil spirit answered, (15:13) Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you? (15:19) The man in whom the evil spirit was leapt on them, overpowered them, (15:25) remember, eight guys, and prevailed against them, (15:29) so they fled out of that house naked and bleeding. (15:36) So could you imagine the danger that men with a legion of demons would have been like? (15:47) How utterly violent and repulsive they must have been. (15:54) Let's look at the next section.

(15:57) When they saw Jesus from afar, they ran and bowed down to him. (16:01) They shouted at the top of their voice, (16:04) What do you want with us, Jesus, Son of God, the Most High? (16:08)

We adjure you, swear to God that you won't torture us before the appointed time. (16:16) Jesus then asked him, What is your name? (16:18) He said, My name is Legion, for we are many.

(16:22) For many demons had entered him. (16:24) They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss. (16:31) James tells us that demons believe and tremble.

(16:37) And here is an example of that. (16:41) Somehow they recognize Jesus, the Son of God. (16:44) How? We can only speculate.

(16:46) But they bowed down to him. (16:50) And the Greek word for bow is proskuno. (16:56) Literally, or figuratively, to prostrate oneself in homage, due reverence to, adore, worship.

(17:09) Can you imagine? (17:11) Many of the Jews of Jesus' day wouldn't even acknowledge that he was a prophet, (17:16) let alone Messiah, who is God in the flesh. (17:21) And here thousands of demons worshipped him. (17:27) They bowed before the King of the Universe.

(17:33) As the disciples were in a state of panic on the turbulent sea just moments ago, (17:38) so are these demons in a state of panic in the presence of Jesus Christ. (17:47) They know that Jesus is the very one that they themselves witnessed create the world and the universe (17:56) by the power of his word in the beginning. (18:01) And they know also he has the power to judge and condemn.

(18:07) They know what their end will be in hell, for they feared the bottomless pit, the abyss. (18:18) In this section of hell, the Greeks call it Tartarus, and it's where the demons have a reservation. (18:29) That's where they will be.

(18:32) Though the leader of this demon horde was afraid of Christ, showing his true nature, his malice and arrogance, (18:40) he adjured Christ. (18:43) He was trying to get him to swear an oath to God that he would not torture them before their time. (18:53) I don't think this demon was in a position to order Jesus to do anything.

(19:02) Yahweh Christ, Jesus Christ, should be feared. (19:09) In Jeremiah 5.22, God asks, (19:12) Do you not fear me? declares Yahweh. (19:16) Do you not tremble in my presence? (19:19) In a similar way, Jesus says in Luke 12, 4 and 5, (19:25) And I say to you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who can kill the body, (19:30) and after that have no more than they can do.

(19:33) But I will warn you whom to fear. (19:36) Fear the one who, after he has killed, has authority to cast you into hell. (19:43) Yes, I tell you, fear him.

(19:47) He was basically saying, fear me. (19:55) That's exactly what these demons were doing. (19:59) They knew Jesus.

(20:03) Whether Jesus kept the same look through all the ages, we don't know. (20:11) We can only surmise. (20:12) But they recognized him.

(20:15) Perhaps they recognized that the fullness of the Godhead was in him. (20:19) Maybe they could see things, spiritually, that us humans cannot see. (20:26) They recognized him.

(20:28) And they feared him. (20:34) Our next text says, (20:36) Now there was at a distance from them a herd of many swine feeding. (20:41) And the demons began to entreat him, saying, (20:46) If you are going to cast us out, send us into the herd of swine.

(20:50) At once Jesus gave them permission, and he said to them, (20:55) Be gone, come out of the men, you unclean spirits. (20:58) And they came out and went into the swine. (21:01) And behold, the herd of about two thousand rushed down the steep bank into the sea, (21:09) and they were drowned in the water.

(21:12) To entreat is to plea earnestly with, or to pray, or to petition. (21:21) Non-believers use this passage as an example that Jesus sinned, (21:28) by being responsible for destroying the swine herders' private property, (21:34) by sending the demons into the pigs who made them jump off a cliff and drown in the Sea of Galilee. (21:41) But if you carefully examine the text, (21:44) Jesus did not send them into the pigs, (21:51) as if by his power he caused the pigs' death.

(21:54) That was just how legend requested it. (21:58) Send us! (22:00) Jesus granted them permission to do so. (22:04) Even though they had permission, the choice was still with the demons, (22:09) whether to enter the pigs or not.

(22:11) God gives intelligent beings a free will, the freedom to choose. (22:19) And they did. (22:20) And they entered.

(22:21) The unclean demons entered the unclean swine. (22:26) How fitting. (22:27) That just popped in my head.

(22:29) Very fitting. (22:30) Maybe that's why Jesus did it, and said, (22:33) you unclean spirits, go into the pigs. (22:43) And as soon as those demons hit those pigs and possessed them, (22:47) they ran headlong to their death.

(22:52) Secondly, God says in Psalm 50, 10 and 11, (22:57) For every beast of the forest is mine, (23:01) the cattle on a thousand hills. (23:03) I know every bird of the mountains, (23:05) and everything that moves in the field is mine. (23:12) This takes away the skeptic's argument.

(23:14) Who gave Jesus authority to say that this could happen to another person's property? (23:20) Jesus is the Son of God and is the creator of all life. (23:27) And guess what? (23:28) Everything belongs to Him. (23:33) Jesus was not guilty of sin.

(23:36) Let's read on. (23:38) Those who fed them fled and told in the city and in the country. (23:43) The people came to see what it was that had happened.

(23:46) They came to Jesus and saw those who had been possessed by demons (23:50) sitting, clothed, and in their right mind. (23:54) Even him who had the legion. (23:56) And they were afraid.

(23:58) Those who saw it declared to them what had happened to those who were possessed by demons (24:03) and about the pigs. (24:05) Then they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region, (24:11) for they were seized with great fear. (24:16) When people witness an amazing event, news spreads quickly.

(24:21) Think of all those shepherds in the field who saw one night a bunch of angels from heaven (24:27) announcing the birth of the Messiah. (24:32) What did they do? (24:33) Did they keep it to themselves? (24:36) No. (24:36) They ran, verified what the angels said would be the coming Savior, (24:43) and then they told everybody about it.

(24:46) Likewise, the Samaritan woman, when she had met the Messiah, (24:52) the only person that

Jesus said, I am he, revealing that he was the Christ, (24:59) she went and told everybody, come see the man who told me everything I have ever done. (25:07) And a crowd came and stayed with them a couple of days. (25:11) No different with the swine herders.

(25:14) They told everyone in the city and in the surrounding country, (25:18) and a crowd came to see Jesus for themselves. (25:24) They heard what happened and saw the men restored fully, (25:30) dressed and in their right mind, (25:33) and that caused them great fear. (25:40) Rather than be happy for the men and welcome and believe in Jesus, (25:45) they begged him to leave.

(25:48) Jesus obliged them. (25:50) Let's read on and finish this story. (25:53) As Jesus was entering into the boat, (25:56) he who had been possessed by a legion begged him that he might be with him.

(26:01) Jesus didn't allow him but said to him, (26:03) go to your house, to your friends, (26:06) and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you (26:09) and how he had mercy on you. (26:13) He went his way and began to proclaim in the Decapolis (26:16) how Jesus had done great things for him, (26:19) and everyone marveled. (26:23) Only one of the former demoniacs wanted to go with Jesus, (26:28) and that was the man who had legion, the legion in him.

(26:32) We don't know how many demons were in the other guy, (26:35) but I would imagine there were plenty enough. (26:41) But Jesus wouldn't permit him. (26:46) I could understand if it was out of fear (26:49) that this man wanted to go with Jesus, (26:52) fearing that maybe the demons might come back, (26:56) and that if he was with Jesus, he would be safe.

(26:59) The very one who healed him showed authority over them, (27:05) or perhaps it was out of deep gratitude (27:07) that he wanted to be with him and serve him. (27:12) I'd like to think maybe it was a combination of both. (27:16) Whatever his reason was, it wasn't in Jesus' plans.

(27:20) Our Lord is about restoring people and relationships (27:24) and spreading the gospel. (27:26) He told this man to go back to his home and to his friends (27:31) and to share the good news that happened in his life (27:36) and how merciful Jesus was to him. (27:40) This man was more than happy to do just that (27:43) because he immediately started telling everybody he saw (27:48) in the Decapolis what happened to him, (27:53) giving Jesus glory.

(27:56) He didn't have to know everything about the Bible (27:58) to share the event that he went through. (28:03) That was enough to get people to believe in Jesus. (28:08) Start with what you know.

(28:11) He had quite a story to tell. (28:15) He could tell them that he was in the absolute worst condition (28:19) a human could ever be in, (28:23) and Jesus, the Son of God, had mercy on him and healed him. (28:28) I don't know why demons seem to have a need to inhabit humans.

(28:36) When Jesus was confronted by the Pharisees one time, (28:41) he called out their stiff-necked unbelief and wickedness. (28:46) They told him that they wanted to see a sign, (28:48) and Jesus told them the only sign he would give them (28:51) was the sign of Jonah. (28:54) And after healing a man in front of them of demon possession, (28:59) they charged Jesus with casting out demons (29:03) by the power of Beelzebub.

(29:06) They blasphemed the Holy Spirit. (29:10) They blasphemed God the Father and Jesus his Son. (29:18) Jesus told them a story of demon possession (29:20) to illustrate their wicked condition.

(29:26) In Matthew 12, 43-45, Jesus said, (29:29) Now, when an unclean spirit goes out of a man, (29:34) it passes through waterless places, seeking rest, (29:37) and does not find it. (29:39) Then it says, I will return to my house from which I came. (29:43) And when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order.

(29:48) Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits, (29:52) more wicked than itself. (29:56) And they go in and live there. (29:58) And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.

(30:03) That is the way it will also be with this evil generation. (30:10) And he was talking about those unbelieving, wicked Pharisees. (30:16) And who were the Pharisees? (30:17) They were the religious leaders of that time.

(30:22) If you've come to believe in Jesus as your Savior, (30:26) and have had your house swept clean, (30:30) but you've gone back to the way you were living, (30:34) you are in danger of becoming worse off than you were before knowing Christ. (30:41) You will become repulsive to God. (30:44) And as the wise man said, (30:47) A dog returns to its vomit, (30:49) and pigs go back to their wallowing in the mud.

(30:55) These two stories today illustrate two of the worst situations we can find ourselves in. (31:03) We get bombarded by situations outside of our control that can affect us negatively, (31:10) which is the storm without. (31:12) And we can be in a sinful and wretched state inside the storm within.

(31:17) And we've seen that belief and trust in Jesus is the key to deliverance and healing, (31:25) and keeping ourselves clean. (31:29) Believe it or not, we can actually learn something from our enemy, Legion, tonight. (31:37) Here is what the demons know and acknowledge about our Savior, Jesus.

(31:43) One, Jesus is deity. (31:46) Two, He should be worshipped. (31:50) Three, Jesus is the Son of God.

(31:55) Four, Jesus has the authority to punish. (32:01) Five, God has set an unknown time for Judgment Day. (32:07) Six, Jesus has the authority to grant or deny permission for demons to request.

(32:14) To live inside of a person, be it a human or an animal. (32:21) They had to ask. (32:25) Seven, Jesus has the authority to send demons immediately back into the abyss in hell.

(32:33) And eight, Jesus will judge the living and the dead. (32:39) Those demons screamed out publicly what they knew about Jesus Christ. (32:45) When was the last time that you publicly professed Jesus as the Son of God? (32:54) Don't let the enemies of God out-evangelize you.

(33:00) Share the Gospel. (33:02) The man who was healed from being possessed by Legion, (33:06) preached only what he knew that what Christ had done for him, (33:10) and that is enough to glorify God and share with others. (33:14) We offer the invitation.

(33:16) If you need, come forward. (33:18)