

From Torment to Freedom

Matthew 8:28-34

Sunday 5/24/2026

The purpose of the Gospel of Matthew is to reveal that Jesus is the Messiah.

His main audience is the Jewish people.

### **Main Takeaway**

It's impossible to have an encounter with Jesus and remain unchanged.

### **Introduction**

Jesus is continuing his ministry of healing by going to the Greko-Roman influenced region of Gadarenes.

This particular province was located in the same general region as the Decapolis.

Decapolis referring to a set of 10 cities within the region.

This is an important fact to note because it establishes that Jesus's authority extends beyond the borders of Israel.

The people of this region were morally corrupt and spiritually bankrupt.

This region would have been very similar to the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Pagan worship

Polytheism

Sexual immorality

Fortunately for the inhabitants of the Decapolis Jesus was not there to destroy this time but to save.

How do we know this: [John 3:16-18](#).

“For God **loved** the world in this way: He gave His “One and Only” Son, so that **everyone** who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through Him. **Anyone** who believes in Him is not condemned. But anyone who does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God.”

Jesus was going to do for the world what Abraham couldn't do for two cities: Save them.

**What we have seen so far:**

1. Up to this point we have seen examples of Jesus's mastery over the body. Ex: The man with the skin disease, and the Centurions servant, and Peters mother-in-law.
2. We have seen his mastery over the elements of nature. Ex: Calming the storm.

**What is coming next:**

Now we will read about Jesus's mastery over spiritual things.

We are going to pick up where we left off two weeks ago after Jesus calmed the storm that was raging on the Sea of Galilee.

## Our Text:

Verse 28: The two men

“When He had come to the other side, to the region of the Gardarenes, two demon possessed men met Him as they came out of the tombs. They were so violent that no one could pass that way.”

Matthew doesn't give us a great description of these two men in his gospel.

What he does tell us is this:

1. They lived in a tomb (cave)
2. They were violent and hostile towards anyone who came near them.

To have a full appreciation for the state of these men, we need to go to the gospels of Mark and Luke.

**Mark 5:2-5** Adds some details to the situation.

1. They were stronger than any man
2. Unable to be subdued
3. Prior attempts to restrain them with chains had failed
4. They spent their days and nights crying out and cutting themselves with rocks.

**Luke 8:27** adds only two details.

1. They were originally from the nearby town.
2. They were naked

Why is this important?

They were local to the region.

People tried to help them (most likely with pagan rituals) and failed.

They have been like this for a period of time.

This was not a sudden issue. It was an ongoing one.

This helps to add credibility to the miraculous healing that was about to happen.

## Verse 29

“Suddenly they shouted, “What do You have to do with us, **Son of God?** Have You come here to torment us before the time?””

Mark 5:6 tells us that the men ran up and knelt before Jesus

Take a minute to really appreciate what just happened here.

Two demon possessed men, with a history of violence and hostility towards everyone they met, just bowed down to Jesus and begged him not to banish them to the abyss.

**They** knew who was standing before them and the power and authority he held.

We see this echoed in Luke 4:41  
(Explaining Jesus healing in Capernaum)

“Aso demons were coming out of man, shouting and saying, “You are the Son of God!”

Who were the “**they**”

Luke 8:30 answers that question for us.

““What is your name?” Jesus asked him. “Legion,” he said – because many demons had entered him.”

We don’t know the exact number of demons but we can certainly see that these men were possessed by an overwhelming force.

Verse 30 - 32

“Now a long way off from them, a large herd of pigs was feeding. “If you drive us out,” the demons begged him, “send us into the herd of pigs.” “Go!” he told them. So when they had come out, they entered the pigs. And suddenly the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water.”

The first question I ask after reading this is how big was the heard of pigs?

If we read Mark 5:13 we see that the heard of pigs numbered about 2,000.

All 2,000 pigs rushed into the sea and drown.

I can only imagine the sound the heard made when the demons entered into them.

The demons’ characteristics didn’t change with their change of address.

They are still hostile, violent, crying out, and harming their host.

Its no surprise at the reaction of the people who witness this event take place.

Verse 33-34

“Then the men who tended them fled. They went into the city and reported everything – especially what had happened to those who were demon – possessed. At that, the whole town went out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged Him to leave their region.”

Why did they want him to leave?

They were afraid

1. Jesus set free two men that were plagued with demons
2. He caused the pigs to act like the two men until they drowned
3. A large portion of food and profit was lost with the loss of the heard.

The gospels of Mark and Luke both record two very important events at the end of their telling of this story.

1. Jesus left.

Willingly and without argument.

2. The men healed begged to go with him.  
Jesus said no to him and gave him some instructions.  
Go back to your home and tell everyone what the Lord has done.

## **Main Takeaway**

It's impossible to have an encounter with Jesus and remain unchanged.

How were they changed?

1. The two men were healed and set free
2. The apostles present had a deeper understanding of who Jesus is.
3. The demons received a change in attitude in his presence
4. The townspeople received peace from the healing of the men.

## **Practical Application**

1. Are we still excited about telling people about what God is doing in our lives?
2. Are we out there telling people about being set free from our sin much like the two men were set free from their possession?
3. Are we experiencing God daily searching for a deeper understanding of who God is?
4. When you're in the presence of God does our attitude reflect it?
5. Are we at peace with our situation knowing that God is in control?

If you answered no to any of these questions I would encourage you to

1. Go home
2. Get on your knees and talk to your Father in Heaven
3. Open up his word and study it like it's the Word of God that it is.
4. Go tell people all about it