CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
MAY 17 2025

Scripture Story: Mark 1:21-28.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 26.

restored at church



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flashlight

"The mind of this wretched sufferer had been darkened by Satan, but in the Saviour's presence a ray of light had pierced the gloom. He was roused to long for freedom from Satan's control; but the demon resisted the power of Christ. When the man tried to appeal to Jesus for help, the evil spirit put words into his mouth, and he cried out in an agony of fear. The demoniac partially comprehended that he was in the presence of One who could set him free; but when he tried to come within reach of that mighty hand, another's will held him, another's words found utterance through him. The conflict between the power of Satan and his own desire for freedom was terrible" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 255).

key text

"The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, 'What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.'"

(Mark 1:27, NIV)

what do you think?

Look up the following passages:

Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:26; Leviticus 19:31; Leviticus 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 1 Samuel 28:3; Isaiah 8:19. All of these texts speak against spiritualism in some form. Why do you think that the warning prohibiting involvement in these things was given over and over?

Read Leviticus 19:31. Why does God say, "I am the LORD your God"?

____ He can supply all our needs.
____ He knows the suffering of a life controlled by demons.
____ Because He is a good God, He alone must have control of our minds.
____ All of the above.

did you know?

Among the most successful agencies of the great deceiver are the delusive teachings and lying wonders of spiritualism. Disguised as an angel of light, he spreads his nets where least suspected. If men would but study the Book of God with earnest prayer that they might understand it, they would not be left in darkness to receive false doctrines" (Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 524).

INTO THE STORY

"They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, 'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!'

" 'Be quiet!' said Jesus sternly. 'Come out of him!' The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

"The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, 'What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.' News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee."

(Mark 1:21-28, NIV)



OUT OF THE STORY

Read Mark 1:21-28; answer the following questions:

1:21 What was the main thing that Jesus was trying to teach His disciples?

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1:22 Why were people so amazed at Jesus' teaching?

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1:23 How do you picture this man possessed by an impure spirit?

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1:24 What strikes you about the demoniac's reaction to Jesus?

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Read again Mark 1:25. Compare that to some other times Jesus spoke with authority over something. What was he rebuking in Mark 4:39? Luke 7:14, 15? What does this tell you about the power of Jesus' word?

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1:26 What do you learn about this spirit?

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1:27 What surprised the people?

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1:28 Was the news that spread about Jesus good news or bad news? Explain.

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punch lines

"Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God" **(Leviticus 19:31, NIV).**

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" **(Ephesians 6:13-18, NIV).**

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" **(James 4:7, NIV).**

"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings" **(1 Peter 5:8, 9, NIV).**

further insight

"When once the restraints of God's word and His Spirit are rejected, no man knows to what depths of degradation he may sink."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 258

"The means by which we can overcome the wicked one is that by which Christ overcame,—the power of the word."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 258

Sabbath

Read Ephesians 6:13-18.

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. . . . [Satan] led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity. . . . This world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation" (The Great Controversy, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 8).

Sunday

Read Mark 1:27.

Read the *Key Text* noting the emphasis in the story on the "authority" of Jesus. Jewish teachers often cited well-respected rabbis in order to give credibility to their teaching. In Jesus' case He did not need to quote some hotshot rabbi. He was and is God. Therefore, His authority eclipses that of any rabbis before Him. Understanding this essential claim of Jesus sheds light on this story and helps us understand why the Pharisees were so exercised about this issue of Jesus' authority.

In what ways do you acknowledge Jesus' authority in your life?

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Monday

Read John 14:11-13.

Reflect on the following: Do we have access to the same power that Jesus manifested with the demoniac? If so, why are so many prayers seemingly not answered? Is there anything we can do to lay claim to that supernatural power? If so, what?

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Tuesday

Read John 8:31, 32.

Read this week's *Flashlight.* Note how Ellen White points out that it was "in the Saviour's presence" that the darkness was penetrated with light. How can we practice being in God's presence? How will that help us resist temptation? Reflect on how we too can be victorious over sin by living in the presence of Jesus. How does someone live in the presence of Jesus?

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Wednesday

Read Romans 8:37-39.

Compile the *Punch Lines* into one verse by taking the main point of each passage and crafting it into one sentence.

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Thursday

Read Philippians 4:8.

How does the devil try to gain access to my heart? What is the best strategy to resist his advances?

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Friday

Read Psalm 139:23, 24.

Ellen White offers this insight into the story of the demoniac: "Every man is free to choose what power he will have to rule over him. None have fallen so low, none are so vile, but that they can find deliverance in Christ. The demoniac, in place of prayer, could utter only the words of Satan; yet the heart's unspoken appeal was heard. No cry from a soul in need, though it fail of utterance in words, will be unheeded" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 258).

Do you have a similar plea to God as made in today's Bible reading? Pray and believe that you will receive what you ask.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 26.

* A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, entitled *Humble Hero*, has been created just for you by the White Estate and Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.