

# Connect360: When Pigs Fly

January 3, 2025

- *Lesson 5 in the Connect360 unit “The reMARKable Journey Continues: The Gospel of Urgency” focuses on Mark 5:1-20.*

In response to the suffering of the man before him, Jesus conversed with the demon and met the demoniac where he was. In the ancient world, the prevailing cultural belief was that knowing a spirit’s name gave one power over it.

While the demon might have been trying to use Jesus’ name against him, Jesus turned the tables on him and asked the demon his name (Mark 5:9). The demon replied, “I am Legion, for we are many.” A legion was a military regiment in the Roman army that included about 6,000 men. While the number of demons probably was not 6,000 exactly, this name certainly illustrated the magnitude of the force these impure spirits amassed against Jesus. Mark seemed to treat this explanation as factual rather than a boast by the demon, because he continued the narrative with plural references to demons.

Again, the demons begged not to be sent out of the area (Mark 5:10), which would presumably restrain their power among these people. The parallel passage in Luke has them begging not to be sent into the abyss where they would await eternal judgment (Luke 8:31). Either way, the demons were bargaining to gain a compromise from Jesus, which culminated in their request to enter the herd of pigs (Mark 5:12). In an ultimate act of authority, Jesus allowed this concession.

As Lord over the forces of evil, which is more awesome: to cast out thousands of demons or to send them to possess a herd of 2,000 pigs? Mark added to the drama of the scene with his visual of thousands of pigs

stampeding down a steep hill and drowning in the lake (Mark 5:13). Some scholars have questioned why Jesus would allow this destruction of property and the livelihood of these pig herders. However, Jesus considered this man's soul to be worth the material loss.

In response to this miracle, the pig-herders displayed the first instance in this narrative of the power of testimony. The biblical pattern of testimony normally has an agent (someone who gives testimony), a subject (what their testimony is), a recipient (someone who receives an effect from the testimony), and a result (how the testimony affects the recipient).

In this first case, the pig-herders are the agents, the subject of their testimony covers "what had happened" with the demoniac and the pigs, and their testimony affected everyone in the town and countryside. When the recipients came to see the evidence of this testimony for themselves, the result is that they were afraid (Mark 5:15). They were so afraid, in fact, that they pleaded with Jesus to leave.

A man whom they knew to be walking around naked and generally acting crazy instead was sitting with Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. Jesus' great power over the demons was singularly terrifying to this superstitious people.

The demoniac presented a picture of true conversion. He was completely changed—the exact opposite of what he had been— totally transformed by his encounter with Jesus' power.

*To learn more about GC2 Press and the Connect360 Bible study series, or to order materials, click [here](#).*