

## **Dr. Mark Jennings, Mark, Session 9, Calming Storm, Demoniac (Mark 5:1-21) Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Jennings, Mark, Session 9, Calming Storm, Demoniac (Mark 5:1-21), Biblicalearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Mark Jennings' Lecture 9** on the Gospel of Mark analyzes two significant events: **Jesus calming a storm** and **healing a demon-possessed man**. The lecture explores **Jesus' authority** over nature, contrasting it with the disciples' fear and lack of faith. It then examines the **exorcism of a "legion" of demons** in a Gentile region, highlighting the possessed man's extreme condition, the demons' fear of Jesus, and the local community's surprising negative reaction. The session concludes by noting the restored man's commission to spread the news of Jesus' mercy, potentially foreshadowing the **Gentile mission**.

**2. 12 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Jennings, Mark, Session 9 – Double click icon to play in  
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalearning.org [BeL]  
Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament →  
Gospels → Mark).**



**Jennings\_Mark\_Ses  
sion09.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Jennings, Mark, Session 9, Calming Storm, Demoniac (Mark 5:1-21)

#### Briefing Document: Analysis of Mark 4:35-5:20

**Overview:** This lecture by Dr. Mark Jennings focuses on two significant events in the Gospel of Mark: the calming of the storm (Mark 4:35-41) and the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20). Jennings analyzes these passages to highlight the theme of Jesus' authority, its escalating display, and the varied responses it elicits. He also considers narrative structure, historical context, and potential theological implications.

#### Main Themes and Important Ideas:

##### 1. Escalating Display of Jesus' Authority:

- Jennings emphasizes that the first half of Mark consistently portrays Jesus as "the stronger one."
- The calming of the storm marks a transition from physical healings and exorcisms to the first "nature miracle," showcasing Jesus' authority over the elements. He states, "Here, Mark returns to displays of Jesus' authority. Prior to this, we've had physical healings, we've had exorcisms, but here we get the first nature miracle."
- This event demonstrates that Jesus' power extends beyond the physical and spiritual realms to encompass the natural world, a prerogative traditionally associated with God. "The power over the elements is a constant prerogative of God. It is something man is completely powerless to control or direct."
- The healing of the Gerasene demoniac further amplifies this authority, showcasing power over a "Legion" of demons, depicted visually through their effect on the herd of pigs.

##### 2. The Calming of the Storm (Mark 4:35-41):

- **Context and Narrative Purpose:** The event follows Jesus' teaching in parables, suggesting a shift from instruction to demonstration of power. The detail about "other boats with him" is noted as potentially an eyewitness detail rather than a thematic element.
- **Nature of the Storm:** Jennings leans towards a natural storm, noting the absence of explicit mention of spiritual forces at work, unlike Mark's usual clarity regarding

demonic activity. However, he acknowledges the symbolic significance of wind and water representing chaos in the ancient world.

- **Disciples' Lack of Faith:** Jesus' rebuke, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" (Mark 4:40), is central. Jennings argues that their fear and question ("Teacher, don't you care if we drown?") indicated a failure to trust in Jesus' presence and mission, even amidst danger. "I believe the rebuke is the fact that they were afraid that they were in danger. That somehow their lives were in danger, the boat that Jesus was on was in danger. That they had, at this point, still failed to recognize the strength and the mission of Jesus."
- **Disciples' Reaction:** Their terror and question, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him" (Mark 4:41), highlight their astonishment and a growing recognition of Jesus' extraordinary nature. This fear is described as "great fear," possibly a reverent fear in response to the scale of the miracle.
- **Echoes of Jonah:** Jennings draws parallels with the story of Jonah, where God controls the storm, but emphasizes the difference: Jesus calms the storm through his own words, demonstrating his inherent power.

### 3. The Healing of the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20):

- **Geographical and Contextual Shift:** The passage marks a geographical transition to the Gentile region of the Gerasenes (Decapolis) and a chronological shift to morning. This signals a broadening of Jesus' ministry beyond predominantly Jewish areas.
- **Detailed Description of the Demoniac:** Mark provides extensive details about the man's condition: living in tombs (ritually unclean), uncontrollable strength (breaking chains), self-harm ("cry out and cut himself with the stones"), and isolation from the community. This paints a picture of the destructive nature of demonic possession.
- **Demons' Recognition and Submission:** The demoniac, upon seeing Jesus, "ran and fell on his knees in front of him" and shouted, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me" (Mark 5:6-7). This demonstrates the demons' immediate recognition of Jesus' authority and their fear of judgment ("torture"). Jennings notes the interplay between singular ("me") and plural ("Legion") in the demon's address.
- **Exorcism and the Name "Legion":** Jesus' command, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit" (Mark 5:8), results in immediate submission. The question about the

name ("What is your name?") is interpreted not as Jesus needing power but as a means to have the extent of the possession ("Legion, for we are many") witnessed and known. Jennings refutes the idea that "Legion" is solely an anti-Roman statement, pointing to its usage in other Second Temple Jewish literature as a descriptor of a large number.

- **Banishment into Pigs:** The demons' request to enter the pigs and Jesus' permission leading to the pigs' self-destruction is analyzed. Jennings suggests this visually demonstrated the "infestation" of demons in the man and the "self-destructive nature of demons on their host." It further emphasizes Jesus' authority over a vast number of evil spirits.
- **People's Fear and Rejection:** The reaction of the local population upon seeing the healed man ("sitting there, dressed and in his right mind") was fear, leading them to "plead with Jesus to leave their region" (Mark 5:15-17). Jennings attributes this to their unsettling encounter with such power and potential economic concerns over the loss of the pigs. This is a "sad turn of events" as they reject the restoration of the man.
- **The Healed Man's Commission:** Unlike previous instances where Jesus commanded silence, he instructs the healed man: "Go home to your family, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you" (Mark 5:19). This is seen as an anticipation of the Gentile mission, with the healed man becoming a witness in the Decapolis, potentially contributing to the positive reception Jesus later receives in that region. "In some ways, this anticipates, I think, the Gentile mission. Here's this Gentile who has been restored, and Jesus is telling him to go tell people."

### Conclusion:

Dr. Jennings' lecture underscores the central theme of Jesus' authority in Mark 4:35-5:20. The calming of the storm reveals his power over nature and the disciples' initial lack of faith. The exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac demonstrates his dominion over a multitude of evil spirits, highlighting the destructive nature of demonic forces and the completeness of Jesus' restoration. The contrasting responses – the disciples' terror and the Gerasenes' fear and rejection – reveal the unsettling impact of such divine power. Finally, the commissioning of the healed man foreshadows the expansion of Jesus' message to the Gentile world.

## 4. Study Guide: Jennings, Mark, Session 9, Calming Storm, Demoniac (Mark 5:1-21)

Study Guide: Mark 4:35-5:20

### Key Themes

- **Jesus' Authority:** The passage highlights Jesus' power and control over nature (the storm) and the supernatural (demonic possession). This reinforces the ongoing theme in Mark's Gospel of Jesus as the "stronger one."
- **Faith and Fear:** The disciples' fear during the storm contrasts with Jesus' expectation of their faith. Their question reveals a lack of trust in his presence and power.
- **The Nature of Demonic Possession:** The encounter with the Gerasene demoniac provides a detailed account of demonic power, its destructive nature, and Jesus' ability to completely overcome it.
- **The Gentile Mission:** The location of the demoniac story in a Gentile region (Decapolis) and Jesus' instruction for the healed man to share his story foreshadow the expansion of Jesus' ministry beyond Jewish borders.
- **Responses to Jesus:** The passage showcases varied reactions to Jesus' miracles, ranging from the disciples' terror and confusion to the Gerasene people's fear and request for him to leave.

### Quiz

1. Describe the disciples' reaction during the storm and what Jesus said to them in response.
  - The disciples were terrified as the storm threatened to swamp their boat and woke Jesus with the question, "Don't you care if we drown?" Jesus rebuked the wind and waves, then questioned their fear and lack of faith, implying they should have trusted in his presence.
1. What is significant about the calming of the storm being described as Jesus' first nature miracle in Mark's Gospel?
  - Prior to this event, Jesus had demonstrated his authority through physical healings and exorcisms. The calming of the storm marks an escalation of the

display of his authority, showcasing his power over the elements, which was traditionally seen as a prerogative of God.

1. What details does Mark provide about the Gerasene demoniac before Jesus encounters him?
  - Mark emphasizes the man's isolation (living in tombs), his incredible strength (breaking chains and irons), and his self-destructive behavior (crying out and cutting himself with stones). These details highlight the extent of the demonic control and the man's pitiful condition.
  
1. What is the significance of the demons identifying Jesus as the "Son of the Most High God"?
  - This title acknowledges Jesus' divine status and authority, a recognition that even the demonic realm possesses in Mark's Gospel. It underscores the supernatural power dynamic at play in the encounter.
  
1. Why does Jesus ask the demon for its name, and what is the reply?
  - While not indicating a need for magical power, Jesus' question serves to make the extent of the demonic influence known and witnessed. The demon replies, "My name is Legion," indicating a multitude of evil spirits inhabiting the man.
  
1. Explain the unusual event involving the herd of pigs and its potential significance.
  - Jesus allows the demons to enter a herd of about 2,000 pigs, which then rush into the lake and drown. This event visually demonstrates the large number of demons that had possessed the man and their inherent self-destructive nature when not controlled by Jesus.
  
1. Describe the reaction of the people of the region after witnessing the exorcism and the fate of the pigs.
  - The people were afraid upon seeing the formerly possessed man now calm and in his right mind. Concerned about the economic loss of the pigs and perhaps unsettled by Jesus' power, they pleaded with him to leave their region.
  
1. What does Jesus instruct the healed demoniac to do, and how does this contrast with other commands in Mark?
  - Jesus instructs the healed man to go home to his family and tell them how much the Lord has done for him. This is in contrast to other instances in Mark where

Jesus commands those he heals or delivers to remain silent, suggesting a shift towards the Gentile mission in this context.

1. How does the geographical setting of the demoniac story contribute to the theme of expanding ministry in Mark?
  - The story takes place in the region of the Gerasenes, part of the Decapolis, a predominantly Gentile area. This geographical shift signifies Jesus' ministry moving beyond Jewish territories and engaging with non-Jewish populations.
1. How might the story of Jonah serve as a "foil" to the calming of the storm narrative in Mark?
  - Both stories involve a storm at sea and someone asleep on a boat. However, Jonah is awakened and the storm ceases after he is thrown overboard due to his disobedience, whereas Jesus stills the storm with his own authority and words, highlighting his divine power in contrast to Jonah's situation.

### **Essay Format Questions**

1. Analyze the significance of Jesus' authority as it is displayed in both the calming of the storm and the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac in Mark 4:35-5:20. Consider the different realms over which his authority is demonstrated and the reactions it evokes.
2. Compare and contrast the disciples' lack of faith during the storm with the faith (or lack thereof) demonstrated by the Gerasene demoniac and the surrounding community. What does this passage suggest about the nature of faith and its recognition of Jesus?
3. Discuss the role and portrayal of demonic forces in the Gospel of Mark, focusing on the encounter with the Gerasene demoniac in Mark 5:1-20. What does this episode reveal about their power, limitations, and relationship with Jesus?
4. Explore the potential foreshadowing of the Gentile mission within Mark 4:35-5:20, paying particular attention to the geographical setting, Jesus' interactions with the healed demoniac, and the reactions of the local population.
5. Examine the narrative structure and key literary devices used in Mark 4:35-5:20 to emphasize the themes of Jesus' authority and the varied responses to his ministry. Consider elements such as direct speech, descriptive language, and the juxtaposition of different events.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Parable:** A simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, often employing figurative language.
- **Authority:** The power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. In the context of Jesus, it refers to his divine power and right to act on God's behalf.
- **Exorcism:** The act of driving out or attempting to drive out an evil spirit from a person or place.
- **Demoniac:** A person believed to be possessed by one or more evil spirits or demons.
- **Squall:** A sudden, violent gust of wind or a localized storm, especially one bringing rain, snow, or sleet.
- **Stern:** The rearmost part of a ship or boat.
- **Rebuke:** To express sharp disapproval or criticism of (someone) because of their behavior or actions. In the context of Jesus, it often involves a command to cease.
- **Faith:** Strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof. In this context, it also implies trust in Jesus' power and presence.
- **Nature Miracle:** A supernatural event involving the natural world, such as calming a storm or walking on water, demonstrating divine power over creation.
- **Legion:** In a Roman context, a large unit of soldiers in the Roman army. In this passage, used by the demon to indicate a vast number of evil spirits.
- **Decapolis:** A league of ten cities mentioned in the New Testament, located primarily east and southeast of the Sea of Galilee, known for their predominantly Gentile population and Hellenistic culture.
- **Adjuration:** A solemn oath or earnest urging. In this passage, refers to the demon's plea to Jesus.
- **Chiasmus:** A literary device in which words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order, in the pattern A-B-B-A.



## **5. FAQs on Jennings, Mark, Session 9, Calming Storm, Demoniac (Mark 5:1-21), Biblicalearning.org (BeL)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions: Mark 4:35-5:20**

#### **1. What is the significance of the "Calming of the Storm" narrative in Mark's Gospel, especially in relation to Jesus' authority?**

The Calming of the Storm is the first nature miracle recorded in Mark's Gospel and represents an escalation in the demonstration of Jesus' authority. Prior to this, his authority was shown through teaching, healings, and exorcisms. By rebuking the wind and the waves and bringing instant calm, Jesus displays power over the very elements, something traditionally attributed to God alone. This event reinforces the central theme in the first half of Mark's Gospel: Jesus is the stronger one, possessing a divine authority that even nature obeys. The disciples' fearful question, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him," highlights their growing recognition of Jesus' unique identity and power.

#### **2. Why does Jesus question the disciples' fear and lack of faith during the storm?**

Despite the severity of the squall, Jesus rebukes the disciples for their fear and lack of faith because they doubted his ability to ensure their safety, even in the midst of chaos. Their panicked question, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" suggests a failure to grasp who Jesus is and the implications of his presence with them. Jesus had already stated his intention to go to the "other side," implying a safe arrival. Their fear indicated a lack of trust that Jesus, the one with authority over teaching, healing, and exorcism, would allow the boat to perish with him and them on board. The "right approach," according to the lecture, might have been to trust in Jesus' plan and power to bring them safely to their destination.

#### **3. What is notable about the setting of the "Demoniac" story in the region of the Gerasenes?**

The shift in location to the region of the Gerasenes is significant as it marks Jesus' movement into a more Gentile-dominated area, known as the Decapolis. This geographical change signals a broadening of Jesus' ministry beyond primarily Jewish territory. Furthermore, the details of the setting – the man living in tombs (considered unclean in Jewish culture), the presence of a large herd of pigs (also unclean for Jews) – underscore this Gentile context. The transition from evening (during the storm) to morning further highlights a new phase in Jesus' activities.

**4. How is the possessed man in the Gerasenes described, and what does this reveal about the nature of demonic possession according to Mark?**

The description of the possessed man is exceptionally detailed compared to other instances of demonic encounters in early Mark. He lives in tombs, cannot be bound even with chains, possesses superhuman strength, and engages in self-harm by cutting himself with stones, crying out constantly. This vivid portrayal emphasizes the extreme power and destructive nature of demonic influence. The fact that "no one was strong enough to subdue him" sets the stage for the demonstration of Jesus' superior authority. The self-destructive behavior also illustrates the harmful impact of demonic possession on the afflicted individual.

**5. What is the significance of the demons identifying themselves as "Legion" and their request regarding the pigs?**

The demons' self-identification as "Legion," meaning "many," underscores the vast number of evil spirits inhabiting the man, highlighting the magnitude of Jesus' power in overcoming them. While some might interpret "Legion" as an anti-Roman statement, the lecturer suggests it's more likely a description of the sheer quantity of demons, a concept also found in other Jewish literature of the time. Their request to be sent into the herd of pigs, and Jesus' permission, serves multiple purposes. Firstly, the dramatic reaction of the approximately 2,000 pigs rushing into the lake and drowning visually demonstrates the multitude and chaotic nature of the demons that had tormented the man. Secondly, it illustrates the self-destructive tendency of these evil spirits.

**6. How does the reaction of the local people to the healing of the demoniac differ from what might be expected, and why?**

Contrary to what one might anticipate – joy and gratitude for the liberation of a long-suffering individual – the people of the Gerasenes react with fear and plead with Jesus to leave their region. This unexpected response is likely due to a combination of factors. The display of such immense power was unsettling and perhaps frightening to them. Additionally, the loss of a large number of pigs represented a significant economic impact. Their concern for their economic well-being and their fear of Jesus' disruptive power outweighed their appreciation for the man's restoration.

**7. Why does Jesus instruct the healed demoniac to go and tell his family and others what the Lord has done for him, instead of following him?**

Jesus' instruction to the healed man to return home and share his experience stands in contrast to his usual commands for silence after miracles. This exception is significant because it marks the beginning of the Gentile mission. As the man was from a Gentile region, Jesus commissions him to be a witness among his own people, telling them "how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you." This directive anticipates the future spread of the gospel to the Gentiles and suggests that the man's testimony would prepare the way for Jesus' later ministry in the Decapolis, where he is indeed met with greater استقبال.

**8. What are the overarching themes and connections between the "Calming of the Storm" and the "Demonic" narratives in Mark 4:35-5:20?**

Both narratives in this section of Mark emphasize the overwhelming authority of Jesus. In the Calming of the Storm, his authority is displayed over nature, demonstrating his power to control the chaotic elements. In the Demonic story, his authority is shown over the supernatural realm, effortlessly subduing a legion of demons that no human power could control. Both miracles evoke strong reactions of fear and amazement, prompting the question of Jesus' true identity. Furthermore, the transition to the Gentile territory in the Demonic narrative hints at the expanding scope of Jesus' mission beyond Israel, while the instruction to the healed man to testify foreshadows the role of Gentile witnesses in spreading the news of Jesus' power and mercy.