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## The application...

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1. How has this incident proved the authority of Jesus? Then what does it mean that Jesus possesses authority over the realm of darkness, the devil and his demons (see James 2:19)?
2. How has this incident helped you to know Jesus' identity? Who is Jesus?
3. The presence of evil, often an invisible threat, is visibly seen in these demon-possessed men. How does the threat demons pose demonstrate evil's agenda?
4. The demons know with certainty that Jesus will judge them. What does their confession confirm? Why must it be taken seriously? And what will happen if it's not taken seriously?
5. Despite Jesus liberating these violent men held captive by the demons, why is it surprising that many reject Him? What does this expose?

## *The King's authority*

*Studies in Matthew's Gospel 8-10*



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## *The King's authority over demons*

*Matthew 8: 28-34*

Jesus backs up His authoritative teaching (5:1-7:27) by what He does, showing His authority in word and deed. He proves His divine credentials as the King of God's kingdom by demonstrating His authority by healing sickness. He also proves His authority over creation by showing His control over the wind and the waves. The disciples' amazement is revealed by their question, "what kind of man is this?" (27); this question needs an answer.

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## The story...

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Matthew previously recorded briefly that Jesus drove out many who were demon-possessed (8:16). Now he details the account of Jesus' encounter with two demon-possessed men after arriving on the other side of the lake.

**Having survived a violent threat to their life on the lake, the disciples witness another terrifying encounter. Yet Jesus isn't intimidated by the confrontation with these two demon-possessed men. Matthew records that they approached Jesus and initially Jesus doesn't say a word (28-29), but the words of the demon-possessed men are very revealing indeed!**

1. What effect does the visible manifestation of evil have on these demon-possessed men and others? Why is this a fitting description?

2. What does the question these demon-possessed men ask Jesus reveal?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is the significance that these demon-possessed men know the identity of Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What is the significance of the name with which they address Jesus (see 2:15 & 3:17)? And how will this inform Jesus' disciples?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What does the concern these demon-possessed men express reveal?

**This region was a Gentile area; for there was a herd of pigs. The Jews considered pigs unclean animals. And, strikingly, once more these demon-possessed men initiate the conversation with Jesus (30-32 ).**

6. What are they acknowledging by asking to be driven out into the pigs?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What does Jesus' word accomplish? And what does this reveal?

8. What does the outcome of the herd of pigs visually symbolize?

**Unsurprisingly, those tending the herd of pigs report the fearful incident to the town. However, rather interestingly, Matthew doesn't detail any change in the demon-possessed men, yet this incident results in the town meeting Jesus (33-34). The focus of the story is quite clearly about the identity of Jesus.**

9. What do those tending the herd of pigs report in the town? Even though Matthew doesn't detail what happened to the demon-possessed men after the demons were exorcised, what did the report entail?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What does the response of the town to Jesus reveal?

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### **The conclusion...**

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The invisible presence of evil is visibly seen in these demon-possessed men. These men were held in bondage by the demons, but Jesus liberated them by His word. This established that He possessed authority over evil; for the demons themselves even acknowledged that Jesus would judge them. Yet not everyone recognizes that Jesus liberates those in bondage to evil.