

The Gospel of Mark

Miracles Around the Lake

Lesson #5 for August 3, 2024

Scriptures: Mark 4:35-41; 5:1-43; 6:1-52; Psalm 104:1-9; Numbers 27:17.

1. This lesson mainly discusses miracles Jesus performed around the Sea of Galilee.

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] Jesus' ministry was largely focused in Galilee, especially in and around the Sea of Galilee, a lake approximately 13 miles (21 kilometers) long and 8 miles (13 kilometers) wide. It is the largest body of water in the area and was the center of life for people living nearby.

Mark 4 ends with Jesus and His disciples traveling across the Sea of Galilee. **A storm arises that Jesus calms by speaking to the wind and waves.** Mark 6 ends with a **similar scene, but this time with Jesus walking on the water** toward His disciples in the boat. In between these scenes on the water are numerous miracles of Jesus that were done on land and His disciples' first missionary activity. These stories are the subject of this ... study. [How much do we know about those missionary activities of the disciples?]

The overarching characteristic of these dramatic stories is to let the reader see who Jesus is. He is the One able to calm a storm, cast out demons, heal a woman who simply touches His clothes, raise a dead girl, preach in His home town, send out His disciples on a preaching mission, feed [thousands] with a few loaves and fish, and walk on water—**incredible displays of power that are drawing the disciples closer to an understanding that He is the Son of God.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath Afternoon, July 27.^{††} [How soon did the disciples recognize who Jesus was?][‡]

2. In this lesson, we will cover some amazing stories including several miracles described in Mark 4:35-6:52. It begins with the weary Jesus sleeping in the back of the boat and then calming the storm with His hand. He cast demons out of two men in a Gentile territory on the “other side” of the Sea of Galilee. He sent those demons into a herd of pigs which then drowned in the Sea of Galilee. Next, He sent the formerly-demon-possessed men to be the first Gentile missionaries to the Decapolis. He returned home to Capernaum where He healed two of God's daughters who were either dead or effectively dead. Then, Jesus returned to Nazareth where He was rejected because He claimed to be the Messiah and favored Gentiles over Jews—because He referred to two Old Testament stories. About that same time, Jesus received the report about the death of John the Baptist. Just at that point, He sent His disciples out throughout Galilee to preach John's message. Then, Jesus, trying to escape the crowds by returning to an area near Bethsaida in the north, discovered huge crowds were waiting for Him. He preached to them and taught them for the whole day with no one providing any food. He fed the 5000 men, not counting women and children, and then sent His disciples away in the boat across the sea back to Capernaum. This series of miracles started a swell of emotion to try to force Jesus to become the king of the Jews. It was followed by Jesus: (1) Sending His disciples back into the boat, (2) Dispatching the crowds, (3) Going up a hill to pray, and then, (4) Walking on the water back to join His disciples in their boat. Jesus demonstrated that with His miracle-working power, He could easily have helped the

Jews conquer and drive out the Romans. But, that was not the kind of kingdom He was trying to establish.

Mark 4:35-41: ³⁵ On the evening of **that same day** Jesus said to his disciples, “Let us go across to the other side of the lake.” ³⁶ So they left the crowd; the disciples got into the boat in which Jesus was already sitting, and they took him with them. Other boats were there too. ³⁷ **Suddenly a strong wind blew up**, and the waves began to spill over into the boat, so that it was about to fill with water. ³⁸ **Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping** with his head on a pillow. The disciples woke him up and said, “Teacher, don’t you care that we are about to die?” [Did the disciples recognize that Jesus was God?]

³⁹ **Jesus stood up and commanded the wind**, “Be quiet!” and he said to the waves, “Be still!” The wind died down, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Why are you frightened? Have you still no faith?”

⁴¹ But they were terribly afraid and said to one another, “Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Mark 4:35-41). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{†‡}

3. ***Do you think this was just chance bad circumstance at the Sea of Galilee? Or, was it a deliberate attempt by the Devil to destroy Jesus and all of the disciples at once? I am fairly sure that it was the latter.***

4. Later, Jesus suggested that they cross the Sea of Galilee, going to the area of Gadarenes.

[BSG:] The story in Mark 4:35–41 fits within a common biblical pattern: that of a “**theophany**”—the appearance of God or one of His angels. Five characteristics are common to these events: (1) the display of divine power, (2) human fear, (3) the command “Do not fear,” (4) the words of revelation for which God or the angel appeared, and (5) human response to the revelation. Four of the five are present in this story—the calming of the storm is the display of divine power, the disciples’ fear is the human fear. The question, “Why are you so afraid?” is the “Do not fear.” The disciples’ question, “Who then is this?” is the human response. What is missing is the words of revelation. This missing detail plays into the revelation/secretary motif that runs through the entire book, where the truth about Jesus will come out. Here the disciples’ question, “Who then is this that the wind and the sea obey Him?” pushes the reader to fill in the answer of the missing words of revelation—He is the Son of God, the Lord Himself.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sunday, July 28.^{†‡}

5. ***Don’t you think that the disciples or one of the other followers of Jesus must have asked Jesus after at least one of these miracles, “How did You do that?”***

Mark 5:1-20: ¹ Jesus and his disciples arrived on the other side of Lake Galilee, in the territory of Gerasa. ² As soon as Jesus got out of the boat, he was met by a man who came out of the burial caves there. This man had an evil spirit in him ³ and lived among the tombs. Nobody could keep him chained up any more; ⁴ many times his feet and hands had been chained, but every time he broke the chains and smashed the irons on his feet. He was too strong for anyone to control him. ⁵ Day and night he wandered among the tombs and through the hills, screaming and cutting himself with stones.

⁶ He was some distance away when he saw Jesus; so he ran, fell on his knees before him, ⁷and screamed in a loud voice, “Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? For God’s sake, I beg you, don’t punish me!” ⁸(He said this because Jesus was saying, “Evil spirit, come out of this man!”)

⁹ So Jesus asked him, “What is your name?”

The man answered, “My name is ‘Mob’ — there are so many of us!” ¹⁰And he kept begging Jesus not to send the evil spirits out of that region.

¹¹ There was a large herd of pigs near by, feeding on a hillside. ¹²So the spirits begged Jesus, “Send us to the pigs, and let us go into them.” ¹³He let them go, and the evil spirits went out of the man and entered the pigs. The whole herd — about 2,000 pigs in all — rushed down the side of the cliff into the lake and was drowned.

¹⁴ The men who had been taking care of the pigs ran away and spread the news in the town and among the farms. People went out to see what had happened, ¹⁵and when they came to Jesus, **they saw the man who used to have the mob of demons in him. He was sitting there, clothed and in his right mind; and they were all afraid.** ¹⁶Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the man with the demons, and about the pigs.

¹⁷ So they asked Jesus to leave their territory.

¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had had the demons begged him, “Let me go with you!”

¹⁹ But Jesus would not let him. Instead, he told him, **“Go back home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how kind he has been to you.”**

²⁰ So the man left and went all through the Ten Towns, telling what Jesus had done for him. And all who heard it were amazed.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

[BSG:] If the night before on the lake was unforgettable, the arrival at the Gadarenes the next morning was just as impressive. The history of the demon-possessed man is laid out in heartbreaking detail. Breaking away from all constraint, he lived in the tombs and cut himself with stones. “No one had the strength to subdue him” (*Mark 5:4, ESV*)—and then he met Jesus.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*^{* for Monday, July 29.}^{‡§}

6. Deep down inside, it seems that this demon-possessed man recognized that Jesus might be able to help him even though he was possessed by a legion of evil spirits.
7. If you were a Jew living in the days of Jesus, would you have refused to use any of the water out of the Sea of Galilee after 2000 pigs were drowned in it?

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **But the purposes of Christ were not thwarted. He allowed the evil spirits to destroy the herd of swine as a rebuke to those Jews who were raising these unclean beasts for the sake of gain. Had not Christ restrained the demons, they would have plunged into the sea, not only the swine, but also their keepers and owners.** [Did the demons want to kill these people as well?] **The preservation of both the keepers and the owners was due alone to His power, mercifully exercised for their deliverance.** Furthermore, this event was permitted to take place that

the disciples might witness the cruel power of Satan upon both man and beast. The Saviour desired His followers to have a knowledge of the foe whom they were to meet, that they might not be deceived and overcome by his devices. It was also His will that the people of that region should behold His power to break the bondage of Satan and release his captives. And though Jesus Himself departed, the **men so marvelously delivered, remained to declare the mercy of their Benefactor.**—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 515.1.†‡
[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p132.2332&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p132.2332&index=0)‡

[BSG:] Now, as Jesus starts His ministry among the Gentile territories, we see a similar scenario. Mark 5:2 tells us, “When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him” (*NASB*). Both in the synagogue of the scribes and among the Gentiles, there were men with unclean spirits that needed to be healed. In both situations, there were men held captive by demons. Jesus came to restore these men to the kingdom.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 66.‡§

8. Again, we see the interesting contrast between demon-possessed individuals recognizing who Jesus was and the Jewish leaders who were doing everything to deny that fact.

[BSG:] Let us consider the information that Mark gives us about the man possessed by many demons. The man claims his name is “Legion.” A legion was a Roman military unit about the size of five to six thousand foot soldiers. (See Robert H. Stein, *Mark* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008], p. 255.) No matter how overwhelmed a human could have been by such an evil force, there is no demonic entity that can resist, or overcome, the power of the Most High God.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 66.†Ω§

9. The fate of this demon-possessed man was cruel and bloody. Mark 5:5 describes his misery.

Mark 5:5: Day and night he wandered among the tombs and through the hills, screaming and cutting himself with stones.—*Good News Bible*.*

[BSG:] Regarding the demoniac, Larry Hurtado writes: “The man is described as both fully captive to the powers of evil and beyond any human help (5:2–4). Further, his dwelling among the tombs, the ‘dwelling’ of the dead, almost makes him like a zombie, a living dead-man. Finally, he is self-destructive (5:5) and obviously in torment. All of this is a powerful picture of how the NT [New Testament] describes the condition of humans apart from Christ: Spiritually dead and in bondage to evil.”—Hurtado, *Mark* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989), p. 83.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 67.†Ω§ [Do we have any people like that living in our world today?]‡

[BSG:] This story has two overriding characteristics. First, it is filled with items of uncleanness or ceremonial defilement according to Old Testament law. Tombs and the dead were unclean (*Num. 19:11, 16*). Bleeding made one unclean (*Leviticus 15*). Pigs were unclean (*Lev. 11:7*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, July 29.‡§

10. **While the people asked Jesus to leave their area because of the loss of the pigs, the formerly-demon-possessed man/men began to spread the news about Jesus so that the next time Jesus came to that area, everybody wanted to see and hear Him!**

11. It is interesting to note that Matthew in telling this story suggested that there were two demon-possessed men instead of just one. (Matthew 8:28-29) These men were the first Gentile missionaries! Remember that Jonah was a missionary to the Gentiles of Ninevah.
12. Next, we jump ahead for a moment to Mark chapter 8 to a story to show what is likely a result of the ministry of those demon-possessed men who stayed as missionaries to their fellow Gentiles and the interest in Jesus that they generated. Note that these events of Mark 8 occurred after feeding “the 5,000” that we will discuss a little later in this lesson.

Mark 8:1-10: ¹ Not long afterwards another large crowd came together. When the people had nothing left to eat, Jesus called the disciples to him and said, ² “I feel sorry for these people, because they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat. ³If I send them home without feeding them, they will faint as they go, because some of them have come a long way.”

⁴ His disciples asked him, “Where in this desert can anyone find enough food to feed all these people?”

⁵ “How much bread have you got?” Jesus asked.

“**Seven loaves,**” they answered.

⁶ He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks to God, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the crowd; and the disciples did so. ⁷They also had **a few small fish**. Jesus gave thanks for these and told the disciples to distribute them too. ⁸⁻⁹Everybody ate and had enough — there were **about 4,000 people**. Then the disciples took up seven baskets full of pieces left over. Jesus sent the people away ¹⁰and at once got into a boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†} [Although Jesus had earlier fed 5,000 Jews, the disciples did not think He would or could do that for Gentiles.][‡]

13. We now turn back to the sequence in Mark 5. When Jesus returned to Capernaum, He was immediately met by a crowd.

Mark 5:21-24: ²¹ Jesus went back across to the other side of the lake. There at the lakeside a large crowd gathered round him. ²²Jairus, an official of the local synagogue, arrived, and when he saw Jesus, he threw himself down at his feet ²³and begged him earnestly, “My little daughter is very ill. Please come and place your hands on her, so that she will get well and live!”

²⁴ Then Jesus started off with him. So many people were going along with Jesus that they were crowding him from every side.—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

14. **Jairus was a religious leader of the local synagogue, and he loved his daughter. He was willing to risk approaching Jesus as the only Source of help.**
15. As we have already noted, the religious leaders were almost always very opposed to everything Jesus did. However, here was a case where one of the Jewish leaders had a daughter who was very sick, and his love for his daughter overruled his “natural” opposition to Jesus. **The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus.** (See Mark 3:2,6.)
16. While Jesus was on His way from the shore to Jairus’s house, there was an interruption.

Mark 5:25-34: ²⁵ There was a woman who had suffered terribly from severe bleeding for twelve years, ²⁶even though she had been treated by many doctors. She

had spent all her money, but instead of getting better she got worse all the time. ²⁷She had heard about Jesus, so she came in the crowd behind him, ²⁸saying to herself, **“If I just touch his clothes, I will get well.”**

²⁹ **She touched his cloak, and her bleeding stopped at once;** and she had the feeling inside herself that she was healed of her trouble. ³⁰At once Jesus knew that power had gone out of him, so he turned round in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

³¹ His disciples answered, “You see how the people are crowding you; why do you ask who touched you?”

³² But Jesus kept looking round to see who had done it. ³³The woman realized what had happened to her, so she came, trembling with fear, knelt at his feet, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴Jesus said to her, “My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your trouble.”—*Good News Bible*.*†

17. Imagine yourself like this woman who had been sick for so long and managed to touch the edge of Jesus’s garment. She realized that she had been returned to perfect health.

18. Notice these additional notes about the woman with the bleeding problem.

[BSG:] Commentator M. Eugene Boring adds another dimension to the misery concerning her malady: “Since vaginal bleeding prohibited marriage and was grounds for divorce, in the understanding of her culture which she shared, the woman cannot fulfill her function as a woman, to bring new life into being as a mother.” In addition, she has been impoverished because she had spent all her money on physicians to no avail. The commentator adds, “Like the leper of [Mark] 1:40, her life is actually a living death, and her healing would be a restoration to life. Like the child who waits in Jairus’s house, she is beyond all human hope.”—Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), p. 160.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 67-68.†§

19. Other people apparently learned from the experience of the woman, touching His garment.

Mark 6:56: And everywhere Jesus went, to villages, towns, or farms, people would take those who were ill to the market places and beg him to let them at least touch the edge of his cloak; and all who touched it were made well.—*Good News Bible*.* [How many people do you think managed to touch His garment?]*‡

20. **After the death of Jesus, even Peter’s shadow (Acts 5:15) and the handkerchiefs of Paul (Acts 19:11-12) healed people! Or, were those the visible “instruments” of God who healed the people?**

21. After people had come from Jairus’s house to report that his daughter had already died. Jesus said: “Don’t worry. Just have faith.” When they reached the place, the mourners were already making much noise. Jesus chased all of the mourners out of the house; took Peter, James, and John with the parents of the little girl; and went into her room.

[BSG:] Taking her hand, He says, “*Talitha koum.*” Mark translates these words, “Little girl, get up.” Actually, the word *Talitha* means “lamb” and thus would be a term of endearment for a child in the home. The command to keep things secret is part of the **revelation/secret motif** that runs through Mark and

points toward who Jesus is and that, ultimately, He cannot remain hidden.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, July 30.^{†§}

22. While Jesus told the people in the room not to say anything about what happened, it would have been impossible to keep quiet about that story, considering all the people who were witnesses outside. Remember that she was the daughter of a prominent member of the city.
23. In the sandwich story, Jesus healed not only the 12-year-old girl who was dead, but also a woman who was ritually and spiritually dead because of her bleeding.
24. Next, Mark's Gospel refers to events in Nazareth.

Mark 6:1-6: ¹ Jesus left that place and went back to his home town [*sic-Br*], followed by his disciples. ²On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue. Many people were there; and when they heard him, they were all amazed. "Where did he get all this?" they asked. "What wisdom is this that has been given him? How does he perform miracles? ³Isn't he the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters living here?" And so they rejected him. [See *Desire of Ages* 74.2.]

[See <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.265&index=0>]

⁴ Jesus said to them, "Prophets are respected everywhere except in their own home town [*sic-Br*] and by their relatives and their family."

⁵ He was not able to perform any miracles there, except that he placed his hands on a few sick people and healed them. **He was greatly surprised, because the people did not have faith.**—*Good News Bible*.^{*†‡}

[BSG:] Usually when a small-town person becomes popular, people back home bask in the attention. Not Nazareth. They were offended and surprised at Jesus' success as a teacher and healer. His shift from being a builder to a teacher seemed hard for them to accept. There also may have been some animosity that He did most of His miracles in Capernaum (see *Luke 4:23*). And He had already had a disagreement with His family (*Mark 3:31–35*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, July 31.[§] [Was Satan involved?][‡]

25. **There are some very important aspects of the story which Mark did not mention. In Luke 4:16-30, some of the details are told. Jesus was rejected by the people of Nazareth for at least two reasons: (1) He claimed that Isaiah's prophecy about the coming Messiah referred to Him, and (2) He seemed to imply that Gentiles were sometimes to be preferred over Jews by telling two stories from the Old Testament!**
26. The disciples were excited about the fact that they had been sent out to the different towns in Galilee and given powers to heal and raise people from the dead. They seemed to have a good reception. By contrast, there is mention of the beheading of John the Baptist by Herod.
[BSG:] The silencing of the clarion voice of the Baptist occurs at the same time as the Twelve Apostles proclaim repentance, just as the Baptist did. John's death foreshadows Jesus'. John is put to death, buried, and reported as risen from the dead (*Mark 6:14–16, 29*), as Jesus would be (*Mark 15 and 16*). These parallel stories point toward a coming crisis for Jesus and His followers.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, July 31.[§]
27. When King Herod heard about the miracles Jesus was doing and the work of His disciples, he was certain that John the Baptist had been raised back to life.

28. On another occasion near the Sea of Galilee:

Mark 6:34-52: ³⁴ When Jesus got out of the boat, he saw this large crowd, and his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things. ³⁵When it was getting late, his disciples came to him and said, “It is already very late, and this is a lonely place. ³⁶Send the people away, and let them go to the nearby farms and villages in order to buy themselves something to eat.”

³⁷ “You yourselves give them something to eat,” Jesus answered.

They asked, “Do you want us to go and spend 200 silver coins on bread in order to feed them?”

³⁸ So Jesus asked them, “How much bread have you got? Go and see.” When they found out, they told him, “**Five loaves and also two fish.**”

³⁹ Jesus then told his disciples to make all the people divide into groups and sit down on the green grass. ⁴⁰So the people sat down in rows, in groups of a hundred and groups of fifty. ⁴¹Then Jesus took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, and gave thanks to God. He broke the loaves and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. **⁴²Everyone ate and had enough.** ⁴³Then the disciples took up twelve baskets full of what was left of the bread and the fish. **⁴⁴The number of men who were fed was 5,000.** [They were ready to make Him king!]

⁴⁵ At once Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to Bethsaida, on the other side of the lake, while he sent the crowd away. **⁴⁶After saying goodbye to the people he went away to a hill to pray.** ⁴⁷When evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, while Jesus was alone on land. ⁴⁸He saw that his disciples were straining at the oars, because they were rowing against the wind; so some time [*sic-Br*] between three and six o'clock in the morning he came to them, walking on the water. He was going to pass them by, ⁴⁹but they saw him walking on the water. “It’s a ghost!” they thought, and screamed. ⁵⁰They were all terrified when they saw him.

Jesus spoke to them at once, “Courage!” he said. “It is I. Don’t be afraid!” ⁵¹Then he got into the boat with them, and the wind died down. The disciples were completely amazed, ⁵²because they had not understood the real meaning of the feeding of the 5,000; their minds could not grasp it.—*Good News Bible*.*†‡

29. How do you think you would have responded to all of Jesus’s miracles?

[EGW:] In their enthusiasm [after the feeding of the 5,000] the people are ready at once to crown Him king. They see that He makes no effort to attract attention or secure honor to Himself. In this He is essentially different from the priests and rulers, and they fear that He will never urge His claim to David’s throne. Consulting together, they agree to take Him by force, and proclaim Him the king of Israel. The disciples unite with the multitude in declaring the throne of David the rightful inheritance of their Master. It is the modesty of Christ, they say, that causes Him to refuse such honor. Let the people exalt their Deliverer. Let the arrogant priests and rulers be forced to honor Him who comes clothed with the authority of God.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 378.1.‡

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30. Following that miraculous feeding of the 5000 men, Jesus commanded His disciples to get in the boat and leave the area. Then, He politely, but forcefully, sent the crowd home.
31. In the fourth watch of the night—between 3 and 6 a.m.—Jesus walked across the water and approached the boat where the disciples were trying to reach shore. Matthew told about Peter’s experience of asking Jesus to allow him to walk on the water and then losing faith as he looked back at the other disciples and almost drowned. Why do you suppose Mark—in Peter’s Gospel—did not mention that story?
32. The people around the Sea of Galilee, seeing miracle after miracle and even Jesus feeding the 5000 men were sure that He was the one who was to be the future king of Israel and that He would help them to throw out the Romans and rule the world. How could they lose if they had Jesus on their side?

[BSG:] Yet, **Jesus does not meet their false expectations. Instead, He sends His disciples away and dismisses the crowd. And, rather than lead a rebellion against Rome, what does He do? He retreats to a mountain to pray**—not what the people were expecting [or hoping].—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, August 1.^{†‡}

33. Jesus said He had come not to help them overcome the Romans, but to help them get out of the bondage of sin. That was not what they were looking for.

[BSG:] What should this story tell us about why a correct understanding of prophecy is important? If a false understanding of Christ’s first coming led to disaster for some, how much more so could a false understanding do the same for some in regard to His second?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, August 1.[‡]

34. Do these stories tell us anything about how we should be preparing?

[EGW:] In all who are under the training of God is to be revealed a life that is not in harmony with the world, its customs, or its practices; and everyone needs to have a personal experience in obtaining a knowledge of the will of God. We must individually hear Him speaking to the heart. When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. He bids us, “Be still, and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10. Here alone can true rest be found. And this is the effectual preparation for all who labor for God. Amid the hurrying throng, and the strain of life’s intense activities, the soul that is thus refreshed will be surrounded with an atmosphere of light and peace. The life will breathe out fragrance, and will reveal a divine power that will reach men’s hearts.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 363.3.[‡] [<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.1753&index=0>][‡]

35. If you had been a Jew in those days, wouldn’t you have wanted that freedom from Rome?

[EGW:] ... Their dissatisfied hearts queried why, if Jesus could perform so many wondrous works as they had witnessed, could He not give health, strength, and riches to all His people, free them from their oppressors, and exalt them to power and honor? The fact that He claimed to be the Sent of God, and yet refused to be Israel’s king, was a mystery which they could not fathom. His refusal was misinterpreted. Many concluded that He dared not assert His claims because He Himself doubted as to the divine character of His mission.

Thus they opened their hearts to unbelief, and the seed which Satan had sown bore fruit of its kind, in misunderstanding and defection.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 385.3.‡

[<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.1846&index=0>]‡

36. How do you think you would have responded to being with Jesus during the events of this lesson? Think of the people in our day who would love to use the power of Jesus to attain political or military objectives!
37. Jesus and His disciples traveled back and forth across the Sea of Galilee several times. We need to recognize that on the western side was Jewish territory but on the eastern side was the Decapolis or Gentile territory, dominated by Greek speaking individuals.
38. Was Jesus preparing His disciples for when they would need to work among the Gentiles?

[Iverson as quoted in BSG:] “The episode signals the beginning of a series of deliberate journeys into Gentile territory made by Jesus. The first encounter with Gentiles outside the Jewish homeland occurs east of the Sea of Galilee in the region of Gerasa. . . . The story of the Gerasene demoniac emphasizes Jesus’ power, inaugurates a mission among the Gentiles, and foreshadows a future ministry in Gentile territory. It is a preparatory mission that paves the way for his return to the region later in the narrative ([Mark] 7.31–37).”—Kelly R. Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark, “Even the Dogs Under the Table Eat the Children’s Crumbs”* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), p. 20.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 65-66].‡§

39. What should we learn from this lesson?

[BSG:] Sometimes we face disagreements with certain leaders or other members of our church community. To what extent do we permit these disagreements to affect our convictions or our relationships with our community? How does Jesus’ example give us insight about how to proceed in such situations?

Jesus went outside of His own community of faith to reach people from Gentile communities. What are we doing to reach people beyond our walls for God’s kingdom?—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 68.‡

40. Clearly, Jesus went beyond the walls of the Jewish community! Are we going outside our comfort zone? As we read earlier from the *Good News Bible* and now from *NASB*:

Mark 6:34: He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.—*New American Standard Bible*.* [2020]‡

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