

**The Church of the Servant King**  
**Survey of the Bible Series**  
***The Gospel of Matthew***  
(Lesson SB-MT8B)  
Matthew 8:23-34  
**Jesus Manifests Himself to Israel**

**Nature Obeys Jesus (8:23-27)**

Even though Jesus had less shelter than the beasts and birds (v. 20), he still has authority over nature. The disciples believed that Jesus could do something. They had seen his miracles. However, they failed to see that the one who had been raised up by God to accomplish the messianic work could not possibly die in a storm while His work remained undone. Jesus could sleep because He knew that His work was not yet done.

**Exorcising Two Men (8:28-34)**

The location for this event seems to have been in the district around the town of Gadara, about six miles away. The village of Gerasa lay about midpoint on the lake's eastern shore. On the adjacent hillside are ancient tombs used for a graveyard and caves were located there. The caves provided protection from the weather and a graveyard would render the men ceremonially unclean. This was Gentile territory as indicated by the presence of the pigs. Jesus had withdrawn here not for ministry, but to get away from the crowds. However, there was no rest from Satanic opposition. Both Mark and Luke only mention one man that was demon possessed. Matthew probably includes two because he had independent knowledge of a second.

Even though there was nothing in Jesus' command to betray His identity, the demons evidently enjoyed some independent knowledge of Jesus' identity. They also knew that there is a time when they will be tortured and rejected forever (Jude 6; Rev 20:10). The demon's use of the word "here" in verse 29 presupposes an understanding of Jesus' pre-existence on the part of the demons.

There are several explanations as to why the demons desired to be sent into a herd of pigs: 1) a desire for a bodily "home"; 2) hatred of God's creatures; or 3) to stir up animosity against Jesus. The first is not likely because the first thing the demons do is cause the death of their new home. The second and third are more plausible answers.

Jesus probably granted their request because it was a way to expose the real values of the people in the vicinity. They preferred pigs to persons and swine to the Savior. Jesus' ministry was not necessarily restricted to the Jews. The Gentiles, like the Jews, also rejected Him.