

Markan and lucan accounts of demon exorcism

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Introduction Exorcism refers to the removal of indwelling spirits or demons from a person through a ritual way. There are many instances in the bible that this happened. This is because people traditionally believed that Satan had demons roaming the universe trying to harm and destroy them. Many of the instances that Exorcism was cited in the Bible are recorded in the New Testament.

For example; Mathew 9: 32-33, Mathew 12: 22, Mark 9: 18-27 and Luke 11: 15-20. This is because the belief in demons entered early Christianity from Judaism. In the Gospels, Jesus is cited to have exorcised demons from people on many occasions. The accounts from the four gospels differ at times even though they refer to a similar occasion. This paper will try to analyze Markan and Lucan account of Jesus sending demons from a man into a herd of swine (pigs). The two accounts are found in Mark 5: 6-20 and Luke 8: 28-36 respectively.

Similarities In both, the man is the one who talked to Jesus and asked Jesus what to do to him (Jesus) referring to him as Son of the Most High (Mark : 6-8, King James Version) he also asked Jesus not to torment him. It is also recorded that Jesus asked him his name. In both, we are also told that there was a mountain nearby and a herd of swine feeding. In both, the word Legion is mentioned and noted to mean ' many'. In the two accounts the swine are sent out by Jesus' command and they head to the sea and are choked (Luke 8: 28-36 and Mark 5: 6-20).

The two accounts also note that the people that were used to eating the swine were quite amazed and they ran away to tell the rest and a crowd

gathered (Page, 1995). They found the man sitting and wearing clothes at the right hand of Jesus. Differences There are some very notable contrasts between the two accounts. The Markan account says 'son of the most high God' while the Lucan account omits the word 'God'. The Lucan account gives a small background of how the demons had tormented the man and led him to the wilderness which is visibly omitted by the Markan account (Page, 1995). The Markan account also gives an estimate of the number of the herd of swine that were by the mountain but the Lucan one does not.

When Jesus asked the name of the man, the Markan account says that the demons answered but the Lucan account says that it was the man who answered and said 'legion'. The people are recorded to have asked Jesus to leave their city in the Markan account. Also the man who had being freed of the demons is said to have asked Jesus to go with him in the Markan account. These extra details are omitted in the Lucan account (Luke 8: 28-36 and Mark 5: 6-20). Reasons and Application The authors of the two accounts may have depended on other people's stories as their source during writing or other recorded information to give theirs. This may have led to the distortion and hence the small disparity in the two accounts.

The most conservative Christians nowadays still believe in the presence of evil spirits in their lives and seek ways to try and get rid of them. This leads to people believing in witchcraft and getting duped as they try seeking intervention like the Jesus one. Other liberal Christians have long abandoned the belief in demons and regard the bible as a pre-scientific literal material (Barnes, 1995).