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JESUS GAVE PERMISSION

“Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. The demons implored Him, saying, ‘Send us into the swine so that we may enter them.’ Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand of them; and they were drowned in the sea,” (Mark 5:11-13). Of the many fascinating glimpses into the nature of Christ we see in this account, we are also given an astonishing glimpse into the nature of the demons as well. I find it amazing that even the demons acknowledge the complete authority of Jesus

when they seek His permission to enter the swine. It truly fascinates me that they requested the permission of Christ for this wish to be granted rather than acting on their own authority. The word Mark uses to describe Jesus’ consent to their request, *epitrepo*, means “to permit, allow, give leave.” Note its use in these other passages as it provides the concept of requiring permission.

“Epitrepo”

“And He said to another, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father,’ ”

Lk. 9:59

“'Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way,'”

Mt. 19:8

“Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You are permitted to speak for yourself,’ Then Paul stretched out his hand and proceeded to make his defense,”

Acts 26:1

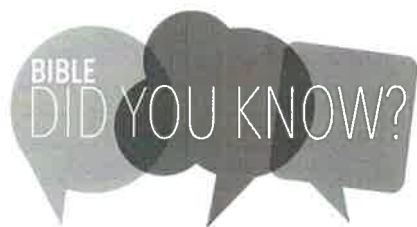
It is a bit strange to imagine Satan and his demonic cronies behaving in a way that first seeks the authority or permission of Christ before acting, but that is the only way they were able to enter the herd of swine on the mountain, by first requesting permission and having their permission granted. This is precisely how Satan was able to tempt Peter to sin by denying he ever knew who Jesus was. He gained permission or authority to do so. *“'Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat,” (Lk. 22:31).* The word Luke provides to

convey the action of Satan in regards to his temptation of Peter is the word *exaiteomai*, which simply means to gain permission by asking. “To ask or beg for one’s self, to ask that one be given up to one from the power of another.” This is consistent with the behavior of Satan as revealed in the first few chapters of Job, when permission was both asked and granted in regards to Satan’s wish to sift Job like wheat and prove no real faith in God was present. What is additionally fascinating about the account in Job is we see Satan not only operating in respect to permission being granted by God, but even respecting and obeying the limitations and boundaries God placed within the authorized realm in which Satan was permitted to act. *“'Put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.’ Then the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.’... 'Put forth*

Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face.’ So the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.’ Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head,” (Job 1:11-12, 5-7).

I’m always somewhat taken back when observing the character of Satan you actually discover certain behavior that is worth imitating. One such trait is his industrious nature of taking full advantage of the time he has to have the greatest amount of influence on others. *“Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time,” (Rev. 12:12).* Satan is not a procrastinator when it comes to using his time profitably in influencing others. While you let that sink in as you measure yourself next to the devil, you can also look at his attitude towards the

authority of God in regards to permissible and limited action as we continue to study and examine our own measure of respect and willingness to submit to His authority ourselves. *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth,” (Mt. 28:18).* – Daniel Ruegg



Michael the archangel had a dispute with the devil concerning the body of Moses. “Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties.

But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’”

Jude 8-9

People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



The Spring Citadel

Excavations around the Gihon Spring in the City of David uncovered a massive 3,800-year-old fortress. Called the “Spring Citadel” by archaeologists, the discovery was part of a 19-year excavation led by Professor Ronny Reich of the University of Haifa and Eli Shukron of the Israel Antiquities Authority. This enormous 18th-century B.C.E. structure that isolates and protects the Gihon Spring is believed to be the fortress described in the Book of Samuel that King David conquered: The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, “You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back”—thinking, “David cannot come in here.” Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David,” 2 Samuel 5:6–7. The Gihon Spring was also the site where King Solomon was crowned, according to the Book of Kings: “King David said, “Summon to me the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada.” When they came before the king, the king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. There let the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anoint him king over Israel; then blow the trumpet, and say, “Long live King Solomon!” 1 Kings 1:32–34. According to Oriya Dasberg, director of development in the City of David, “The Spring Citadel was built in order to save and protect the water of the city from enemies coming to conquer it, as well as to protect the people going down to the spring to get water and bring it back up to the city.” With 23-foot-thick walls comprised of stone blocks up to ten feet wide, the Spring Citadel represents the largest Canaanite fortress discovered thus far in Israel.

