

## Superhuman Strength

“No one was strong enough to subdue him.”

—Mark 5:4

**T**he Gerasene had been chained-up numerous times, but the demons within him had repeatedly broken his chains and the iron cuffs on his ankles. Today, thousands of police reports describe similar accounts of superhuman strength in people on bath salts, flakka, and PCP. We just read some accounts of the inhuman strength of bath salts and flakka users. Here are a few of people on PCP:

After being arrested, a man on PCP broke his own wrists to get out of his handcuffs, and then bludgeoned the police officers with his broken hands. It took six officers to subdue him.<sup>1</sup>

A police officer stopped a motorist who was on PCP. The motorist attacked the officer, who used his club to defend himself. After taking repeated blows to the head, chest, and arms, the motorist grabbed the officer's club, and shook the officer around in the air like a rag doll. Other officers arrived and shot the motorist in the leg and chest, but he still continued to toss the officers around. Finally, a group of officers subdued him. On his way into the ambulance he tore off his bloody compresses and threw them at the police.<sup>2</sup>

## PHARMAKIA

A PCP user in a hospital broke out of restraints designed to withstand 1000 lbs. of force.<sup>3</sup>

As I was presenting this information at a church in Florida, a sheriff's deputy told me that he once had a man on PCP pick up a full-sized, stocked refrigerator, and hurl it at him from twenty feet away. He threw it from his kitchen, across the living room, through a bay window, and onto the front porch when the deputy rang the doorbell in response to a domestic disturbance call!

There is no physiological reason why people would suddenly have such strength. The stimulants in bath salts, flakka, and PCP can trigger the release of adrenaline, which does increase strength and stamina, and the analgesic effects of PCP can deaden the user's sensation of pain, but these physiological changes do not account for the extraordinary strength people on drugs sometimes display. If superhuman strength was merely the result of the drugs, users would possess it every time they got high!

Superhuman strength can only be explained as the supernatural strength of a demon, and it is one of the best-known symptoms of demonic influence. Christian missionaries sometimes see this symptom when they cast out demons, and it can take a whole group of people to restrain someone who is demonized.

In *Demonology Past and Present*, Kurt Koch wrote:

The second sign of possession is the unusual strength exhibited by the possessed person. . . . When I was in the Philippines, [a] frail young man I had to deal with, who under normal circumstances I would have easily been able to contain, sometimes needed nine grown men to hold him down when the supernatural rage struck him.<sup>4</sup>

In *What Demons Can Do to Saints*, Merrill Unger wrote:

I have personally observed such a display of violent strength. It occurred during a prayer session of Christians for a young convert who was severely tormented by many demonic powers. While in the unconscious demonized state, when the demons were manifest and in control, suddenly he leaped up from the pallet on which he was reclining and seized a heavy piece of furniture. Brandishing it in midair, he threatened to hurl it at those engaged in battle for his release. Doubtless he would have

### *SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH*

thrown the object had the demon energizing him not been rebuked and forced to leave its victim.<sup>5</sup>

These accounts are consistent with the Bible's account of a demonized man who overpowered seven would-be exorcists:

Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.

One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

—Acts 19:13–16

It is important to note that the apostles, like all believers, had power and authority over demons through their relationship with Jesus.<sup>6</sup> The sons of Sceva had only second-hand knowledge of Jesus, and were no threat to the demon at all.

### ***Nakedness***

Another symptom that we saw in the Gerasene that is also seen in PCP, flakka, and bath salts users is nakedness. Mark 5:15 states that the Gerasene was "dressed and in his right mind" after Jesus cast the demons out of him. Luke's account says, "For a long time this man had not worn clothes."<sup>7</sup>

In chapter 23, we read several accounts of people running around naked on bath salts and flakka. PCP users are known for it as well. Consider this testimony from a former California police officer:

Many officers around the world have suffered major incapacitating injuries and even death while attempting to take into custody persons under the influence of PCP, an animal tranquilizer known for giving human users 'super-human' strength.

It is not unusual for the most aggressive efforts of five or six officers to be inadequate to control a single PCP suspect without serious injury to several of the involved parties.

## PHARMAKIA

A police officer was disarmed and shot in the face by a naked man who was under the influence of phencyclidine (PCP).

Four police officers responding to a single incident suffered an assortment of broken bones and concussions at the hands of a naked PCP suspect.

Another officer shot and killed a naked man on PHP (a PCP analog); the man had twice taken the officer's baton and was about to overpower him.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Self-harm***

Some drug users display yet another demonic symptom seen in the Gerasene: self-injury. Mark 5:5 says he "would cry out and cut himself with stones." PCP users are known for extreme acts of self-mutilation (see p. 284), and we will soon read an account of a meth user's gruesome self-injury, but this symptom is not limited to drug users. Approximately 10 percent of all teenage girls in the United States harm themselves, usually by cutting themselves. They are often referred to as "cutters," and there may be a spiritual source of their behavior as well.