

Mark 04 - Parable of the Sower; Why Parables?; Parable of the Lamp; Parable of the Seed Growing by Itself; Parable of the Mustard Seed; Jesus Calms the Sea

III. Opposition to the servant (Mark 3:20—8:33)

- (4) Opposition causes Christ to change the direction of his ministry (Mark 4:1—5:43)
 - (A) Revelation of the mystery age (4:1-34)
 - (a) Sower (4:1-20)
 - (b) Lamp (4:21-25)
 - (c) Growing seed (4:26-29)
 - (d) Mustard seed (4:30-34)
 - (B) Revelation to his disciples (Mark 4:35—5:43)
 - (a) Power over nature (4:35-41)

Mark 4

- (4) Opposition causes Christ to change the direction of his ministry (Mark 4:1—5:43)
 - (A) Revelation of the mystery age (4:1-34)
 - (a) Sower (4:1-20) (Cf. Matt 13:3-9; Luke 8:4-8)

The Coming Kingdom 17 An Interim Age: Sower (Matt 13:1-9,18-23)

1 Again He began to teach by the sea. And such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat on the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land.

1 He began to teach again by the sea. And such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land.

1 Then Jesus began to teach again beside the sea. Such a large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while the entire crowd remained beside the sea on the shore.

1 And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

- Again He got into a small boat to remove Himself slightly from the crowd in order to be able to teach (Cf. 3:9)

2 And He was teaching them many things **in parables**, and was saying to them in His teaching,

2 And He was teaching them many things in parables, and was saying to them in His teaching,

2 He began teaching them many things in parables. While he was teaching them he said,

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

- "...in parables" - *parabole*, "something thrown alongside"; a similitude

— The popular definition that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning is basically accurate as far as it goes

— The use of parables for teaching was a common rabbinic device that Jesus adopted and used with great skill

— Jesus used familiar images to help explain the spiritual truths in His message about "the kingdom" (v11,26,30)

- Why did He speak in "parables"? He used this approach so that He could arouse the careless and instruct the concerned, and yet conceal the truth from His enemies who would use it against Him (v10-12).

3 **"Listen to this! Behold, the sower went out to sow;**

3 **"Listen to this! Behold, the sower went out to sow;**

3 **"Listen! A farmer went out to sow.**

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

- "Listen" - Jesus introduced and concluded this parable with instructions that His hearers should give it special consideration (v3,9; Cf. v23)

— Jesus likely taught this parable many times during His ministry, and the disciples were familiar with it

— It is a key parable because it introduced elements that recur in the other parables Jesus taught that day, such as the seed

4 **as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up.**

4 **as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up.**

4 **As he was sowing, some seeds fell along the path, and birds came and ate them up.**

4 **And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.**

- "...ate it up" - the hard heart resists the Word of God, making it easy for Satan (the birds) to snatch it away

— Hard hearts must be plowed up before they can receive the seed and this can be painful (Jer 4:3; Hosea 10:12)

5 Other seed fell on the **rocky ground** where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil.

5 Other seed fell on the rocky *ground* where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil.

5 Others fell on stony ground, where they didn't have a lot of soil. They sprouted at once, because the soil wasn't deep.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

— "...rocky *ground*" - having no depth, nothing can last without roots

— The emotional hearer, not realizing the cost to be genuine. Always chasing the next "experience."

6 And when the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

6 And after the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

6 But when the sun came up, they were scorched. Since they didn't have any roots, they dried up.

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 Other seed fell **among the thorns**, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

7 Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

7 Others fell among thorn bushes, and the thorn bushes came up and choked them out, and they didn't produce anything.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

— "...among the thorns" - the one who does not truly repent and remove the weeds: the worldly cares and the lust for things

— The careful farmer is commanded to "break up the fallow ground, and sow not among thorns" (Cf. Jer 4:3; Hosea 10:12)

8 Other seeds fell into the **good soil**, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundred *times as much*."

8 Other seeds fell into the good soil, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

8 But others fell on good soil and produced a crop. They grew up, increased in size, and produced 30, 60, or 100 times what was sown."

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

- "...good soil" - the true believer evidenced by a changed life (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 5:19-23)

9 And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

9 And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

9 He added, "Let the person who has ears to hear, listen!"

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The Purpose of the Parables (Cf. Matt 13:10-17,34-35; Luke 8:9-10)

10 As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve *disciples*, began asking Him *about* the parables.

10 As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him *about* the parables.

10 When he was alone with the Twelve and those around him, they began to ask him about the parables.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

- The Twelve plus other disciples asked Jesus to explain the parables to them

— They were asking why Jesus was using parables to teach, as well as their meaning

11 And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the **mystery** of the kingdom of God, but for those who are outside, everything comes in parables,

11 And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables,

11 He told them, "The secret about the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside, everything comes in parables

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

- "...mystery" - *mystērion*, refers to a truth previously hidden but now revealed; it is knowledge that is unknowable from the OT

— If something is knowable from the OT, it is not a mystery. So the NT mysteries contained in Mark 4 (and Matt 13) cannot refer to what is clearly known from the OT.

- The parables of Mark 4 (and Matt 13) are explicitly said to contain the mysteries of the kingdom. The same is not said of other parables.
- He revealed this mystery in parables so that only those who really care will come to know the truth (Is 6:9-10; 42:18-20)
- Jesus made a distinction between those who accepted His teaching, the Twelve, and those who rejected it, the scribes and Pharisees
- God was giving those who accepted Jesus' teaching new revelation about the coming messianic kingdom. He was withholding that revelation from those who rejected Him. The parables were the vehicle of that revelation.
- If the presentation of direct truth in the form of Jesus' words has not been met with an effective hearing response (belief), Jesus will still present truth to unbelievers, but now only indirectly through parables
- Jesus' followers (believers) were given the mystery by God, but even they still needed Jesus to explain it to them
- The Holy Spirit enabled the receptive to understand this enigmatic revelation, but He made it incomprehensible to the unbelieving

12 so that WHILE SEEING THEY MAY SEE, AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR, AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND IT WOULD BE FORGIVEN THEM."

12 so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven."

12 so that 'they may see clearly but not perceive, and they may hear clearly but not understand, otherwise they might turn around and be forgiven.'

12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

- Jesus quotes Is 6:9-10 to show that God was doing through Jesus what He had done through Isaiah centuries earlier
- God uses revelation to both enlighten the receptive, but he also uses it to befuddle the unreceptive
- Their inability to comprehend is a divine judgment for their unbelief (Cf. Rom 11:25-32)
- Further enlightenment requires positive reception of present revelation (Cf. Ezek 12:2; Matt 13:14-15; Luke 8:10; John 12:38-40; Acts 28:26-28; Rom 11:8-10)

Parable of the Sower Explained (Cf. Matt 13:18-23; Luke 8:11-15)

13 And He *said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables?"

13 And He *said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables?

13 Then he told them, "You don't understand this parable, so how can you understand any of the parables?

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

- Jesus stated that if one didn't understand the parable of the Sower, one could not understand the other kingdom parables He would teach

— The idioms are consistent within the seven parables

14 The sower sows the **word**.

14 The sower sows the word.

14 The farmer sows the word.

14 The sower soweth the word.

- Jesus did not give His disciples several hermeneutical principles to understand the parables...He gave them a sample interpretation as a pattern that they could apply in understanding other parables

- Jesus' interpretation: the seed = the Word, or message from God, that "the Sower" proclaims

— People make either a positive or negative response to this message, for one of three reasons. Regardless of the reason, a negative response proves unproductive in their lives.

- "...word" - the "word" that Jesus was sowing was the good news concerning the messianic kingdom

Each of the three fruitless hearts is influenced by a different enemy: the hard heart—the devil himself snatches the seed; the shallow heart—the flesh counterfeits religious feelings; the crowded heart—the things of the world smother the growth and prevent a harvest.

These are the three great enemies of the Christian: the world, the flesh and the devil (Eph 2:1-3). [Wiersbe]

It is up to each hearer to let the Word sink in and become fruitful. If he only hears without responding—without doing something about it and committing himself to their meeting—the words are in danger of being lost, or of never coming to anything. The point of the parable then becomes about the learner's responsibility, and about the importance of learning with one's whole will and obedience, and not merely with one's head.

15 These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately **Satan** comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.

15 These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.

15 Some people are like the seeds along the path, where the word is sown. When they hear it, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

- "...Satan" - the birds are the ministers of Satan

16 And in a similar way these are the ones sown *with seed* on the **rocky places**, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy;

16 In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the *rocky places*, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy;

16 Others are like the seeds sown on the stony ground. When they hear the word, at once they joyfully accept it,

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

- "...rocky places" - impulsive hearers without roots

17 and yet they have no *firm* root in themselves, but are *only* temporary; then, when affliction or persecution occurs because of the word, immediately they fall away.

17 and they have no *firm* root in themselves, but are *only* temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

17 but since they don't have any roots, they last for only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes along because of the word, they immediately fall away.

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And others are the ones sown *with seed* among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word,

18 And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word,

18 Still others are like the seeds sown among the thorn bushes. These are the people who hear the word,

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things enter and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

19 but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

19 but the worries of life, the deceitful pleasures of wealth, and the desires for other things come in and choke the word so that it can't produce a crop.

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And those are the ones sown *with* seed on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept *it* and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundred *times as much.*"

20 And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

20 Others are like the seeds sown on good soil. They hear the word, accept it, and produce crops—30, 60, or 100 times what was sown."

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

There are specific forces that fight against the seed-bearing fruit:

- The world smothers the growth in crowded hearts (v7,18-19)
- The flesh produces a temporary response in shallow hearts (v5-6,16-17)
- The devil snatches the seed from hard hearts (v4,15)

As we sow the seed in our preaching, teaching, and witnessing, we must not become discouraged (Gal 6:9; Ps 126:5-6) for God will use His Word as He sees fit, and it will not be wasted (Is 55:8-11). Neither should we become elated over a false growth (v30-34). A mustard seed is tiny but, when grown, produces a large shrub, not a tree. There is the suggestion here that Satan (the birds in the tree, v15) will encourage a false growth that will give opportunity for the enemy to work. In Scripture, a large tree can symbolize a great worldly kingdom (Ezek 17:22-24; 31:3-9; Dan 4:20-22).

(b) Lamp (4:21-25) (Cf. Mark 4:21-25; Luke 8:16-18)

Jesus' statements in this parable appear scattered throughout the other Gospels:

- v21 occurs in Matt 5:15; Luke 11:33
- v22 occurs in Matt 10:26; Luke 12:2
- v24 occurs in Matt 7:2; Luke 6:38
- v25 occurs in Matt 13:12; 25:29; Luke 19:26

This demonstrates that Jesus frequently used these expressions at other times during His ministry, not just here.

21 And He was saying to them, "A **lamp** is not brought to be put under a basket, or under a bed, is it? Is it not *brought* to be put on the lampstand?

21 And He was saying to them, "A lamp is not brought to be put under a basket, is it, or under a bed? Is it not *brought* to be put on the lampstand?

21 Then Jesus told them, "A lamp isn't brought indoors to be put under a basket or under a bed, is it? It's to be put on a lamp stand, isn't it?

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

- "...lamp" - represents the illumination that Jesus had just given about the purpose of the parables and the meaning of the parable of the sower

— He did not want His disciples to conceal what He had just told them, but to broadcast it

22 For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has *anything* been secret, but that it would come to light.

22 For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has *anything* been secret, but that it would come to light.

22 Nothing is hidden except for the purpose of having it revealed, and nothing is secret except for the purpose of having it come to light.

22 For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

- While v21 expressed a parable, this verse explained a literal reality

- People do not hide precious things forever; they conceal them temporarily, then bring them into full view

— If they remain hidden forever, they are virtually lost

— People only conceal them to protect them from others who would abuse or steal them

— Thus, the disciples should not conclude that just because God had previously hidden the characteristics about the kingdom that Jesus was revealing, that He wanted them to remain unknown. The time had come to proclaim them publicly.

23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen!

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And He was saying to them, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and *more* will be given you besides.

24 And He was saying to them, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides.

24 He went on to say to them, "Pay attention to what you're hearing! You will be evaluated by the same standard with which you do your evaluating, and still more will be given to you,

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

- The disciples needed to carefully consider what Jesus was telling them
- To the degree that they paid attention to what He said, would be the degree to which they would profit from it
- God would graciously bless attentive disciples with even greater benefit than the effort they would expend in obeying His words; their blessing would be disproportionately large.

25 For whoever has, to him *more* will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

25 For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him."

25 because whoever has something, will have more given to him. But whoever has nothing, even what he has will be taken away."

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

- The Lord gives you some truth and sees how you receive it and what you do with it; that will determine the next step
- If a disciple pays attention to and assimilates the revelation God has given, God will increase their capacity to understand and give additional revelation
- On the other hand, a person who does not use their ability to understand and respond to God's revelation, appropriately loses that ability
- The word "hear" is used 13x in this chapter and refers to the receiving of God's truth into the inner person, just the way soil receives the seed. We must be careful how we hear (Luke 8:18) and what we hear (v24); for this determines what we have to share with others.

(c) Growing seed (4:26-29)

26 And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like a **man** who casts **seed** upon the soil;

26 And He was saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil;

26 He was also saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seeds on the ground.

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

- Apparently Jesus addressed this parable to the multitudes (Cf. v1-9). Each parable to the multitudes illuminated something about the messianic kingdom.

- "...man" - in view of the former parable, he represents Jesus and His disciples

- "...seed" - represents the good news about the kingdom, just like in the parable of the Sower

27 and he goes to bed at night and gets up daily, and the seed sprouts and grows—how, **he himself does not know.**

27 and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows—how, **he himself does not know.**

27 He sleeps and gets up night and day while the seeds sprout and grow, although he doesn't know how

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

- The seed grows mysteriously, without the continuing work of the sower. God causes it to grow.

- "...he himself does not know" - automatic, "by itself"; this word is in the emphatic first position in the sentence

28 The soil produces crops by itself; first the stalk, then the head, then the mature grain in the head.

28 The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head.

28 the ground produces grain by itself—first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29 Now when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

29 But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

29 But when the grain is ripe, he immediately starts cutting with his sickle because the harvest time has come."

29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

- At harvest time, the sower, who had played no visible role in the growth of the crop, returned to the field as its reaper

- The same divine Person who sows also reaps
- This parable can be summarized in four words:
 1. Sowing (v26)
 2. Sleeping (v27)
 3. Growing (v28)
 4. Reaping (v29)

All we can do is sow the seed; God alone can give the increase (1 Cor 3:6-7). We cannot make the seed grow; in fact, we do not fully understand how the seed grows. Our task is to sow the seed and be alert when the harvest is ready (John 4:35-38).

While sleeping is sometimes a picture of sin (Rom 13:11-14; 1 Thess 5:1-11), here it simply reminds us that hard-working people need their rest (Mark 6:31). If workers do not take care of themselves, they cannot do the work God has called them to do.

(d) Mustard seed (4:30-34) (Cf. Matt 13:31-32; Luke 13:18-19)

The Coming Kingdom 19 An Interim Age: Mustard Seed; Leaven (Matt 13:31-33)

30 And He was saying, **"How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it?**

30 And He said, **"How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it?**

30 He was also saying, **"How can we show what the kingdom of God is like, or what parable can we use to describe it?**

30 And he said, **Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?**

- This parable assured the multitudes that the kingdom would one day be impressively large. The OT predicted that it would cover the earth and incorporate Gentiles as well as Jews (Ps 2; Ezek 17:22-24; 31:6; Dan 4:12).

31 *It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is the smallest of all the seeds that are upon the soil,*

31 *It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil,*

31 *It's like a mustard seed planted in the ground. Although it's the smallest of all the seeds on earth,*

31 *It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:*

32 yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants, and forms large branches, with the result that **THE BIRDS OF THE SKY** can NEST UNDER its shade."

32 yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade."

32 when it's planted it comes up and becomes larger than all the garden plants. It grows such large branches that the birds in the sky can nest in its shade."

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

- "...BIRDS OF THE SKY" - emissaries of Satan

The Fulfillment of Prophecy (Cf. Matt 13:34-35; Mark 4:33-34)

33 And with many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to understand *it*;

33 With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it;

33 With many other parables like these, Jesus kept speaking his message to them according to their ability to understand.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

34 and **He did not speak to them without a parable**; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.

34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.

34 He did not tell them anything without using a parable, though he explained everything to his disciples in private.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

- Similar to Matthew's account, which is more detailed and includes a total of seven parables

- "...He did not speak to them without a parable" - this is astonishing: He only spoke in public with parables, explaining it to the disciples in private

— The turning point was Mark 3 (Matt 12), when they ascribed His actions to Satan

The Sea of Galilee

In Jesus' day this beautiful body of fresh water, 13 miles long and 7-1/2 miles wide, was dotted with populous towns, such as Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, Magdala and

Tiberias. The lake abounds in fish, with fishing an important industry (Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20). The sunny climate, with health-giving sulphur springs near Tiberias, made it a mecca for the sick, and a fruitful scene for Jesus' healing ministry (Mark 1:32-34).

The lake lies in a depressed cup 680 feet below sea level and enjoys a healthful semi-tropical climate. The Israeli Defense Force is the only air force that must have special altimeters to fly up the Jordan Valley: below sea level. The lake was often subject to sudden and violent storms as the cold air from snowy Lebanon collided with the warmer air above the lake. The valley on the NW side, near Magdala, formed by the two prominent mountains: "The Horns of Hattin" which create a venturi effect that can cause a surprising squall on this relatively small body of water (as we shall note in this chapter).

(B) Revelation to his disciples (Mark 4:35—5:43)

(a) Power over nature (4:35-41) (Cf. Matt 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25)

35 On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, "**Let's go over to the other side.**"

35 On that day, when evening came, He *said to them, "**Let us go over to the other side.**"

35 That day, when evening had come, he told them, "**Let's cross to the other side.**"

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, **Let us pass over unto the other side.**

- Going from the west side to the east side (5:1)

36 After dismissing the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.

36 Leaving the crowd, they *took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him.

36 So they left the crowd and took him away in a boat without making any special preparations. Other boats were with him.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

- Jesus wanted to get away from the multitudes who had given Him no rest at all that day (3:20—4:34) and before

The Galilean Fishing Boat

In 1986 a Roman-era fishing boat was discovered in the mud during a drought when the lake was at a record low. It was 26ft long and 7ft wide, of Lebanese cedar and oak. It was radiocarbon dated 85 BC—15 AD, and thus appears typical of the Gospel period. After careful chemical treatments, it has been placed on display in a specially built facility, Yigal Allon Museum, next to Kibbutz Nof Ginosar, since 1995.

37 And a fierce gale of wind *developed, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling *with water*.

37 And there *arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.

37 A violent windstorm came up, and the waves began breaking into the boat, so that the boat was rapidly becoming swamped.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And yet Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they *woke Him and *said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

38 Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they *woke Him and *said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

38 But Jesus was in the back of the boat, asleep on a cushion. So they woke him up and asked him, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to die?"

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

- The fact that Jesus could sleep in the midst of a violent storm shows His physical exhaustion
- This is the only place where Matthew, Mark or Luke record Jesus sleeping
- The disciples did not like the fact that Jesus appeared to be unconcerned about their safety
- There is an notable contrast between the disciples' anxiety and Jesus' lack of concern
- Did Jesus know the storm was coming? Can He be trusted in the storms of life?
- These were not "landlubbers" unfamiliar with these waters: these were professional fishermen well acquainted with seamanship and the storms characteristic of this area
- Some (Barnhouse, et al.) believe that this was a supernaturally induced storm (in anticipation of the events of the next chapter?)
- Just as Satan raised the storms that destroyed Job's poverty and children, he may have been trying to destroy Christ before He could go to the Cross

39 And He got up and **rebuked** the wind and said to the sea, "**Hush, be still.**" And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

39 And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "**Hush, be still.**" And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

39 Then he got up, rebuked the wind, and told the sea, "**Calm down! Be still!!**" Then the wind stopped blowing, and there was a great calm.

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, **Peace, be still.** And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

- "...rebuked" - *epitimaō*, to muzzle; to admonish sharply
- "...Hush, be still" - *phimoō*, "be muzzled!" [there was even more "muzzling" to come on the approaching shore!]
- Jesus would use the same terms (rebuked, *epitimaō*; Hold thy peace, *phimoō*) when stilling the storm (Mark 1:25)
- His "rebuke" of the wind and "muzzling" of the waves are phrased in the language of exorcism, recalling the power of God over chaos at creation
- Jesus address His creation as His "child" and it responded accordingly

40 And He said to them, **"Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"**

40 And He said to them, **"Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"**

40 He asked them, **"Why are you such cowards? Don't you have any faith yet?"**

40 And he said unto them, **Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?**

- Jesus expressed disappointment that the disciples had not demonstrated more mature faith (Cf. 7:18; 8:17-18,21,33-34; 9:19)

- "...afraid" - *deiloi*, timid; no truth in Him on this occasion

— They did not yet realize that Jesus was God—the One who controls nature (Cf. Ps 89:8-9; 104:5-9; 106:8-9; 107:23-32)

— Jesus anticipates comprehension on the part of the disciples, and yet they exhibit a profound lack thereof

41 They became **very much afraid** and said to one another, "Who, then, is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

41 They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

41 Overcome with fear, they kept saying to one another, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the sea obey him!"

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

- Indeed! Jesus completed the lesson and then gave His disciples an unexpected examination!

— They had listened to the Word of God, and that Word should have increased their faith (Rom 10:17)

- "...very much afraid" - *ephobethesan phoban*, describes a respectful awe that people feel in the presence of supernatural power (Cf. 16:8)

- They had seen Jesus perform many healings and exorcisms, but this was a new revelation of the extent of His authority
- Their question shows that they still didn't understand who He was

Alas, they failed the test! It is not unusual for terrible storms to come suddenly on the Sea of Galilee, although this one may have been satanic in origin—the word “rebuked” in v39 is the same word Jesus used when dealing with the demons (1:25).

Perhaps the enemy was trying to keep Jesus from arriving at Gadara, where He would deliver two demoniacs from Satan’s power. “With Christ in the vessel, you can smile at the storm”—if your faith is in Him and Him alone.

They’re getting the message...He was crucified on a cross of wood; Yet He made the hill on which it stood!” The storms of life can come suddenly; but none take Him by surprise. There is no life where sorrow does not come. However, earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

They can come for several reasons. Our review in Romans listed 10:

Why Do Christians Have Trials?

1. To glorify God (Dan 3:16-18,24-25; John 9:1-3)
2. Discipline for known sin (Heb 12:5-11; James 4:17; Rom 14:23; 1 John 1:9)
3. To prevent us from falling into sin (1 Peter 4:1-2)
4. To keep us from pride—Paul kept from pride by his “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor 12:7-10)
5. To build faith (1 Peter 1:6-7)
6. To cause growth (Rom 5:3-5)
7. To teach obedience and discipline (Acts 9:15-16; Phil 4:11-13)
8. To equip us to comfort others (2 Cor 1:3-4)
9. To prove the reality of Christ in us (2 Cor 4:7-11)
10. For testimony to the angels (Job 1:8; Eph 3:8-11; 1 Peter 1:12)

Application

- The storms of life can come suddenly, but none take Him by surprise. They can come for several reasons.
- There is no life where sorrow does not come, however, earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal
- We should note that the presence of Jesus on the boat did not keep the storm from coming
- Storms are promised
- We can cause the storm ourselves—Jonah did. The Lord can send one to discipline you (or to train you to help others in their storms...)

- And, of course, they can be produced by Satan, as here
- The wise man builds on the Rock
- Even the winds and the waves obey Him!