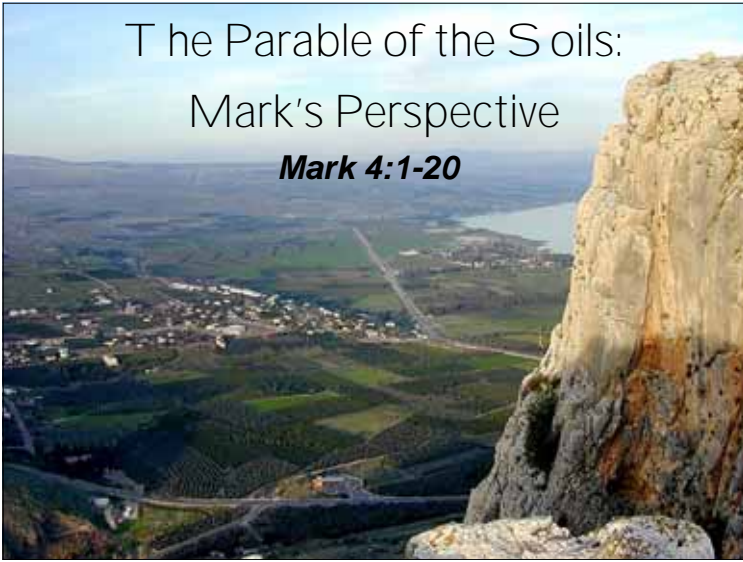


The Parable of the Soils: Mark's Perspective

Mark 4:1-20

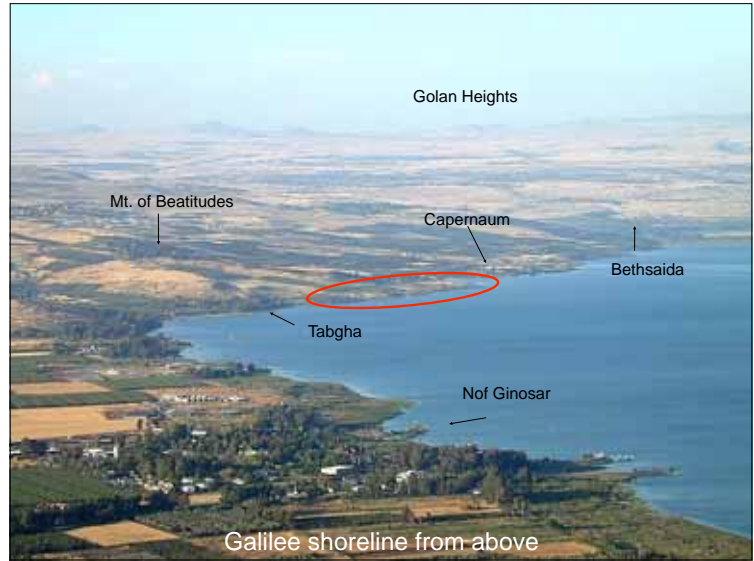


I. The Setting of the Parables (1-2)

- 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."



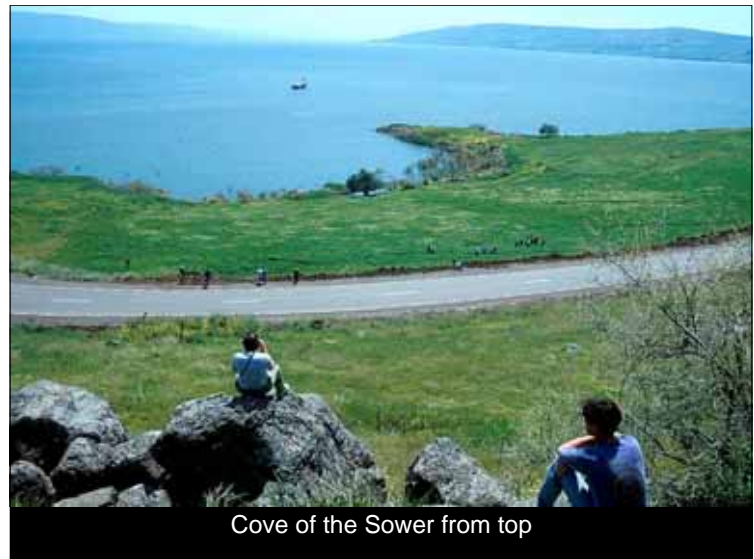
First century boat model at En Gev



Galilee shoreline from above



Cove of the Sower aerial



Cove of the Sower from top

I. The Setting of the Parables (1-2)

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

II. The Parable of the Soils (3-9)

- **The Hard Soil (4)**
- **The Rocky Soil (5-6)**
- **The Thorny Soil (7)**
- **The Good Soil (8)**
- **9** - "And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear.""

III. The Purpose of Parables (10-12)

- Cf. Mark 3:23 - "He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"
- **10** - "As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, *began* asking Him *about* the parables."
 - Matt. 13:1 - "That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea. And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach."
 - Matt. 13:34 - "All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable."
 - Matt. 13:36 – "Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."
 - Mark 4:33-34*
 - Cf. 4:10 – "[they] began asking Him about the parables [plural]."

The Order of Events

- 1) The healing of the demoniac (Matt. 12:22-23)
- 2) Jesus' teaching in a house in Capernaum (Mark 3:20-21)
 - The Scribes accuse Him of being possessed by Satan (Mark 3:22)
 - Jesus responds (Mark 3:23-30)
 - Jesus' family arrives (Mark 3:31-35)
- 3) Jesus' teaching at the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 13:1; Mark 4:1)
- 4) Jesus leaves the Lake and goes into a house (Matt. 13:36) and explains the parables privately to His followers.

Three Questions

- Their Questions...
- 1) What is the meaning of this parable?
 - Luke 8:9 – "His disciples *began* questioning Him as to what this parable meant."
- 2) What is the meaning of other parables?
 - Mark 4:10 - "As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, *began* asking Him *about* the parables."
- 3) Why are you speaking in parables?
 - Matt. 13:10 - "And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"
- Jesus' answers...
- 1) What does this parable mean?
 - Mark 4:13-20; cf. Matt. 13:18-23; Luke 8:11-15
- 2) What is the meaning of the other parables?
 - Matt. 13:36-43
- 3) Why are you teaching in parables?
 - Mark 4:11-12; cf. Matt. 13:11-15; Luke 8:10

III. The Purpose of Parables (10-12)

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

What is "the Kingdom of God"?

- Normally: the territory or realm over which a king rules.
- Biblically: the rule of God.
- Two distinct realities:
 - 1) the universal sovereign rule of God
 - 2) the messianic or mediatorial rule of God
 - a) a present aspect
 - A spiritual kingdom.
 - "the people over whose hearts Christ rules."
 - b) a future aspect
 - (i) The millennial kingdom
 - » Matt. 8:11-12 - "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline *at the table* with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;
 - (ii) The eternal kingdom
 - » 2 Pet. 1:11 - the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

III. The Purpose of Parables (10-12)

- **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.""
 - LXX translation of Isaiah 6:9-10.
 - Quoted 6x in the NT—always in the context of unbelief and hard heartedness.
 - Is. 1:2-4*; 5:1-7, 12b-13, 16, 20-21, 24b-25*

Pharaoh

- Who hardened Pharaoh's heart?
 - Hardening w/o mention of the agent
 - 5x; the initial sign & plagues 1,3,5,7
 - Hardened his own heart
 - 2x; plagues 2, 4
 - God hardened his heart
 - 3x; plagues 6,8,9
- Cf. John 9:39; 12:36-41



An Illustration



Application

- 1) For unbelievers
 - Cf. Is. 1:18-20
 - The invitation still stands: 9 - "And He was saying, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."
- 2) For believers
 - a) Celebrate the sovereign grace of God!
 - b) Persevere in sharing the gospel.