

Part 9

Jesus, Lord of All (4:35-5:20)

• *Lord of the Universe*

The Gospel of Mark moves from Jesus' greatness as a teacher, to His greatness as the Lord of the universe. We move from parables<sup>□1</sup> to miracles. **Jesus is Lord of creation** <sup>□2</sup>, Lord over Satan<sup>□3</sup>, Lord over death<sup>□4</sup> and disease<sup>□5</sup>.

□1 4:1-34  
 □2 4:35-41  
 □3 5:1-20  
 □4 5:21-24, 35-43  
 □5 5:25-34

**1. Lord of Creation**

First there is an event which shows Jesus as the Lord of creation. It is late in the day<sup>□1</sup>, so Jesus and the disciples start out by boat to go to the other side of the lake. Other boats come too<sup>□2</sup>. Suddenly there is a storm which is so violent it threatens to sink the boat<sup>□3</sup>; Jesus is asleep<sup>□4</sup>.

□1 4:35  
 □2 4:36  
 □3 4:37  
 □4 4:38

• *The disciples react badly to a sudden storm*

The disciples react badly. They almost seem to be blaming Jesus. When alarming situations come we feel hopeless ourselves, and it is easy to want others to do something, so we tend to blame others in order to goad them into action. It is because we feel helpless ourselves, yet we want someone to do something to help us. We unconsciously use blame as a means of pressing the other person to do something. The disciples did it to Jesus<sup>□1</sup>! But it is a bad habit which we have to recognize and resist.

□1 4:38

• *Two rebukes*

Jesus rebuked the storm<sup>□1</sup> and it calmed down immediately<sup>□2</sup>. Then He rebukes them. 'Why were you cowardly?' He asks<sup>□3</sup>. This kind of panic amidst crisis is the opposite of faith<sup>□4</sup>. **Cowardliness reveals a small and narrow faith in Jesus.** The disciples accused Jesus of not caring; apparently they had no idea that He could do anything about it. They did not wake Him expecting Him to calm the waves. They woke Him because they wanted Him to know what trouble He had got them into!

□1 4:39  
 □2 4:39  
 □3 4:40  
 □4 4:40

• *Ruler of the waves – worthy of greater trust*

**He revealed to them that He was worthy of greater trust.** The miracle led them to a new grasp of the greatness of Jesus. A few minutes before He had been asleep. No doubt His tiredness was the result of His work in ministry. He had fallen asleep with weariness after heavy work. Yet the One who had fallen asleep out of weariness is also the One who rules the universe. By faith in His own power, He knew He could speak a word to any aspect of creation and it would obey Him. He was weak enough to fall asleep. He was strong enough to rule the waves.

• *Jesus: divine and human*

Jesus is Lord of creation! At any time He wishes He can control wind and rain and storms. Yet it is the same Lord Jesus Christ who could be so tired as to want to sleep at the back of a boat after a hard day's work. Because He is the divine Lord of the universe He can cope with every emergency. Because He is a human being He can relate to us and our world and our needs. He combines deity and humanity, power and compassion.

**2. Jesus: Conqueror of Satan**

Next there is an event which shows **Jesus as the Conqueror of Satan**<sup>□1</sup>. He comes to the other side of the sea, to a town called Hippos (also called Gerasa – but it is not the town of that name in the Decapolis; and it is called 'the country of the Gadarenes' in Matthew 8:28-34, and

□1 5:1-20

• *A Demon possessed man*

'the country of the Gergesenes' in Luke 8:26-39). It is on the north-eastern shore of the lake. A wild and weird man approaches Him. He has the obvious signs of demon possession. He dwells in a place associated with death<sup>□2</sup>. He has unusual strength; even chains cannot hold him<sup>□3</sup>. He constantly wanders around the tombs shouting and cutting himself with stones<sup>□4</sup>. He is compulsively aware of who Jesus is. When the demon-possessed man saw Jesus he was immediately compelled to recognize Him. He acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah<sup>□5</sup>. Shouting in a

□2 5:3  
 □3 5:4  
 □4 5:5  
 □5 5:6-7

loud voice he speaks of 'Jesus, Son of the Most High God! If no one else recognizes Jesus, the devil knows who He is!

• Demons leave the man and enter nearby pigs

It is an obvious case of demon possession. Jesus orders the spirit to leave the man<sup>1</sup> and then asks his name. Apparently hundreds of evil spirits live within him<sup>2</sup>. Jesus gives the spirits permission to go into nearby pigs. It is within the traditional land of Israel and pigs were unclean animals in the Mosaic law. They should not have been keeping pigs within God's Israel. The demonized pigs destroy themselves<sup>3</sup>.

1 5:8

2 5:9

3 5:10-13

• Go and witness

Soon the news is reported and the Gerasenes are alarmed<sup>1</sup>. The restored man wants to be taken with Jesus as a disciple and trainee<sup>2</sup>. But the man is told instead to go and be a witness to those who live in the Decapolis, the area of 'Ten Towns' to the south and east of the lake<sup>3</sup>. The instruction is different from that given to the man in Mark 1:40-45, but then the danger of premature fame is not a problem in Gadara. It is a more pagan area and the danger of premature fame doing Jesus damage is not present as it was in the region of Capernaum.

1 5:14-17

2 5:18

3 5:19-20


• The authority of Jesus

The story demonstrates that Jesus was able to exercise authority in the realm of the demonic and not only in the realm of the weather. He could rebuke a storm; and He could rebuke a demon equally easily. To the disciples the incident came as an **encouragement and a warning**. It was an encouragement to know that Jesus could conquer and command even an abundance of demons.

• A warning – the people's choice

But it was also a warning. When Jesus comes the pigs have to go! The people had a choice between welcoming Jesus and losing their pigs, or asking Jesus to go in case He should deprive them of more of their illegal but profitable activities.

There is abundant evidence that Jesus can only bring them blessing. The man they know so well is standing there clothed and in his right mind. But they prefer pigs to Jesus and beg Jesus to leave. Tragically they get what they want. Jesus leaves them and never returns. They can keep any more pigs that might be around but they have lost the presence of the Son of God.

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