

HWMR - Crystallization Study of the Gospel of Mark

Book One, Week 8

Message Eight

The Kingdom of God (2)**The Kingdom as the Subduing of Rebellion
and as the Transfiguration of the Lord Jesus**

Scripture Reading: Mark 4:35-41; 9:1-13

Calming the Wind and the Sea 4:35-41

Mark 4:35 And He said to them on that day when evening had fallen, Let us go over to the other side.

Mark 4:36 And leaving the crowd, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat; and other boats were with Him.

Mark 4:37 And there arose a great windstorm, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already beginning to fill up.

Mark 4:38 And He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. And they woke Him and said to Him, Teacher, does it not matter to You that we are perishing?

Mark 4:39 And having awoken, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Be silent! Be still! And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.

Mark 4:40 And He said to them, Why are you cowardly in this way? How is it that you do not have faith?

Mark 4:41 And they became greatly frightened and said to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?.

Being Transfigured on the Mount 9:2-13

Mark 9: 1 And He said to them, Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall by no means taste death until they see the kingdom of God having come in power.

Mark 9: 2 And after six days Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up alone into a high mountain privately. And He was transfigured before them,

Mark 9: 3 And His garments became sparkling, exceedingly white, such as no fuller on earth could whiten them.

Mark 9: 4 And Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were conversing with Jesus.

Mark 9: 5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tents, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah.

Mark 9: 6 For he did not know what to answer, for they had become extremely frightened.

Mark 9: 7 And a cloud appeared, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud: This is My Son, the Beloved. Hear Him!

Mark 9: 8 And suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone, but Jesus only with them.

Mark 9: 9 And as they were coming down from the mountain, He ordered them not to relate to anyone the things which they had seen, except when the Son of Man has risen from the dead.

Mark 9:10 And they kept the word, discussing among themselves what rising from the dead was.

Mark 9:11 And they asked Him, saying, Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

Mark 9:12 And He said to them, Elijah does indeed come first and restore all things. And how is it that it is written of the Son of Man that He should suffer many things and be counted as nothing?

Mark 9:13 But I tell you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him the things that they wished, even as it is written of him.

THE REALIZATION OF AUTHORITY BEING A GREAT REVELATION

In the universe there are two great things: **believing** unto salvation and **submitting** to authority. In other words, **to trust and obey**. The Bible shows us that the definition of **sin** is **lawlessness** (1 John 3:4). In Romans 2:12 the phrase “without the law” is the same as “lawless.” To be **lawless** is to **disregard the authority of God**, and to disregard the authority of God is sin. To **transgress** is a matter of **conduct**, but to be **lawless** is a matter of **attitude** and **heart**. The present age is one of lawlessness; the world is full of sins of lawlessness. Even the lawless one is about to be manifested. At the same time, authority will have less and less place in the world. In the end all authority will be overthrown. What remains will be a reign of lawlessness.

Hence, there are **two principles in the universe**—**God’s authority** and **Satan’s rebellion**. We cannot serve God on the one hand, while taking the way of rebellion with a spirit of rebellion on the other hand. Although a rebellious person can preach, Satan will laugh, because the principle of Satan is there in the preaching. **Service is ever attendant to authority**. Do we want to submit to God’s authority or not? We who serve God must gain this basic understanding at some time. It is like touching electricity. Once one touches it, he will never be careless with it. In the same way, once a man meets God’s authority and is smitten by it, his eyes will be enlightened. He will be able to discern not only himself, but others as well. He will know who is and who is not lawless.

May God be merciful to us that we would be delivered from the way of rebellion. We can lead God’s children in the proper path only when we know God’s authority and have learned the lesson of submission. (Authority and Submission, Chapter 1, Section 3)

DAY 1

I. The kingdom of God is the power to subdue rebellion—Mark 4:35-41:

- A. There are two great principles in the universe—**God's authority** and **Satan's rebellion**; the unique controversy between God and Satan concerns authority and rebellion—Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13:
1. **Rebellion** is the **denial of God's authority** and the **rejection of God's rule**:
 - a. **Satan** was originally an archangel created by God, but due to his pride he **uplifted** himself, **violated** God's sovereignty, **rebelled** against God, became God's adversary, and established his own kingdom—Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:2-19; Matt. 12:26.
 - b. When **man sinned**, he **rebelled** against God, **denied** God's authority, and **rejected** God's rule; at Babel men rebelled collectively against God to abolish God's authority from the earth—Gen. 3:1-6; 11:1-9.
 2. Although Satan rebelled against God's authority and although man violates His authority by rebelling against Him, **God will not let this rebellion continue; He will establish His kingdom on the earth**—Rev. 11:15.

DAY 2

- B. The Lord Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose—Mark 1:14-15:
1. The **kingdom of God** is a **divine realm** where God can exercise His authority to work out His plan—Matt. 6:10, 33; Luke 12:32; Col. 1:13.
 2. As God incarnate, the Lord Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God—to establish a realm in which God can carry out His purpose through the exercise of His authority—John 1:1, 14; 3:3, 5; 18:36:
 - a. To establish the kingdom of God, the Lord Jesus stood as a **victorious** man, **defeating** Satan and **withstanding** all hardship, opposition, and attack—Mark 1:13; Matt. 4:1-11.
 - b. The Lord Jesus **preached the gospel of the kingdom** so that rebellious sinners might repent and be saved, qualified, and equipped to enter into the kingdom of God—Mark 1:14-15; Matt. 4:17.
 - c. The Lord bound Satan, the strong man, and entered into his house to plunder his goods so that **sinners** might be **brought into the house of God through regeneration for the kingdom of God**—Mark 3:27; Eph. 2:19.
 - d. As the Lord cast out demons by the Spirit of God, He was **destroying** Satan's kingdom and **bringing** in the kingdom of God—Matt. 12:28.

In Mark 3:26 the Lord points out that if "*Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he is not able to stand, but has an end.*" Then He continues in verse 27, "*But no one can enter into the house of the strong one to plunder his goods unless he first bind the strong one, and then he will plunder his house.*" The "**goods**" here are sinners kept in Satan's house for his kingdom. The Slave-Savior **bound** Satan, the strong one, and **entered** into his house to **plunder** his goods so that the **sinners might be brought into the house of God** (Eph. 2:19) through **regeneration** for the kingdom of God (John 3:5). While the Slave-Savior was doing the gospel service, He was binding the strong one, Satan. The gospel service is a warfare to destroy Satan and his kingdom of darkness.

The Lord's word in verse 27 indicates that while He was **preaching** the gospel, He was **binding** the strong one in order to destroy his kingdom by **plundering** his house. In other words, **the Lord's preaching was a plundering**. Satan has captured all sinners and has placed them into his house, which is a prison. Hence, all sinners have become Satan's captives. But the Lord Jesus, who has the power of the Spirit, has come to preach the gospel. He has come to plunder Satan's house and to release his captives.

If we did not have the Lord's word recorded in verse 27, we would not realize that **when we preach the gospel we should plunder Satan's house**. We may think that gospel preaching is simply a matter of soul winning, a matter of saving lost sinners. The Lord, however, has a different concept concerning the preaching of the gospel. His concept is that **the preaching of the gospel to save sinners is the plundering of Satan's house to release his captives**. To be sure, this plundering destroys Satan's kingdom.

As He was **preaching** the gospel, the Lord was **destroying** the kingdom of Satan by the power of the Holy Spirit. At the time of His baptism He denied Himself, having Himself buried in the waters of death. The Lord would not do anything by His own power, strength, or energy. On the contrary, He did everything by the Holy Spirit. In particular, by the Holy Spirit **He preached the gospel in order to plunder Satan's house and destroy his kingdom**.

The **gospel service** is not only a matter of **preaching**; the gospel service also involves **fighting** and **plundering**. Sinners are the "goods" captured by Satan and kept in the stronghold of his house. Hence, not only do unbelievers need to be convinced and subdued, but also Satan's house needs to be **plundered** so that they may be **released** from their captivity. In order to release those held captive by Satan in his prison, we need power and authority. The Holy Spirit is our authority and power. From the Lord's auxiliary act here we realize our need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to preach the gospel. (Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 12, Section 1)

DAY 3

- C. The record in Mark 4:35-41 is a picture of rebellion and of the kingdom of God as the power to subdue rebellion:

1. Satan has a kingdom, the authority of darkness, which is against the kingdom of God—Matt. 12:26; Acts 26:18:
 - a. The **demons** belong to Satan's kingdom and possess people for his kingdom—Mark 1:23-27; 5:2-20; 7:25-30; 9:17-27; 16:9.
 - b. **Satan** is the **ruler of the world** and of the authority of the air; he has his **angels**, who are his subordinates as rulers, authorities, and world-rulers of the darkness of this world—John 12:31; Eph. 2:2; 6:12.
2. Between the word concerning the kingdom of God in Mark 4:26-29 and the record of the demonstration of the kingdom of God in 5:1-20, there is the incident of the stormy sea in 4:35-41:
 - a. The **fallen angels** in the air and the **demons** in the water **collaborated to frustrate** the Lord Jesus from going to the other side of the sea because they knew that He would cast out the demons there—5:1-20.
 - b. The Lord **rebuked** the wind and **commanded** the sea to be silent because of the rebellious angels and demons who were behind the scene.
 - c. After He rebuked the wind and spoke to the sea, the wind ceased, and there was a great calm, for the rebellion of the evil angels and the demons had been subdued by the power of the kingdom—4:39.

DAY 4

II. The kingdom of God is the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus—9:1-13:

- A. What is described in Mark 9:1-13 is a picture of the kingdom of God coming in power; the center of this picture is the **glorified Jesus**, and with Him are **Moses** and **Elijah**, representing the Old Testament saints, and **Peter**, **James**, and **John**, representing the New Testament saints—vv. 2-4.
- B. For the Lord Jesus to be transfigured meant that **His humanity was saturated and permeated with His divinity**; this **transfiguration**, which was His **glorification**, was equal to **His coming in His kingdom**—v. 2:
 1. The Lord's word in verse 1 about the coming of the kingdom of God in power was fulfilled by His transfiguration on the mountain—vv. 2-3.
 2. The **transfiguration**, the shining, of the Lord Jesus was His coming in His kingdom; **where His transfiguration is, there is the coming of the kingdom**—Matt. 16:28—17:13; Luke 9:27-36.
 3. The transfiguration of the Lord Jesus was the realization of what He is.
 4. **The kingdom is the shining of the reality of the Lord Jesus; to be under His shining is to be in the kingdom**—Rev. 22:4-5.

DAY 5

- C. Christ has been **sown** into our heart as a seed; this seed will **grow** and **develop** until it blossoms and is manifested in glory—Mark 4:26-29; Col. 3:3-4:
 1. In Mark 9 we see the transfiguration of Christ as the seed sown in Mark 4.
 2. The One whom we have received as the seed of the kingdom of God needs to grow in us until He blossoms from within us; this **blossoming will be the transfiguration of the Lord in us in a practical, experiential way**—Col. 1:27.
 3. **When Christ is transfigured within us, that transfiguration becomes the kingdom of God ruling over everything in our life**—v. 13.

DAY 6

4. The **church as the kingdom of God** cannot exist in the natural life but can **exist only in this realm of transfiguration**—Rom. 14:17.
5. If we are **willing to lose our soul-life for the Lord's sake**, we will experience a prevailing **transfiguration in the church life**; this transfiguration will be a genuine revival—Mark 8:35-38; Matt. 16:25-27.

EXPERIENCING THE LORD BLOSSOMING WITHIN US

The Lord Being Transfigured in Us

We need to consider this understanding of the **kingdom** as the **transfiguration of the Lord Jesus** in the light of our experience. When you **believed** in the Lord Jesus and **received** Him, you received a Jesus who **was not transfigured**. Just as the seed received by the soil is a seed that has not yet been transfigured, so in our experience the Christ we received was a Christ not transfigured. The **transfiguration** of a seed requires the **growth** of that seed into a mature plant and the **blossoming** of that plant. Therefore, we may say that the transfiguration of a seed requires growth and blossoming. In a similar way, **the Lord Jesus we received needs to grow in us until He blossoms from within us**.

We are the **soil**, and the Lord Jesus is the **seed** of the kingdom. When we received Him into us, we received Him as the One who had not yet been transfigured in our experience. Have you received the Lord Jesus, and is He now in you? We all can testify strongly that we have received the Lord and that He is in us. But has the Lord been transfigured in you? If the Lord who is in you has not yet been transfigured, others will not be able to see the kingdom of God in you. Since we have not yet experienced this kind of transfiguration, **we need the Lord to grow in us until He blossoms**. That blossoming will be the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus in us in a practical way. Such a **transfiguration is the kingdom of God**.

Enjoyment and Ruling

The transfiguration of the Lord Jesus within us becomes not only our **enjoyment** but also God's **ruling**. When the Lord Jesus is transfigured in us in a practical way in our daily living, that transfiguration becomes the kingdom of **God ruling everything in our life**. **This kingdom rules us and also gives us the full enjoyment of God**. (Life-Study of Mark, Chapter 66, Section 1)