

1. Opening Prayer

2. Intro: Interpreting Parables

a. Allegory (Early Church Fathers)

A method to find out a hidden meaning on a written word.

Origen (184 - 253): As a human being is composed of soul, spirit, and body,
the bible is composed literally, morally, and spiritually.

Irenaeus (100 or 140 – 200 or 203) (from seekingvirtueandwisdom.com)

Adam as prefiguring Jonah saved by Christ

Adam's disobedience as heresy, "The Church has been planted as a garden in this world, and the Spirit of God says, 'You may freely eat from every tree of the garden,' that is, you can partake of every word of Scripture of the Lord, but you shall not partake with any heretical discord..."

Moses' rod as Christ

b. One Point Analysis

Adolf Julicher (1857-1938): Parables have a one main point in a broad sense,
that is, religious ethics.

Charles H. Dodd (1884-1973): We can find out more than religious ethics in the parables,
if we focus on the actual situation when parables were told.
The kingdom of God between the actual and the critical situations.
Eschatology realized.

Joachim Jeremias (1900-1979): Eschatology not yet realized.
Early Churches adapted parables in their circumstances.
Thus, parables are polemic and apologetic.

c. Recent Studies

New Hermeneutic: Subjectivity. Parables interpret the readers.

Readers will face the difference between their expectations before reading
and new insights after reading.
Open ended realities (Mark. 4:9)

3. Read Mark Ch. 4

4. Discussion

- a. How would you relate Ch.4 with the previous chapter?
- b. Why do you think Jesus used parables?
- c. The kingdom of God was proclaimed to all people, but the Kingdom of God seems hidden in the parables. How shall we understand it?
- d. How do you understand Jesus' question in verse 13?
- e. Verse 34 says that Jesus explained all the parables to the disciples but Mark didn't write all the explanations for us. Why do you think Mark didn't write all the explanations?
- f. In this chapter, can you find out why Jesus told each parable? Or can you find out the context when each parable was told?
- g. In the parable of the sower, why do you think the sower sowed the seeds on the path, rocky ground, and among thorns?
- h. How do you understand the parable of a lamp?
- i. Can you compare the parable of the sower with the parable of a lamp?
- j. What is the point of the parable of the growing seed?
- k. What is the point of the parable of the mustard seed?
- l. Read YLT version. Do you find out anything interesting?
- m. Read Psalm 106:23, 25-31. Does it help to understand the story of Jesus calming a storm? If yes, how?
- n. In this chapter, Jesus' name was not mentioned even once. Do you think it is intentional? If yes, why?

5. Closing Prayer

³⁵ And he saith to them on that day, evening having come, 'We may pass over to the other side;'

³⁶ and having let away the multitude, they take him up as he was in the boat, and other little boats also were with him.

³⁷ And there cometh a great storm of wind, and the waves were beating on the boat, so that it is now being filled,

³⁸ and he himself was upon the stern, upon the pillow sleeping, and they wake him up, and say to him, 'Teacher, art thou not caring that we perish?'

³⁹ And having waked up, he rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be stilled;' and the wind did lull, and there was a great calm:

⁴⁰ and he said to them, 'Why are ye so fearful? how have ye not faith?'

⁴¹ and they feared a great fear, and said one to another, 'Who, then, is this, that even the wind and the sea do obey him?'