

# Mark

## The Gospel of the **Servant of God**

### I. The *Service* of the **Servant** (1:1-10:52)

- A. His *Preparation* for **Ministry** (1:1-20)
- B. His *Powerful Ministry* (1:21-2:12)
- C. His *Pointed Defense* of His **Ministry** (2:13-3:6)
- D. His *Progressing Ministry* (3:7-35)

### E. His *Practice* of Teaching in Parables (4:1-34)

#### 1. The *Parable* of the Sower (4:1-20)

#### 2. The *Parable* of the Lamp (4:21-25)

<sup>21</sup> 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**?

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

<sup>23</sup> If anyone has ears to **hear**, let him **hear**.”

<sup>24</sup> 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.

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

#### 3. The *Parable* describing Kingdom Growth (4:26-29)

<sup>26</sup> And **He** was saying,

“The kingdom of God is like a **man** who **casts seed** upon the **soil**;

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

<sup>28</sup> The **soil produces crops** by itself: first the **blade**,  
then the **head**, then the **mature grain** in the **head**.

<sup>29</sup> But when the **crop permits**, he *immediately* puts in the **sickle**,  
because the harvest has **come**.”

#### 4. The *Parable* of the Mustard Seed (4:30-34)

<sup>30</sup> And He said, “*How* shall we **picture** the kingdom of God,  
or by what parable shall we **present** it?

<sup>31</sup> *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**,

<sup>32</sup> 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**.”

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

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

### Lessons from the *Parables* (4:21-34)

#### 1. The *Parable* of the Lamp (4:21-25)

Having declared the **teaching** and **interpretation** of the **Parable** of the **Sower**,  
**Jesus** would now turn to **His disciples** and **exhort** them to share what they  
have *heard* with **others**. They were **not** to keep *hidden* the “**light**” of the  
teaching that they have **heard** from **Him**, but were to be like lamps that  
would naturally be put on lampstands to give light to the room.

The **Parable** of the **Lamp** highlighted the **important ministry** that His **disciples**  
would have had of sharing the “**light**” of **Jesus’ teaching** to others.  
**We too** are to let the “**light**” of what **we know** concerning the teaching of the  
**Lord** with others.

**Jesus teaches** that what is hidden will eventually be revealed, and we should  
be **careful** with how we “**measure out**” and **use** the light we have been **given**:

For whoever **has**, to him *more* shall **be given**; and whoever does **not have**,  
even what **he has** shall be **taken away** from him.” (4:25)

#### 2. The *Parable* depicting Kingdom Growth (4:26-29)

The kingdom of God is like a **man** who **casts seed** upon the **soil**, and then  
leaves to go about his **daily routine**. Without him **knowing** completely how it  
happens, the **seed** germinates, sprouts, and grows to maturity without his  
effort.

This **parable** illustrates the **unique** and **unstoppable nature** of **God's kingdom**, which **grows** and develops *independently* of **human effort**. The **kingdom of God**, like the **seed** cast to the **ground**, follows the same **dynamic process** of taking **root** and **growing gradually** until the time when it is **fully mature**, and ready for **harvest**.

### 3. The *Parable* of the **Mustard Seed** (4:30-34)

The **kingdom of God** is like the **mustard seed** which, when **sown** upon the **soil** is **smaller** than **all** the **seeds** that were **sown**. However, through it **begins** as the **smallest**, it **grows** and becomes **larger** than **all** the garden **plants**, and forms **large branches**.

This **parable** describes the **power** and **growth** of the **kingdom of God**. The **kingdom of God** will have the **smallest** of **beginnings**, but will **end** up **surpassing** all the **earth's kingdoms** in **power** and **glory**.

## Reflecting on the **Beginnings** of this *Present* Age-- a “**Mystery**” *form* of the **Kingdom of God**

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

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**, (Mark 4:10-11)  
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If you were a **Jew** in the **OT**, you would draw your **time line** with a **present age**  
and an **age to come**, *separated* by **Messiah's coming**.

The **Prophets** did not see but **one advent** (**coming of the Messiah**).

When **Jesus the Messiah** came into the world, **He** began  
**ministering miraculously** among the **people**, and was **preaching** and **teaching**  
that the **kingdom of God** was *at hand* (Mark 1:15).

The **rule** of the **Messiah** on earth, **promised** in the **OT**,  
and earnestly **longed for** by the **Jewish people**, was *near*.

However, as **Jesus ministered**, though **He** was **received** by **many**,  
**He began** to receive *more and more* **hostility** by the **religious leadership**,  
as well as the **people**, whose **hearts** were becoming **hardened** towards **Him**.

When the **religious leaders** accused **Him** of **casting out demons** by the **power of Satan**,  
**He declared** that this was **unpardonable** (Matthew 12:24, Mark 3:22),

and began to teach the people in parables.

When the disciples asked Him why He was speaking to them in parables,  
Jesus declared,

“To **you** it has been granted to **know** the *mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven,  
but to **them** (those who **disbelieved**) it has not been **granted** (Matthew 13:10-11).”

The rejection of Jesus the Messiah by many of Israel’s leaders and people  
meant that there would be a postponement  
of their **promised kingdom** on earth (Acts 1:6-8).

This however, did not mean that the **plans of God** were nullified.  
For through the rejection of the Messiah, the redemptive purposes of God  
would be **accomplished**, not *only* for Israel, but for all believers  
among the **nations**. (Acts 1:8) (Romans 11).

In order to **fulfill God’s purposes** for this **present age**, Jesus declared there  
would be a *mystery form* of the **kingdom** in this present age.  
The **parables** presented **truths** about this present kingdom, which were  
*mysteries* because they were not revealed in the OT  
(Matthew 13:11)(Ephesians 3:5-6).

This present age is also called by some the “inter-advent” period  
because it would be **between** the **first** and **second** comings of the Lord

## Personal Application

**We** should be like *Lamps*—letting our “*Light* so shine”

A. By **sharing** and **teaching** the *light* of God’s Word

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path...

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives *understanding* to the **simple**.  
(Psalm 119:105, 130)

For the commandment is a lamp and the *teaching* is light;  
and *reproofs* for discipline are the **way of life**...(Proverbs 6:23)

B. By **living lives** that are **characterized** by Righteousness

...for **you** were formerly **darkness**, but now **you** are light in the Lord;  
**walk** as **children of Light** (for the *fruit* of the Light consists  
in all **goodness** and righteousness and *truth*),

trying to learn what is **pleasing to the Lord**. (Ephesians 5:8-10)

C. By **living lives** that are **characterized by Good Works**

Let **your light shine** before **men** in such a way  
that they may **see your good works**,  
and **glorify your Father** in **heaven**. (Matthew 5:14, 16)