

Mark 4:35-5:43

Setting: Mark is recounting a time of Jesus with his disciples not long after his ministry has started. This section records (in narrative) the events of 4 different miracles. (but sequential)

This is not the actual text → it is my own paraphrase/summary to allow myself to see the main events, actions, & emotions involved...

- First story: Jesus asks his disciples to take him across the lake. They leave the crowd + get in the boat. Jesus goes to sleep on a cushion in the stern. [A furious squall comes up nearly swamping the boat] The disciples wake Jesus asking him if he cares if they die. He gets up and rebukes the wind and waves. (they obey) He asks his disciples why they were afraid. They are terrified asking who he is... [No one was strong enough to subdue him] He sees Jesus and falls to his knees in front of him. The demon addresses him as, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. The demon begs to be sent into a herd of pigs. Jesus gives them permission. The pigs (2,000) rush into the lake + die. The crowd sees the man dressed + in his right mind. The people are afraid. The man wants to go w/ them; Jesus tells him to share the news. He does; the people are amazed.
- Second story: Jesus + his disciples cross the lake and get out of the boat. A man w/ an evil spirit comes from the tombs to meet him. [No one was strong enough to subdue him] He sees Jesus and falls to his knees in front of him. The demon addresses him as, Jesus, Son of the Most High God. The demon begs to be sent into a herd of pigs. Jesus gives them permission. The pigs (2,000) rush into the lake + die. The crowd sees the man dressed + in his right mind. The people are afraid. The man wants to go w/ them; Jesus tells him to share the news. He does; the people are amazed.
- Third story: Jesus crosses back over the lake. A large crowd gathers around him. A synagogue ruler asks him to come place his hands on his daughter so that she might be healed. Jesus goes w/ him. A woman suffering from bleeding was also in the crowd. She had heard of Jesus + thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." She touches his cloak, the bleeding stops. Jesus realizes power has left him. He wants to know who touched him.

The disciples ^{unbelief} stiff at his question, but he keeps ^{perseverance} looking.
 The woman ^{in submission} falls at his feet and confesses. ^{no fear} "trembling with fear"
 He assures her her ^{belief} faith has healed her = "Go in peace"
^{beyond control?} → Jairus is told [his daughter is dead] + he should leave Jesus alone ^{no fear}
 Jesus replies, "Don't be afraid; just believe." ^{from faith}
 He ^{the witnesses} only allows Peter, James + John to follow him
 The people at the house are crying + wailing loudly. ^{unbelief}
 Jesus tells them that she is not dead, only asleep.
 They all ^{unbelief} laugh at him. ^{both}
 He takes the girl ^{physical} by the hand and ^{just words} tells her to get up.
 She ^{instant} (immediately) gets up and walks around
 They were astonished. ^{what / how?}
 He gives them strict orders ^{app. of vs. 19} (not to tell) anyone.

Observations

- Recurrence: There are several recurring themes w/in the narratives.
 - * In each story, Jesus faces something that the world sees as being "beyond man's control" → the storm threatened to swamp the boat, the demon-possessed man was too strong to be subdued or bound, the woman's bleeding was beyond the abilities of her doctors, and no one believed that Jairus' daughter could be raised from the dead = each scenario represents the "impossible"
 - ⇒ This, of course, is directly contrasted in each story by Jesus' ability to do the impossible → He rebukes the storm, He sends the demons away, He heals the woman, and He brings Jairus' daughter back from the dead.
 - ⇒ Each challenge also demonstrates Jesus' power over different things - He can control the natural world (the storm), the ~~physical~~ spiritual world (the demons), the physical body (the woman's bleeding), and even death itself.
 - ⇒ First He uses simply His words to calm the storm and command the demons, but the woman requires physical touch and faith in His power, and He both physically takes

the girl by the hand as well as uses his words to speak to her when he brings her back to life → this miracle also requires the faith of her father

* the last miracle represents a culmination of the previous ones

~~What are the implications of this recurring theme?~~

- What are the implications of this recurring theme? Why did Mark choose to emphasize the impossibility of each situation?
- Is there any significance to the 4 diff. types of miracles that Jesus performs? What insights can be gained as a result of the comparisons + differences b/w each demonstration of his power?
- What is the significance of the differing means of performing the miracles? Are they at all related to the different types of miracles that were performed? Why does Mark choose to make a point of pointing this out?

* Fear is also a recurring theme:

- During the storm, the disciples are first afraid for their lives and then terrified by Jesus' power; The demon is afraid of Jesus' power and the people are afraid of him after witnessing the results of the miracle; the woman trembles with fear before Christ as she confesses what she has done, and Jesus has to reassure Jairus to not be afraid after his daughter died

⇒ of course, this "fear" is presented almost synonymously with unbelief and in direct contrast to belief/faith in all of the stories: Jesus asks his disciples after the storm, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" Then the disciples and the crowd are afraid after the miracle has taken place b/c they don't know what to think of Jesus - they do not yet believe who he is (even after the demon announced it...); and at the end, Jesus himself draws a direct correlation b/w the two when he tells Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe."

⇒ However, even though the people are afraid, the disciples scoff, and the crowd laughs, ultimately all are amazed by

- what Jesus has done. Their disbelief is turned into awe (if not belief) at Jesus' miracles, His ability to do the impossible
- What is the meaning of fear? What is the significance of its recurrence throughout the narrative?
 - What is the meaning of unbelief? Why did Mark choose to portray it synonymously with fear?
 - What is the meaning of belief/faith? What is the significance of its direct contrast w/ belief - especially by Jesus Himself (2x)?
 - What are the implications of this recurrence and contrast for the readers/listeners?

* There is also the recurring mention of the crowd:

- Jesus originally gets into the boat to leave the crowd, but a crowd waits for Him on the other side. Then, when He returns, another crowd is waiting, but when He goes ~~red~~ into Jairus' house, He specifically leaves the crowd again.

⇒ The first and final miracles w/in this passage were performed w/ few witnesses while the 2 in the middle were done in front of a crowd.

⇒ When the crowd saw the miracle, Jesus told the man to ^(v. 19) share the good news in the Decapolis, but when the crowd was not there to witness it, Jesus told the family and the ^(v. 43) disciples that they were not to tell anyone.

- What is the meaning and significance of this? Why did Mark choose to repeatedly mention the crowd's activity and relation to Jesus in each of these miracles? ~~What is the significance~~
- What is the significance of Jesus' contrasting response to the two different situations? What are the implications of His role vs. the crowd's role in these narratives?

• Contrast: Almost all the recurring themes are presented alongside a contrasting idea. However, the tension of the contrasts found w/in this passage is best highlighted in 2 parallel comments by Jesus. During the storm, Jesus asks His disciples, (4:40),

"Why are you so afraid? Do you ^{still} have no faith?" to start the sequence of narratives, but the passage ends w/ Jesus reassurance to Jairus (5:36), "Don't be afraid; just believe." * Form = Inclusio?

⇒ This sums up the progression of the sequence of events

- Pivot: the woman's faith - "If I just touch his cloak, I will be healed" - she is the first person to show belief instead of fear, and she is rewarded for it.
- Climax: Jesus' admonition to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe." The disciples had little faith, the woman was healed by her faith, but the story doesn't end there → anyone can have that type (Jairus too) if he simply chooses to believe.

- What is the meaning of this contrast? How do the two parallel situations serve to emphasize Mark's message? What is the significance of the contrast b/w the characters involved in each?

- What is the relationship b/w the contrast, the pivot, and the climax? Why did Mark choose to arrange these narratives using these relationships? What are the implications of his use of this particular format? How does this structure affect the message of the passage as a whole?

⇒ With that in mind, I would probably choose to look at the paragraphs + sentences containing the contrast, pivot or climax of this passage.

- The contrast, of course, carries all the way down to the sentence level as Jesus directly contrasts fear with belief in his exhortation, "Don't be afraid; just believe." And both verbs are in the imperative, implying an active response of the listener/recipient
- The pivot point is set up by the dialogue b/w Jesus and the woman, which is in question and answer format as Jesus keeps asking (persistently), "Who touched me?" → The disciples don't understand the question, but the woman falls to her knees

in answer + then receives an even better answer (one that meets her deepest needs) in Jesus' reply

→ It's almost as if she didn't know what question she really needed to ask, but Jesus did so He persists until He can give her the answer she needs

- It's also interesting that the question the disciples ask at the very beginning of the passage is also answered, but not by Jesus. The disciples wonder "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" ⇒ the very next dialogue contains the response as the demon yells, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" - but there's no indication that the disciples even notice this, in fact they're not even mentioned in this story

- What is the meaning of these questions and the following answers? Why does Mark choose to present the dialogue and arrange the stories in this format?

- What are the implications of the identities of those who question ~~and~~ ^(varying) versus the response?

- The story of Jairus is juxtaposed with the story of the woman suffering from bleeding ⇒ Form: Intercalation

- Why? What is the significance of Mark's choice to tell them simultaneously like he did?

⇒ Both are stories of people of faith while the first 2 stories are not

- How does their relationship to each other affect their message/meaning? Does their proximity allow for new emphasis or insight into the truths about Jesus' character and actions presented within the narrative?