**The Gospel of Luke**

**Witness to the Gentiles - #10**

**The Galilean Ministry, Part 3**

**Luke 4:40-41, 42-44, 5:1-11**

**Luke 4:40-44 – “You are the Son of God!”**

***4:40*** *As the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him; and he laid his hands on each of them and cured them.*

***41*** *Demons also came out of many, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Messiah.*

Studies and notes

1. Whenever the Gospels mention the setting of the sun, it means it is Sabbath.
2. Jesus would lay his hands on the sick; this practice is not known in the OT.
3. The confession “*you are the Son of God*” appears also in Mark 1:34, Matthew 8:16.
4. Jesus rebuked the evil sprits so that they may not insert in their confession what may confuse those standing watching.

“Jesus does not need the witness of the evil spirits, for Jesus came only to save humans, as for the evil spirits they are not part of preaching the Good News.

– Abba Philemon”

**Luke 4:42-44 – Departs for other cities**

***Luke 4:42*** *At daybreak he departed and went into a deserted place. But crowds were looking for him; and when they caught up with him, they wanted to prevent him from leaving them.* ***43*** *But he said to them, “I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.”* ***44*** *So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea.*

**Studies and notes**

1. It was early morning and Jesus goes to isolated place; certainly not the Desert of Judea because the crowd followed him.
2. The crowds desired to keep him but Jesus wanted to preach.

**Important note of the kingdom**

1. Luke refers most of the time to the “*kingdom of God.*” This appears in 6:27; 7:28, 8:1, 9:2, 11:27,60, 62; 10:9, 11; 11:20; 13:18, 20, 28, 29; 14:15; 16:16 and many others). In all Luke says this 32 times, compared to 21 for the other three Gospels combined. Luke also uses “kingdom” only, as in 11:2; 12: 31, 32; 22:29, 30; 23:42.

Mathew and Mark used “kingdom of heaven.” Heaven means God in the common daily speech in the days of Jesus.

1. What is the Kingdom? It is God is ruling as King. We can understand this by a good reading of the Sermon on the Mount. There we can see how God is ruling:

- First as Father or the heavenly Father

- Second among the poor, the sorrowful, the meek, the hunger and those thirsting for what is right, the merciful, those whose hearts are pure, the peacemakers, and those who suffer persecution.

1. Those who are in the kingdom with the Father are like their king: they live a life that is not based on the Law and its interpretation. Jesus came not to add more commandments or to make the commandments more difficult, but he pointed to the heart to take the road to be like the Father.

**The mission of Jesus**

1. Very often verse 43 does not receive attention. Jesus says even to us now, “*I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose.*” Two important facts must be remembered:

a. The first is that Jesus brought this reign of the Father, so the kingdom is with him and in fact is his gift, “*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*” (Luke 12:32).

b. Second is that the reign of the Father is seen in the mission of Jesus. What does this mission reveal to us in our confused culture?

2. Jesus’s reign is the reign of mercy, salvation, restoration, new birth, resurrection and above all inheriting this kingdom forever.

**A Hymn**

Your cross, O Christ our God

The throne of mercy and life

Revealed to us your love for sinners

The same undivided love of the Father

Graft this power of love and mercy

Into our hearts

By the Holy Spirit

To become truly your disciples. – GHB

**A different area**

In verse 44 we see that Jesus goes to Judea, which is different from Galilee. Now Jesus is no longer preaching in that part where Jews and Gentiles lived together.

**Luke 5:1-11 – Simon is called to catch Humans not fish**

***Luke 5:1*** *Once when Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesart, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God,* ***2*** *he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets.* ***3*** *He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.*

***4*** *When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deeper water and let down your nets for a catch.”*

***5*** *Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.”*

***6*** *When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break.* ***7*** *So they waved to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink*

***8*** *But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Go and leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!”* ***9*** *For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken;* ***10*** *and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon.*

*Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching human beings.”* ***11****When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.*

**Studies and Notes**

1. Jesus, here, is still in Galilee on the shore of the Lake of Gennesart. Note that the call of Simon took place in the land of the mixed race.
2. Catching so many fishes here is almost identical with John 21:1-11. The basic difference is that in John’s Gospel the miracle happened after the resurrection, maybe to remind the apostles of their first call. In both accounts there is a confession of the divinity of Jesus as Lord.
3. The lake is not far from Capernaum (see Mark 2:2, 3:9). The name is Greek and around this lake still good, fertile land. The lake is called also “sea” (Josh 12:3 in the LXX)
4. “Two boats,” identified by the Greek word ***plorarion***, would mean “little boat” and it seems from verse 3 that both belong to Simon.



Fishing boat discovered in Galilee. *Yigal Alon Museum*

*in Kibbutz Ginosar in Israel*

**Text Notes**

**Verse 5** **-** Luke used the Greek title ***epistata***, “Master,” for a good reason. The title “rabbi” used in the other Gospels is not meaningful for Gentile Christians.

**Verse 6-7 -** The catch was too much. The nets were going to break, and even the two boats after they were filled with fishes were almost sinking because of the weight.

Peter’s encounter with the Lord.

Before the big catch, Jesus was *Master*, but after the big catch Jesus is *Lord*.

Peter dropped on his knee before Jesus. This is an act of worship and deep reverence.

**Verse 8-9 -** What is the meaning of Peter’s words “*Go and leave me*”? It does not mean get out of the boat, but “let me have a space to think.” Peter was seized with amazement. How can I be given such a blessing of such a big catch? Here comes his deep religious self-awareness, “*I am a sinner*,” just like Isaiah 6:5.

**Verse 10 -** “*You shall be catching humans*.” This was a well-known metaphor in the OT (see Jeremiah 16:16, Amos 4:2, Habakkuk 1:14-15) where God says, “*Look, I am sending for many fishers, says Yahweh, and they shall catch them.*”

**A Conversation with Philemon:**

**What did Jesus teach?**

I have asked Philemon this question and expressed my sadness that all the three Gospels did not give us any hint of what did Jesus teach?

Philēmōn was surprised and said:

I am not sad at all, because Jesus teaches us life.

Jesus does not hand over to us ideas, because even now he teaches life. Words are the best way of defining ideas, but for Jesus the gift of life is not ideas expressed by words. Life is discovering the fatherhood of God and this is not an idea but a fellowship with the Father of Jesus who is at the center of this revelation.

Here, all come to the Father in freedom. You can see this in all the Parables of the Kingdom.

**Cyril of Alexandria on the catching of the fishes**

“As He had now taught them sufficiently, and it was fitting also to add some divine work to His words for the benefit of the spectators, He bade Simon and his companions push off a little from the land, and let down the net for a draught. But they replied, that they had been laboring the whole night, and had caught nothing: in the name, however, of Christ, they let down the net, and immediately it was full of fish; in order that by a visible fact, and by a type and representation, miraculously enacted, they might be fully convinced that their labor would not be unrewarded, nor the zeal fruitless which they displayed in spreading out the net of the Gospel teaching; for that most certainly they should catch within it the shoals of the heathen.

“But observe this, that neither Simon nor his companions could draw the net to land; and therefore, being speechless from fright and astonishment – for their wonder had made them mute – they beckoned, it says, to their partners, those, that is, who shared their labors in fishing, to come and help them in securing their prey. For many have taken part with the holy Apostles in their labors, and still do so, especially such as search into the meaning of what is written in the holy Gospels; and others besides them, even the pastors and teachers and rulers of the people, who are skilled in the doctrines of truth. For still is the net drawn, while Christ fills it, and summons unto conversion those in the depths of the sea, according to the Scripture phrase; those, that is to say, who live in the surge and waves of worldly things.”

**Using what we already know**

**Note from Philemon**

“The Gospel account says that Jesus can use our former training and all the accumulated knowledge we gather from doing our jobs as introduction for the work of the Kingdom. The Tax Collector Levi that is Mathew has learned how to gain others while at his former job he learned how to gain money. Now fishermen learn patience and learn how to watch the nets, and where to go to catch fish. Such training made them able to lay the foundation of the church. I met an engineer a while ago and I told him that I wish to learn from him how to build because he was a great Builder and a successful person. But someone teased him and told him that he does not serve the Lord. I was sad because any service to our human life is a service to the Lord. He was comforted when I told him to see how building homes require wisdom and that there is a plan that he has to execute, so let this be an introduction that can help you to lean how to plan and organize inner life.”

Feb 10, 1956

**A short note: Why should we believe that Jesus is the Son of God?**

1. It is not hard to collect over 45 verses for the NT that all declare the Jesus is the Son of God. But why has this fact been repeated so many times and on various occasions?
2. This was not a topic that was debated even in the NT itself. It was a public confession by many people after seeing or witnessing something unusual like healing or casting our demons. But Jesus was not interested in making miracles but in teaching: the Fatherhood of God, the coming of the Kingdom, and the sending of the Holy Spirit to complete his mission.
3. We know this not only because “the Bible tells me so” as some of us sing, but also because Three Great Gifts we have received:
   1. First is the gift of Adoption that gives us access to the divine life of the Father and the courage to call the Father with Jesus, Abba.
   2. Second is the Gift of Eternal Life, that is marked by the resurrection from the dead just like the Lord himself.
   3. Third, Jesus re-generates our life, changes our old life and frees us from the tyranny of sin and death.

These three gifts couldn’t be given by a creature like us.

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