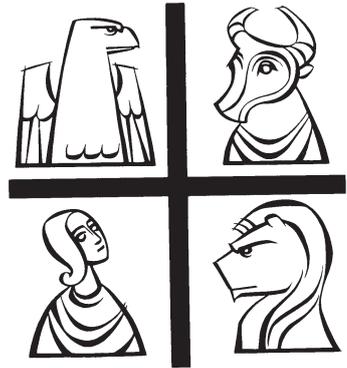


Reading Luke in Lent



Gospel of Luke 8:4-25

The Parable of the Sower

4 And when a great crowd was gathering
and people from town after town came to him,
he said in a parable,
5 'A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed,
some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it.
6 And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.
7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it.
8 And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold.'
As he said these things, he called out,
'He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'

The Purpose of the Parables

9 And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant,
10 he said,
'To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God,
but for others they are in parables, so that
"seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand."
11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.
12 The ones along the path are those who have heard;
then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts,
so that they may not believe and be saved.
13 And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy.
But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.
14 And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear,
but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life,
and their fruit does not mature.
15 As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word,
hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.

A Lamp Under a Jar

16 'No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed,
but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light.
17 For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest,
nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.
18 Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given,
and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away.'

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

19 Then his mother and his brothers came to him,
but they could not reach him because of the crowd.
20 And he was told, 'Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you.'

21 But he answered them,
'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.'

Jesus Calms a Storm

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them,
'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they set out,
23 and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake,
and they were filling with water and were in danger.
24 And they went and woke him, saying,
'Master, Master, we are perishing!'
And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased,
and there was a calm.
25 He said to them,
'Where is your faith?'
And they were afraid, and they marvelled, saying to one another,
'Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?'

Reflection

Jesus' family are those who hear the word of God and do it. They are like the seed which falls into good soil and grows and yields a hundredfold. But there are also those who do not act, who wither away, who hide their light. Those who listen will be rewarded — they will be given more than they have.

Despite all this teaching and explaining to the disciples what the parable meant they still forget or do not wholly realise who Jesus is. In the middle of the storm they panic. Jesus wakes up and rebukes not just the wind and the raging waves but also the disciples for their lack of faith.

- What sort of light does your faith burn with?
 - Is it one which others can see?
 - Does it enlighten others with the light of faith?

Prayer

God of the heavens,
God of the earth,
all creation awaits your gift of new life.

Prepare our hearts
to receive the word of your Son,
that his gospel may grow within us
and yield a harvest that is a hundredfold.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.
Amen.