A PLAN BEYOND YOU

MARK 4-6

MARK 4-6

- Teacher in a boat and in private (4:1-2, cf. 33-34)
- Parables: The Sower (4:3-29); the Mustard Plant (4:30-32)
- Power over Death, Spirits, the Lost (4:35-5:20)
- Giver of life (5:21-43)
- Measuring hometown, everywhere else, rulers (6:1-29)
- No distinction (6:30-56)

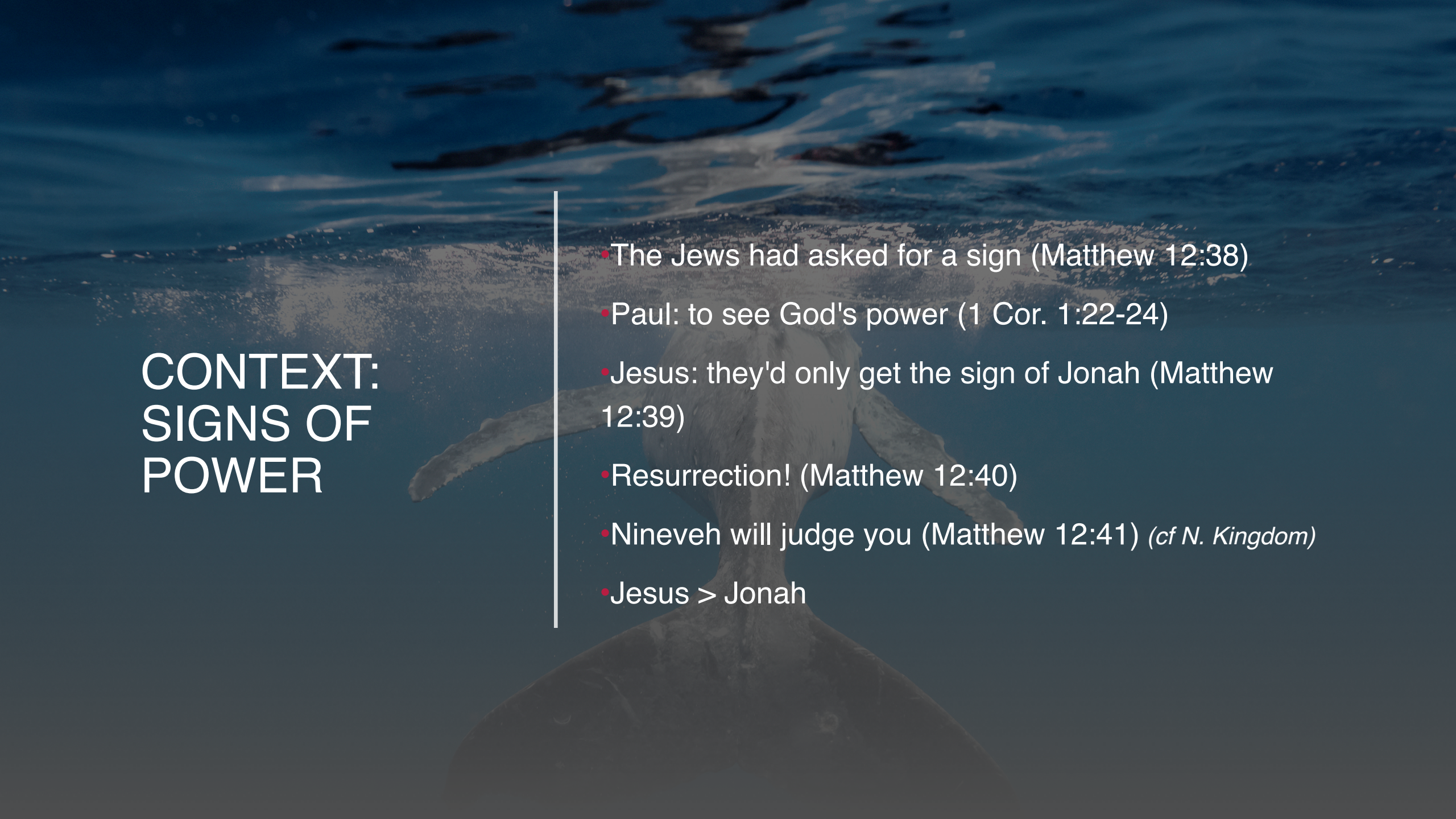
TEACHER IN A BOAT

- Unusual pulpit?
- Boats cross water
- Water separates and parts
- Boating: floating on a force you can't tame
- Chronology: probably right after Matthew 12

WATER AND THE PROMISE

- Exodus: up from slavery into God's liberty
- Joshua 3: up from exile into God's promise
- Water separates Exile from Promise, Death from Life
- ritual cleansing and conversion (trad.; *see* QR)
- preparatory repentance: John the Baptist





CONTEXT: SIGNS OF POWER

- The Jews had asked for a sign (Matthew 12:38)
- Paul: to see God's power (1 Cor. 1:22-24)
- Jesus: they'd only get the sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:39)
- Resurrection! (Matthew 12:40)
- Nineveh will judge you (Matthew 12:41) *(cf N. Kingdom)*
- Jesus > Jonah

CONTEXT: SIGNS OF WISDOM

- Common then: measure teaching by its effect
- Example: Socrates’ strange god, indicted Athens' order
- The gentiles’ intellectual high mark was the Greeks
  - Paul: to see God's wisdom(1 Cor. 1:22-24)
- Queen of Sheba to judge generation (Matthew 12:42)
- Jesus > Solomon

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

- **You sow so you get crops. Why sow to bad soil?**
- seed eaten by birds (4:4) = adversary and lies (4:15)
- seed lacking roots (4: 5-6) = people not durable (4:16-17)
- seed among thorns (4:7) = distracted people (4:18-19)
- seed in good soil (4:8) = hear, accept (4:20)
- **The Word measures its recipient.**

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

- **Why cast the seed everywhere?**
- **Lamps shine and secrets are for revealing**
- **You're being measured (4:24)**
- **4:14 = Isaiah 6:9 (ears “otherwise” they'd hear)**
- **Whatever fruit comes will be harvested**

PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD

- **mustard ≈ faith (Matthew 17:20)**
- **Jesus authors & perfects it (Hebrews 12:2)**
- **Smallest seed gives shade to everything else?**
- **History: weak made strong = revolution!**
  - (overheard atheist: altruism is naturally selective)
  - (maybe only a “Christian atheist” could argue that?)

“LET US GO OVER” — POWER OVER DEATH

- Not the first guy sleeping with a boat pillow mid-storm
- So similar to Jonah, cynical textual critics say “stolen”
- The men in Jonah's boat feared God
- The min in Jesus' boat feared Jesus

DEMONIAC — POWER OVER SPIRITS & THE LOST

- Gerasenes ≈ where Jesus will later feed 4,000 gentiles
- Jesus exerts power over a spirit nobody else could
- pigs = symbol of Roman power in the region
- These were the enemies of the Jews, and he's a super-Rabbi
- Jesus sent the freed man as 1st missionary to gentiles (5:19-20)

GIVER OF LIFE

- Jairus' daughter — no rush to resurrect (cf. Lazarus)
- Woman physicians couldn't heal: “Daughter, your faith”
- The scared dad: “only believe”

THE WORD MEASURING:

- Home: “could do no miracle” (belief must be *in Him*)
- Everywhere:
  - go unequipped, shake the dust of rejection
  - preaching repentance, casting out demons, healing
- Rulers: reluctantly lost message to political priority

THERE IS NO DISTINCTION IN GOD'S GRATUITY

- Jesus feeds Jews (12 baskets = 12 tribes of Jacob)
- “He intended to pass them” — his plan was in Gentile territory
- Jonah was thrown out of the boat; Jesus got in!
- This time in Gerasa, gentiles thronged to him for healing
- Many here like the one Jewish woman who touched his clothes
- Jesus to feed Gentiles (7 baskets = 7 nations; *see* Mark 8)

A PLAN BEYOND YOU

JESUS IS A SOWER WHO SOWS SO FRUIT WILL HAPPEN

WE ARE NOT MERE RECIPIENTS IN A BOAT BALANCING ON DEATH

WE ARE TO BEAR FRUIT WHERE THE BOAT IS HEADED