

PART 16: CONTRACTION: THE GRAND QUALIFIER OF BELIEF, 4:35-41. #1. Belief in Jesus Christ must be qualified in some way because faith (belief) is not purely a subjective response. #2. So the question is, just how is faith in Christ to be qualified? Some are persuaded that the true qualifier of belief is right doctrine, sincerity and genuine emotion. However, the Book of Mark presents qualified belief in specific terms. #3. "And He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?'" 4:41. The Lord tells the reader that up to that point the disciples who heard His teaching and witnessed His miracles "still" held no qualified faith in Jesus. #4. This poses the question as to why not? What was lacking? The answer is implicit; the disciples held no belief in the Lord's powers of contraction. They "still" had "no faith" that the material world would always contract back upon the will of Christ, the word of Christ, and the power of Christ. #5. Proof of this generalization was the Lord's response to the immediate circumstances. "And there arose a fierce gale of wind...waves...breaking over the boat...the boat was filling up", 4:37. Those afloat were in a state of panic while Jesus, astern, remained asleep. #6. Awakened, the Lord spoke "to the sea" as if it was human and not an inanimate thing. "Hush, be still"; the wind complied, 4:39. #7. "They became very much afraid and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?'" 4:41. #8. If one says he/she has faith in Christ yet has no belief that everything in time contracts back upon His will, then whatever he/she calls it, it is not qualified faith. #9. To have faith in Christ is to believe in the Lord's powers of contraction.

PART 17: PARABOLIC REASONING. #1. Jesus' use of parables ushered in a strange way of teaching as far as the disciples and everyone else was concerned, 4:2, 10. #2. However, His purpose was to begin the task of teaching a particular form of reasoning to which all present were unaccustomed. This was a revealed way of reasoning that may be referred to as parabolic reasoning, 4:13-25. #3. In parabolic reasoning, the starting point for thought is the word of God. Then that revealed language manifold is brought to bear upon the temporal inventory, in consequence of which the human mind (thought, speech, behavior) is expected to contract back upon the word of God. #4. Therefore, parabolic reasoning is the generalized way of understanding the world of time, facts and material reality. It is furthermore appointed to govern the relation of the believer to time. #5. Parabolic reasoning reverses the misguided dependence upon human wisdom and human experience. Parabolic reasoning is exquisitely counter intuitive, as it owes no debt to the temporal order. #6. Is it quite possible that many believers do not yet grasp the meaning and significance of the biblical parables? Is there any question that the New Testament parables mark the threshold of a revealed way of thinking about the world and the men and women in it? #7. Parabolic reasoning is the great powerful fortress from which we confront this world of pain, disappointment, and loss. It is the gift of God to every child of His. To those who are devoted to mastering it, parabolic reasoning is an abundant well of ever-increasing spiritual understanding. #8. "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.

PART 18: SUPERNATURAL CONTRACTION IS ABSOLUTE, 5:1-20. #1. Anything absolute is irresistible and invulnerable. The "country of the Gerasenes" (5:1) was in for a profoundly disturbing shock. "...immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him", 5:2. #2. Another confrontation between two supernatural powers began when the Lord set foot in that region. #3. A circumstance beyond human resolution: "...no one was able to bind him anymore with a chain...he had often been bound by shackles and chains...torn apart by him... no one was strong enough to subdue him, 5:3, 4. #4. Unbridled fear of the powers of contraction: It is curious that the demons sought out this sharp confrontation on their own, 5:6. And these unclean spirits were profoundly unnerved by the contractive power of Jesus, 5:7. #5. The Lord enforced supernatural contraction upon the unclean spirits. They came out of the man, 5:8. They were no match for the "Son of the Most High God", 5:7. #6. Fear of disembodiment: The showdown had come and "Legion" begged to negotiate. "And he began to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country", 5:10. Into the "swine" they went. The term "earnestly" implies that unclean spirits operate according to pure self-interest. Yet they are insecure in the presence of absolute power. #7. All such encounters are about power. The power to force circumstances. But it is disturbing to be caught in the middle. The locals who "observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind" (5:15) "became frightened". #8. There was too much power at one time and in one place, for comfort. "And they began to implore Him to leave their region", 5:17. #9. Absolute power was established again as a factual reality but the meaning of it was lost to them, except for the Gerasene, 5:18-19. We learn from this encounter that nothing is insuperable for the absolute power of God. Nothing! It is upon that absolute power that we must depend. #10. In every circumstance, situation and state of being, we remember that every source of redemption is downstream from the absolute powers of contraction!

PART 19: THE CONTINUUM OF CONTRACTION, 5:21-43. #1. Two physiological episodes serve as a setting for the study of a supernatural continuum of contraction. #2. One's physiology and that of loved ones is a very precious and fundamental gift. And, of course, human physiology is always highly vulnerable in the world. #3. The first physiology case: "... (a) synagogue official named Jairus... My little daughter is at the point of death... (she) died... twelve years old..." 5:22, 35, 42. #4. Second physiology case: "A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years... endured much at the hands of many physicians... spent all she had... not helped at all... grown worse", 5:25-26. #5. Inherent in the language of this text is the appearance of a supernatural continuum of contraction. The Lord lays this continuum across these two grave physiological circumstances and many more in the Book of Mark. We grasp its symbolism as a string of words. #6. This continuum begins with the fountain head of all things, God-->the Holy Spirit linking the Father to -->the Son, Jesus-->who demonstrated and taught the powers of contraction-->faith in the Lord-->a use of language-->the power of God-->human physiology-->resurrection and healing. #7. By what the Lord had already done in this book, hope had taken root in many people. Faith began to be generated in the reasoning of many forlorn souls. #8. Noticeable in this

continuum of contraction is its beginning; absolute, invisible and infinitely spiritual--and there was a terminus; temporal, material and physiological. In addition, there was an outcome, which was beyond human and experiential explanation. #9. "Jairus" and the "woman" with "a hemorrhage", were in desperation and both felt compelled to and invited to lay hold of the very apparent reality of this supernatural continuum of contraction!

PART 20: THE CONTINUUM OF CONTRACTION, 5:31-43. #1. The supernatural continuum of contraction becomes more than a religious conception. In this text this continuum, identified by the following sequence: God-->Holy Spirit-->Jesus-->demonstrated contraction-->Faith-->Language-->the power of God-->physiology-->resurrection/healing, became the axis around which the two physiological circumstances revolved. #2. Because of this continuum of contraction, human physiology was no longer a clinical event, nor a physiological event. It, in fact, became a spiritual event. In other words, the substance of the event was changed. #3. The faith of "Jairus" in God, in the Holy Spirit, in the powers of contraction would not allow the reduction of the event to its lowest common denominator, which was the physical. "Jairus" "fell at His feet and implored Him earnestly, saying, 'My daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live'", 5:22-23. #4. Along with Jairus, the "woman" with "a hemorrhage for twelve years" (5:25) adjusted language to the reality of the revealed spiritual axis of the event. "For she thought, 'If I just touch His garments, I will get well'", 5:28. The Lord assured her, "...Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction", 5:34. #5. She refused to reduce the situation to the lowest common denominator. In the case of the deceased twelve-year-old little girl, those attending knew she was dead. #6. The Lord made what some considered to be an absurd observation: "...Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep", 5:39. "They began laughing...", 5:40. #7. Generalization: The supernatural continuum of contraction stands against the usual human insistence on the reduction of personal circumstance to its lowest physical common denominator. Everywhere in the Bible that insistence is the hallmark of faithlessness.