

PLEASANT SPRINGS CHURCH • SERMON • THE CONQUERING KING,
PART THREE

Stronger Than Us

The sea, sin, the rebel powers, and the King who is mightier than the mighty waters

Stronger Than Us

A Sermon on Psalm 93:4–5 — Yahweh Reigns Over the Waters

By A Disciple of Jesus Christ • Pleasant Springs Church • August 9, 2026

Key Texts: Psalm 93:4–5 • Genesis 1:2 • James 1:14–15 • Deuteronomy 32:8–9 • Mark 1:40–42 • Mark 4:39–41

Stand on a balcony in Florida and look at the ocean long enough and it will tell you the truth about yourself. It is bigger than you. It is stronger than you. And there is no end of it in sight. Scripture knows that sea — it uses it, again and again, as the picture of chaos, of death, of the rebel nations, of everything that will not be tamed. This sermon walks from the surf line to Achan's tent to a leper's knees to a boat on the Sea of Galilee, and finds the same answer waiting at every stop: whatever is stronger than us has already been put beneath the feet of Jesus Christ.

THE BIG IDEA

There are real powers stronger than we are — the sea, our own sinful hearts, the desires that own us, the rebel spirits behind the idols, and death itself. Scripture never pretends otherwise. It simply insists that the LORD on high is mightier than all of them, and that the King who spoke to the storm has already conquered every one of them at the cross and the empty tomb.

THE SERMON TEXT — PSALM 93:4–5

Psalm 93:4–5 (ESV • MT 93 / LXX 92)

“Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty! Your decrees are very trustworthy; holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore.”

WHAT THE WATERS STAND FOR

The waters here are not merely an illustration. All through the Old Testament the sea carries a settled set of meanings, and every one of them matters this morning:

chaos

rebellion

untamable power

death

the nations

sometimes the sea itself

and ultimately every force set against God's good order

A BALCONY IN FLORIDA

Last week we were on vacation in Florida. One morning I was sitting on the balcony by myself, looking out at the ocean and the waves, admiring the beauty of God's creation — and then it hit me. Its size. And then I looked at myself, and how small I am beside it.

As I looked at the clarity of the water, and watched the waves, and felt the wind, I understood again why so many of us are drawn back to it every year.

But then it was as though the Lord began speaking to my spirit, showing me that sin — my own sinful heart and my own human weakness — reminded me of that sea. Apart from the grace of God, both of them are stronger than I am.

Sin often appears beautiful. It promises pleasure, or fulfillment, or security. But beneath the surface it is stronger than we are apart from God's grace.

THEN I WADED OUT

Later I walked on the beach, enjoying the warm foam rushing over my feet, tempting me to wade a little deeper. A couple of days later I did. I waded out about waist deep, and then about chest high — and the current of the rip was so strong that I felt like Jim Cantore on the Weather Channel leaning into the wind, except I was in water, and its strength was holding me up and pushing me back.

I realized very quickly that it was stronger than I was.

That is exactly how the Scriptures use the sea: chaos, death, rebellious nations, and forces beyond human control. Those images point us to every power that stands against God's good order — including sin, including suffering, and including the spiritual forces of evil.

Sitting there again, I looked out to the horizon where the water met the sky, and there was no end in sight. And at that point my mind went back to Genesis, and to creation, when the waters were chaos and the Spirit of God hovered above them.

Genesis 1:2 (ESV)

“The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

As I kept gazing at that horizon my heart began to melt, thinking how big, how strong, and how mighty God really is — for He is outside of time and space. So what does that mean for me and for you?

He is bigger than our problems.

He is stronger than our adversaries.

His grace is greater than my sins.

His love is deeper than any sea.

And outside of Christ, we have no hope at all.

Psalms 29:10 (ESV · MT 29 / LXX 28)

“The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.”

Yahweh reigns over the forces of chaos that no human can control.

THE SEA HIDES WHAT IT HOLDS

Take another look at the sea, because like sin it conceals its dangers. You know that out there are sharks, and jellyfish, and crabs, and barracudas, and riptides. All of them are present. Almost none of them are visible until it is too late.

Many of us visit the beach without ever once thinking that a tragedy could reach us or our family. We turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the drownings and the stings and the bites that happen every year — not to mention the shoreline the water is quietly eroding the whole time. And we do the very same thing with sin. We think: *I can handle it.*

Though the sea is stronger than me ... YAHWEH REIGNS!

Just as the sea draws people down to its shores, we are all lured and enticed by our own desire.

James 1:14–15 (ESV)

“But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”

If we go back to where we left off with Achan, hiding the spoils for himself, we will see that there was a deeper problem underneath than the things he took.

Joshua 7:21 (ESV)

“When I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath.”

His desire for material possessions had become greater than his desire to obey. And what we think we possess very often ends up possessing us.

Matthew 6:21 (ESV)

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

**Though Achan’s desires were stronger than him ... YAHWEH
REIGNS!**

Whether it is materialism, money, success, recognition, pleasure, pride, control, or fear, any of these can become a foothold by which our hearts are drawn toward idolatry — just as the rebellious spiritual powers drew the nations away from the true God.

When mankind rejected God at Babel, God gave the nations over to the sons of God.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 (ESV)

“When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.”

A note on the text. The ESV here follows the oldest witnesses: a Dead Sea Scroll of Deuteronomy (4QDeut^j) reads “sons of God,” and the Septuagint — the Greek Old Testament the apostles quoted — reads ἀγγέλων θεοῦ (“angels of God”; some Greek copies, “sons of God”). The traditional Hebrew text behind the King James reads “the children of Israel,” which is why a KJV in your lap says something different at this verse. We say so plainly rather than quietly choosing one. Either way, verse 9 stands: the LORD kept Israel as His own portion.

This does not mean God lost control of the nations. It means He gave them over in judgment, while keeping Israel as His own inheritance. Those spiritual rulers then accepted worship that belonged to the Lord. Instead of leading people to God, they enslaved them through idolatry. Behind idols stand real spiritual powers that want our allegiance.

Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

Whatever masters our hearts becomes an idol — whether it is carved out of wood or hidden inside our ambitions. Idols always promise freedom and always produce slavery. What we think we own ends up owning us.

**Though the nations fell under spiritual rebellion ... YAHWEH
REIGNS!**

Thinking about Achan trying to hide those spoils reminds me of the leper who came to Jesus in Mark 1.

Leprosy in that day was incurable. It often showed up as a small spot — something easily unnoticed, easily ignored, easily covered. But given time it spread, and it consumed the person who had it, and it was contagious. Those who contracted it were isolated and abandoned and left to die. Sin is exactly like that.

This man realized that he needed Someone bigger than his problem, and that without a Savior he was under a death sentence. We have to come to the same place. Our vices are bigger than we are. We are under the same sentence. And Christ Jesus is the only answer.

Mark 1:40–42 (ESV)

“And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, ‘If you will, you can make me clean.’ Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, ‘I will; be clean.’ And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.”

Notice what he came confessing. He believed Christ was able — he simply did not know whether He was willing. “If you will, you can make me clean.” And Jesus did more than grant the request. He reached out and touched the untouchable man, and said, “I will; be clean.”

Though leprosy was stronger than the man ... YAHWEH REIGNS!

Psalm 93 declares that the Lord is mightier than the mighty waters. The Gospels then show us that Lord standing up in a boat and speaking to the sea itself.

Mark 4:39, 41 (ESV)

“And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ... And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’”

The One who rules the sea is the same One who conquered sin, death, and the rebellious powers through His cross and His resurrection. The empty tomb is God’s own declaration that there is nothing stronger than Jesus Christ. Whatever is stronger than us has already been placed beneath His feet.

Ephesians 1:22 (ESV)

“And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church.”

SO WHAT?

If our King truly reigns over every power stronger than us, then His testimonies are sure. His Word can be trusted even when our feelings cannot. And because our King is holy, holiness is fitting for His house. If Christ reigns in our lives, then our lives should reflect His holiness. We do not pursue holiness to earn His victory — we pursue holiness because we belong to the victorious King.

Psalm 93 belongs to a small group of psalms (93; 95–99) that Old Testament scholars call the *enthronement psalms* — songs that open by announcing, in effect, “The LORD has become king.” They were sung by a people surrounded by neighbours whose own stories said the world was won in a fight against the sea. The following background is offered for deeper study — the same Author-and-Audience approach we use across the Discipleship School, with the Septuagint (LXX) and ESV set beside the preached text.

If you look this psalm up in a Septuagint, you will not find it at 93. Because the Greek tradition joins Psalms 9 and 10 into one, the LXX runs a number behind the Hebrew from that point through Psalm 147 — so **our Psalm 93 is Psalm 92 in the LXX**. That is the numbering the early church read and the Fathers quoted.

Psalm 93:4 (LXX 92:4) — The Waters and the LORD on High

ἀπὸ τῶν φωνῶν ὑδάτων πολλῶν θαυμαστοὶ οἱ μετεωρισμοὶ τῆς θαλάσσης,
θαυμαστὸς ἐν ὑψηλοῖς ὁ κύριος.

“Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty!” (ESV)

An honest difference worth naming. The Hebrew and the Greek do not say quite the same thing here. The Hebrew (and so the ESV and KJV) builds a comparison — the LORD is *mightier than* the waters. The Greek translator instead reached for *θαυμαστός* (*thaumastos*), “marvelous, wonderful”: “marvelous are the surgings of the sea; marvelous on high is the Lord.” Both readings land in the same place — the sea is awesome, and the Lord above it is more awesome still — but they get there by different roads, and it is worth knowing which one your Bible is travelling.

Psalm 93:5 (LXX 92:5) — Testimonies, Decrees, and a Fitting Holiness

τὰ μαρτύριά σου ἐπιστώθησαν σφόδρα· τῷ οἴκῳ σου πρέπει ἁγίασμα, κύριε, εἰς μακρότητα ἡμερῶν.

“Your decrees are very trustworthy; holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore.” (ESV)

μαρτύρια (martyria) — “testimonies.” The Hebrew word here is *’ēdōt*, and translations render it differently: the KJV has “thy testimonies,” the ESV has “your decrees.” The LXX reads *martyria* — literally *testimonies*, the same root that gives us *martyr*, one whose life is a witness. God’s decrees are not cold regulations; they are His sworn testimony about Himself, and they have been *ἐπιστώθησαν* — proven trustworthy, verified, shown reliable. That is exactly the ground the sermon ends on: a King whose word holds when our feelings do not.

Why the sea, and why these neighbours. Israel’s neighbours told creation stories in which a storm god had to defeat the sea before the world could stand — Baal against Yamm (“Sea”) at Ugarit, Marduk against Tiamat in Babylon. Psalm 93 uses that familiar picture and quietly dismantles it. There is no battle here. The LORD does not *win* against the waters; He is simply, already, higher than they are, and His throne “is established from of old” (v. 2). The sea lifts up its voice — and the LORD on high is mighty. That is why, when Jesus stands in a boat and the wind and the sea obey Him, the disciples ask the only question left to ask: “Who then is this?”

The threads in this sermon — the hidden sin under Achan’s tent, the rebel powers behind the idols, the heart that must be made new, and the King who reigns over the unseen realm — each open into a fuller study. Keep growing:

THE CONQUERING KING • PART 2

Hidden Things

Where we left off with Achan — the anatomy of hidden sin: first we see, then we desire, then we take, then we hide.

THE CONQUERING KING • PART 1

Conquering the Heart

The Captain of the Lord’s host with His sword drawn — the battle in the unseen realm, and the one battlefield every conflict leads back to.

THE UNSEEN REALM

Paul & the Deuteronomy 32 Worldview

The nations given over at Babel, the sons of God, and the powers behind the idols — the full study behind this sermon’s middle section.

A NEW HEART

Born From Above

If our vices are stronger than we are, the cure is never more effort — it is the new birth only God can give.

*“Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea,
the LORD on high is mighty!”*

Psalm 93:4 (ESV)