

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“(Jesus) walked along a little farther and He saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John...mending their nets. Jesus called them.

So they left their father in the boat with the hired men and followed him.”

Mark 1: 19-20

ZEBEDEE

Alone among the broken nets he watched them go. His flesh now grown, but still his hope, not just for those declining years of splicing rope and spinning yarns among his peers, but for the fragile continuity the simple rightly see avenging death. What father doesn't long to have his sons about him at the end?

Yet secretly, he'd always known they were not cut out for this. The younger, an incorrigible scribbler, who spent tomorrow's catch on books; the other, driven by God knew what wanderlust. That was the mother's influence: She always said: "They need a bigger pond than Galilee." Well now she had her wish.

But quit like that? Throw twenty years' apprenticeship and steady work away, after five minutes' chat with some smooth-talking landsman, offering dreams for pay? The old man studies his hemp-hardened hands, not daring to admit that he might have gone, had he been called. Instead, he thought about a wasted life of toil, of hauling fish to buy this boat and, through his boys, leave something to posterity.

Now who would ever hear the name of Zebedee?

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