

## **FAITH IN THE STORM** *Mark 4: 35-41*

**1. FOLLOWING JESUS DOES NOT STOP THE STORMS OF LIFE.** In the lesson the disciples are just following directions and are swamped. (v. 35-37)

**2. WHY JESUS BEING ASLEEP IS GOOD NEWS: as a real man he understands you.**

*Mark 4:38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion.*

**3. TRUE FOLLOWERS ASK DUMB QUESTIONS.**

*Mark 4:38 The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"*

The disciples are not so spiritual that they're not afraid. They are!

We will always be confronted by our own frailty.

**4. THE STORM IS STOPPED WITH JUST A FEW WORDS. CHRIST CAN CALM ANY STORM.**

*Mark 4:39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*

*John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

*Colossians 1:15-18 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*

*Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

**5. JESUS REBUKED THE WIND AND LOVED THE DISCIPLES.**

*Mark 4:40-41 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

<sup>41</sup> *They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"*

## Monday, June 22nd Read Mark 4:35-41

What was the purpose of this experience? Why was a storm allowed to arise on the sea with Jesus in the boat? The answer is given in [Mark 4:41](#). And what a marvelous purpose it was: to stir His people to ask, "Who the heck is this?" It's a question you've got to ask too! Jesus proved again that He is the Messiah! Calming the storm would do three things.

1. **It would demonstrate who He is:** the Sovereign Lord who has all power—even power over nature.
2. **It would strengthen the belief of His followers,** belief in Him as the Messiah and in His personal care as their Savior.
3. **It would give to all generations a picture of His care and power** to deliver through all the storms of life (trials and fearful experiences).

It does not matter what the storm or trial is nor how terrifying it may be—Jesus is able to deliver and bring about the most assuring calm. Few trials could be as terrifying as being caught in a life-threatening storm at sea. I got a great respect for the ocean! In this experience God has demonstrated His wonderful care and power to deliver the believer through all the 'storms' of life. Here is the organization:

1. [Rest and peace are sought after a tiring day \(v.35-36\).](#)
2. [Rest and peace can be experienced despite a great storm \(v.37-38\).](#)
3. [Rest and peace are a concern to Jesus \(v.38-39\).](#)
4. [Rest and peace come through two sources \(v.40-41\).](#)

**Read 4:35-36** It's time to kick back after a long day. You know what that's about!. Note it was evening of the same day when Jesus sought some rest and peace. He had been teaching all day to a multitude of people. The crowd had been so massive and pressing that they had forced Him off the shore into a boat (cp. [Mark 4:1](#)). As anyone knows, just being in such a massive throng of people struggling for space is tiring. That's why I never loved Disneyland—they let too many people in! It strains and taxes the strongest nerves. Imagine the fatigue of Jesus, having been responsible for the crowd, controlling and teaching them all day long. The fatigue and exhaustion of His body were seen in the fact that He left *immediately* for the other shore. He made no preparations whatsoever. Note the words, "they took Him just as he was" ([Mark 4:36](#)). Provisions, a change of clothing, notifying His family that He would be gone a while—nothing mattered but rest and peace. He was so fatigued He even slept through the storm ([Mark 4:38](#)). He just had to get away.

An interesting note that is not commented on by the other gospel writers is the simple statement: "There were also with Him other little ships" ([Mark 4:36](#)). Mark mentions this to stress His deity, His being the Son of God. There would be other witnesses to His great power and control over nature. Jesus sets a dynamic example in laboring to the point of fatigue and exhaustion. How many of us labor to the point that we just collapse, being unable to shower or change clothes, being so tired that we even sleep through violent storms? Now, that's what I call tired!

*1 Corinthians 15:58* Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

*John 9:4* As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

*Romans 13:12* The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

*2 Timothy 4:2* Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

## Tuesday, June 23rd Read Mark 4:37-38

Rest and peace can be experienced despite a great storm. Note the words "a great storm." The idea is a severe storm with...

- rolling black clouds thundering and tumbling in upon one another.
- gusts of wind slamming into everything standing in the path of the wind's force.
- heavy drops of rain falling like pellets upon the earth.

The idea in the Greek is something like the fury of a hurricane. Such violent storms were regular occurrences on the Sea of Galilee. This was a fresh water lake in northern Palestine. At its widest points it was only about 13 miles north to south, and 8 miles east to west. It would not be called a sea today because of its small size. There are several important facts to note about the Lake.

1. **The Lake was known by several names:** the Sea of Galilee ([Matthew 4:18](#); [Matthew 15:29](#); [Mark 1:16](#); [Mark 7:31](#)); the Sea of Tiberias ([John 6:1](#); [John 21:1](#)); the Lake of Gennesaret ([Luke 5:1](#)); and simply the "Sea" ([John 6:16-25](#)) or the "Lake" ([Luke 5:2](#); [Luke 8:22](#)). In the Old Testament it was called the Sea of Chinnereth (meaning heart shaped, [Numbers 34:11](#); [Deut. 3:17](#); [Joshua 13:27](#)) or Chinneroth ([Joshua 12:3](#); [1 Kings 15:20](#)).

**2. The Lake was surrounded by some of the richest and most heavily populated areas of Palestine.** Large towns flourished along its shores, towns which play a prominent role in Scripture: Capernaum, Bethsaida ([Mark 6:45](#)), Chorazin ([Luke 10:13](#)), Magdala ([Matthew 15:39](#)), Gadara ([Mark 5:1](#)).

**3. The Lake was subject to violent storms.** It sat 680 feet below sea level which gave the Lake a warm climate, but it was in a pocket-like basin surrounded by steep, fast-rising hills (2000 feet high) and funnel-like mountains. The funnels or deep ravines running down through the mountains have resulted from eons of erosion. When cold-fronts move in with their fierce winds, the cold whips through the funnel-like gorges and mixes with the warm temperatures of the Lake. Unpredictable and terrifying storms result ([Matthew 8:23-27](#); [Mark 4:35-41](#); [Luke 8:22-25](#)).

### Wednesday, June 24th Read Mark 4:37-38

*"The ship was covered with the waves" ([Matthew 8:24](#)).*

*"They were filled with water, and were in jeopardy" ([Luke 8:23](#)).*

While all the turmoil was going on, Jesus was in the back of the ship sleeping. He was, so to speak, at rest—at peace with Himself and with others and with nature itself. He was completely without guilt or shame, completely at peace with God. Think of the times you can't sleep--what's that about? Hmmmm.... Jesus rested perfectly in the care of God. Therefore He was able to rest through the storm.

**Read Matt. 8:24-25.** It's always scary to discover that you're not able to handle a situation. That's what the disciples saw. Their terrifying discovery was twofold.

**1. They, the seasoned and self-confident fishermen, were unable to handle this particular storm.** Note these facts about the disciples and the storm.

- a. **They were seasoned fishermen.** They knew the sea and the boat; they knew how to handle themselves in the midst of any situation or trial. The same is true with many of us. We are seasoned at living and in handling the storms of life. We feel that no trial or situation can swoop down upon us beyond our control. We are completely self sufficient, or so we think and feel.
- b. **They were face to face with a storm so severe that they were not able to save themselves.** No doubt they had faced storms before, but they had never confronted a situation as terrifying as this severe storm. Everyone of us will face a *storm that terrifies* us some day. The *terrifying storm* will be beyond our control. We will not be able to save ourselves. In life this is why we need a savior.
- c. **They were frightened and terrified.** They were completely helpless and hopeless, left to themselves. When the terrifying storm hits us, it will leave us fearful, helpless, and hopeless.
- d. **They apparently had tried to handle the storm without Jesus until the situation got out of control** (cp. [Matthew 8:25](#)). This, of course, is the root of the problem in many of our situations: lack of trust and faith in Christ and failing to call upon Him soon enough to prevent desperation.

**2. They were without the immediate help of Jesus.** To them, He was asleep. Jesus was present, yet He seemed so far away; He seemed asleep. He was out of reach, unaware of their desperate plight, unconscious of their need—so the disciples thought. How often our lack of trust and sin cause us to feel that the Lord is unaware and out of reach and untouched by our need. Of course, we're wrong.

*Jeremiah 10:23 I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.*

*John 3:27 To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven.*

*John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

*2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.*

### Thursday, June 25th

**Mark 4:38** *Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"*

Why did the disciples call upon Jesus now? Why not earlier?

- ⇒ The situation was totally *out of control*, beyond their ability to handle.
- ⇒ They were about to perish and die.
- ⇒ They had waited and waited, tried and tried to handle the situation themselves. They were prideful men: big, sturdy, capable, seasoned, and prideful in their profession. They had always handled every situation before; they could handle this one, or so they thought.

In the final analysis, the disciples confessed their need. They broke through their pride and came to Jesus. But note: they had almost waited too late, humanly speaking. Jesus *stirred Himself* and heard their concerns.

Note these significant lessons.

- 1) **Imminent danger can drive us to Christ**, but we need to remember three critical things.

- a) **We can wait too long.** We can die and slip into eternity before we know it.
- b) **We run a terrible risk in waiting.** We overlook something: a person who decides to wait until the last minute is not all that sincere about Christ, and Christ knows it.
- c) **We waste a lifetime of living** - really living in all the fulness of life. Abundant life comes only through Christ—the life that brings unbelievable confidence and assurance, security and self-worth, love and joy, peace and rest.

*John 10:10* The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.  
*Galatians 5:22-23* But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,<sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

- 2) **There is one ingredient so often missed in asking Christ to save us**—one ingredient that determines whether we are heard or not: a true sense of need—a desperate plea for help beyond ourselves—a crying out to the Lord Himself—a diligent seeking.

*Hebrews 11:6* And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

- 3) **Their cry included the steps necessary for Christ to save us.**

- a) They believed He could save them: so they came to Him.
- b) They confessed their need to be saved, that they were perishing.
- c) They cried out in desperation for Christ to save them.

- 4) **A desperate cry that will not quit will awaken the Lord to our need.** No matter what it may be, persevering in prayer will awaken Him and bring the answer.

## Friday, June 26th

*Mark 4:39-41* He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

The disciples were going through two human experiences, but *they were aware of only one*: the experience of terrible fear. What they failed to see was completely hidden to them. They were experiencing the root cause of fear: little faith. Their trust in Christ (that their lives were completely in His keeping and under His care) was lacking. Their trust was incomplete and immature. They were not sure that He was aware of their desperate need. But He was, just as He is aware of all needs—always. He was the One who asked, "Why are ye fearful?" It was as though He was shocked at their lack of faith.

*Matthew 17:20* He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.

### Note several lessons.

- 1) Christ was not disturbed with their calling and interrupting His sleep. He was disturbed with their fear and lack of trust. He is never disturbed with our crying out to Him.
- 2) There is no excuse for a disciple's fear. Of all people, believers are supposed to be the persons trusting Him, knowing that He is looking after their lives. Believers are to know His supernatural strength; they are supposed to walk through all things courageously, even death.
- 3) The disciples neglected Christ. They could have prevented much of their problem if they had gone to Christ earlier. As pointed out earlier, they were trying to handle the situation by themselves, confident of their own ability. How often we walk in self-confidence, not paying enough attention to the Lord and His care. We *always* need to be calling upon Him, not waiting until the last moment, expecting Him to step in and meet our emergency ([1 Peter 5:7](#); [Ephes. 6:18](#)).
- 4) Christ rebukes fear and unbelief but he's easy on the people. Fear and unbelief dishonor Him. It says to the world that Christ is not enough. He is not strong enough and does not care enough and does not love enough to look after us in our trouble and sin. How foolish we are ([John 3:16](#); [1 Peter 5:7](#); [Matthew 11:28-30](#))!
- 5) Faith is to be several things.
  - ⇒ Faith is to be the foundation of our lives, not a beam for emergency support.
  - ⇒ Faith is to be the flow of our behavior, not the serum for emergencies.
  - ⇒ Faith is to be the permeating thought of our mind, not the sporadic thought aroused by need.
  - ⇒ Faith is to be the constant plea of our heart, not the occasional cry of desperation.
- 6) Storms and trials can lead to terrible discouragement and fear...
  - fear that one has gone too far for recovery.
  - fear that no one really cares.
  - fear that one is a stumblingblock and a burden to others.
  - fear that there is no real reason for living.

But there is hope—in *Christ*. He is *The Great Deliverer* from fear. In fact, He is The Great Deliverer from all trials and temptations. It's the Good News and its free.

***Matthew 28:20*** *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*