

Calming the Storm

Scripture: Mark 4:35–41

Code: 41-21

Open your Bible, if you will, to the fourth chapter of the gospel of Mark, and we come to the final paragraph in this fourth chapter, verses 35 through 41; verses 35 through 41. Now, remember that Mark's purpose in writing the gospel is stated in chapter 1, verse 1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Mark, like all the other writers - Matthew, Luke, and John - has as his goal and his objective to make it clear, unmistakably clear, that Jesus is none other than God. That He is man, to be sure, but that He is God as well, the God-man. That will be demonstrated, magnificently, unforgettably, in the passage that is before us. We will see a beautiful portrait of His humanity, and we will see a staggering demonstration of His deity.

Let's look at the story, starting in verse 35. "On that day, when evening came, He said to them, 'Let us go over to the other side.' Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, 'Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?' And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Hush, be still.' And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? How is it that you have no faith?' They became very much afraid and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?'"

Well, the simple answer to that question is, He is God, because only God has such power over wind and waves. We shouldn't be surprised about that, since we hear the testimony of John, in John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word" - meaning Christ - "and the Word was with God, the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." That is to say that Christ, the Word, is the Creator of everything that exists. If He has the power to create it, He has the power to control it.

In Hebrews, chapter 1, it speaks of God's Son, who is appointed heir of all things, verse 2, "through whom also He made the world." And then in verse 3, He "upholds all things by the word of His power." Here, we are told that God made the world through the agency of Christ, and Christ sustains it by His power.

In Colossians, chapter 1, there is a similar testimony from the apostle Paul, where it tells us, in verse 16, "By Him" - that is, by Christ - "all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible...all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together." He is the Creator and the Sustainer of the creation; that is the testimony of Scripture, and those are only samples of the kind of testimony that is repeated in the New Testament regarding Christ. Another one is 1 Corinthians 8, which tells us, similarly, that He is the one who has made everything that has been made. "There is but one God, one Father, from

whom are all things...we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we exist through Him.”

He is the Creator of the universe; all things exist because He made them, and all things are sustained because He sustains them, so that when we come to an occasion like this, what we are seeing anecdotally, what we are seeing in the incident that happens, is this creative power. Creative power is demonstrated in every healing miracle. Whenever Jesus healed someone, it was a creative miracle. He had to give the person new limbs, or new organs; that's creation. But here, on a grand scale, He demonstrates His power over the inanimate world, the wind and the waves. He has displayed His power over demons; He can control the spiritual world. He has displayed His power over disease; He can control the human world, even in its physicality. And here He has power over the natural creation.

This demonstration is really unique in the New Testament. There are some other physical miracles, like the feeding of the five thousand and the feeding of the four thousand, where He creates food virtually out of nothing, speaks it into existence, clearly, an indication of His creating power.

But this is on a grander, if you will, and more powerful scale, and the Lord couldn't have picked a better place to demonstrate His power over His creation. This lake that is in view here is the very familiar Sea of Galilee. It isn't mentioned here, but it doesn't need to be, because we know the context. Jesus' ministry is being carried on in Galilee. His basic headquarters is in Capernaum, at the northern edge of the Sea of Galilee. He has been moving in that area, and teaching in the villages and towns of Galilee. On this particular day, He has spent the whole day in that area, on the edge of the sea. If you go back to chapter 4, verse 1, “He began to teach again by the sea” - that's the Sea of Galilee. “Such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land. And He was teaching them many things.”

The scene was repeated on a number of occasions. The crowd was so massive that they pressed Him all the way to the water's edge, and the only way He could get some space between Himself and the crowd, and say what He wanted to say, would be to get in a boat, and get off the shore into the water a little bit. The water would act as a little bit of a reflection of His voice, and the hillsides surround could create very much of an amphitheater, and so it would be easy for Him to be heard in that way.

So, in the very familiar territory of the Sea of Galilee - which isn't really a sea, it's a fresh water lake, and today it's known as Lake Kinneret, in Israel - but it's, to us, called the Sea of Galilee. It is the lowest fresh water lake on the planet; it is 682 feet below sea level. It isn't as low as the Dead Sea, but the Dead Sea is not fresh water; it is highly mineralized content, and the salt in the Dead Sea is so thick that you can float on the top of it rather easily. But this is the lowest fresh water lake in the world, and as a result of that, it has been much studied for its unique properties. It has a stratification of water. There are literally three stratifications of the water, that go down a hundred and fifty feet, and those stratifications have a lot to do with the surface of the lake at various times of the year. They have a lot to do with the content of algae, which has a lot to do with the content of fish. In 1896, one fishing boat alone brought in 92 hundred pounds of fish. It is a prolific lake for the production of fish, and having that kind of water and that kind of resource in Galilee was a great blessing to the people who live there.

It is surrounded by mountains. Essentially, on the west and the northwest, the mountains rise to

1,500 feet. On the northeast and the east, they rise to 3,000 feet, to the Golan Heights, which runs 42 miles in length, and the lake is only 13 miles, so it goes far past the lake; the lake is 13 by 8. So, it sits in a bowl, and the water that comes into the lake that comes - comes partly from some hot springs, but primarily from the Jordan River, which flows out of Mount Herman. Mount Herman is up in the north, on the Lebanon border, at 9,200 feet, so the water flows about 10,000 feet down, to fill up this lake in this bowl. It is such pristine, fresh water that it provides, even today, about fifty percent of the water for the nation Israel, so it was a tremendous resource to them, for water as well as for fish.

Now, that's why so many of the disciples were fishermen; up to seven of them. We know James and John, Peter and Andrew, and there may have been three more who were also fishermen on that lake. Because of its unique location, because it's only 30 miles from the Mediterranean, and it sinks so low, it has very special properties, because it is surrounded by these mountains. That adds to the uniqueness of the lake, and as a result, scientists have done research on this lake through the years to study it. It is different than all other bodies of water in the world, and what particularly makes it unique is the fact that it is subject to very, very severe winds. And both in the summer and the warm part of the year, and in the winter in the cold part of the year, it experiences these kinds of winds. The winds that come in the summer are the Sirocco winds, from the east; they'd be like our Santa Ana winds, only they typically come every day from noon to six o'clock. They're pretty predictable. The wind comes down hard off the Golan Heights and a little north of that, and it comes down, and it turns the lake into a boiling caldron, and it's pretty much the routine every day during the summer. These make it a very treacherous place to be in a boat at the wrong time.

The winter is even worse, because the winter winds are cold winds, that come from the north and the northwest, and when the cold air comes down, and it hits the warm air that naturally sits in the bowl, it creates a turmoil; the cold air goes through the warm air, and causes tremendous turmoil on the lake.

So, whether you're in the summer or the winter, it is subject to this. I have been there on a number of occasions, and I have seen these kinds of winds come out of nowhere. I remember one time we got in this metal boat, and we were going to go across the Sea of Galilee. And we were up in the bow, standing on the bow and enjoying the ride, and, all of a sudden, out of nowhere, the lake began to foam, and the waves began to rise. And pretty soon we had to run to the stern, to avoid the water splashing over the bow, only to be drenched by the water that went over the wheelhouse, and hit us all the way in the stern.

So, it can be a very troublesome place if you're there at the wrong time; between, I guess, November and April, that is the most dangerous, treacherous time. And in very unexpected ways, those winds can come, those cold winds, and the waves can get anywhere from five to ten feet. And that just doesn't happen on a lake, but it happens there, and it can be a very terrifying experience. In fact, one historian gives the record of the fact that on one occasion, they were in Tiberias, on the western shore of the lake, and the waters, the waves were coming so high that they were coming two hundred yards into the city of Tiberias, off this little lake. All of this is the basic product of the wind.

So, that's the place where this happens, and so it couldn't have been a better place for the Lord to demonstrate His power over nature, and that's exactly what He does here. Let's start with a calm before the storm, we'll call it the calm before the storm, then we'll look at the calm during the storm, and then we'll look at the calm after the storm, and then we'll look at the storm after the calm. Okay?

We'll work our way through the whole deal here.

All right, the calm before the storm, verse 35. "On that day when evening was come" - that day means a very specific day. What day? The very day that started in verse 1, when the Lord went down by the Sea of Galilee, and began to teach, and a huge massive crowd, as always, came, and He had to get in a little boat. And when He taught on the soils, and then pulled the disciples aside, and explained the meaning of the parables to them, while not explaining to the crowd. And then He told the parable, as you remember, of the lamp and the basket. And then He told the parable of the seed planted at night that grows, the farmer knows not how. And then He told the parable of the mustard seed. And it's been a long day, and those are only representative of the parables that He gave. He most likely gave many more parables than just these, and there was a full day of teaching. We can assume as well that people had brought the sick and the needy to Him, and there was healing going on as well. We would assume, then, that it was a typically exhausting day for the Lord; teaching itself can be very, very exhausting, and He did it day, after day, after day, after day, with tremendous demands being made on Him.

So, we can assume that He's somewhere on the northwest edge of the Sea of Galilee, off in the little boat, near the town of Capernaum. Evening comes, dusk; the people will kind of dissipate now, and go to their homes. "He said to them" - that would be to His disciples, who are referred to in verse 34, His own disciples. "He said to them, 'Let us go over to the other side.'"

Now, we might assume that He was going over to the other side just to get a bit of a rest, and that would be, to one degree or another, reasonable, to get away. There were many occasions when He did that, when He tried to escape the crushing crowd. We could assume that because there were no large cities on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee - all the large cities and towns were on the western shore - that maybe He was just going over there to get away from things, where He could get a bit of a break, and a little bit of rest.

But if you understand what comes next in the book of Mark, you know that that was not the point, because in chapter 5, verse 1, when "they came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him."

He comes to an encounter, which has been ordained by His Father, with the Gerasene maniac, who is full of demons; and He ends up sending those demons into a herd of pigs, who take a dive off the hill and end up in the sea itself. So, while it may have been assumed that this is a way to get away, and get a bit of a break, it turns out to bring Jesus into one of the most formidable, one of the most dramatic encounters of His entire life, with this demonized maniac on the other side. Jesus always operated on a divine appointment; rest was perhaps somewhat incidental to Him. But nonetheless, at the end of a long, long day, it would be good to get a calm ride in the boat to the other side, and perhaps a few hours' break.

So, verse 36 says, "Leaving the crowd" - and remember, He's in a boat already, teaching. May well have been the same boat, because it says, "they took Him along with them in the boat" - that boat perhaps belonged to Peter, or John, or Andrew, or James, one of those fishermen. And they took Him - "just as He was" - which indicates that He didn't go anywhere. He didn't go to change, didn't go to eat; they just took Him the way He was, and headed off in the water, and then "other boats were with Him."

The word boat, by the way, ploion, doesn't tell you anything about the size of the boat; it's a very generic word. It doesn't say whether it was a large boat or a small boat, but we know it was a relatively small boat, because the kind of boats that were used for fishing on the Sea of Galilee were relatively small boats. In the last month - you may have seen it - they have discovered one of them, which they were able to dig up from the bottom of the lake. And they have - sort of the rib cage of that boat still remains, and from what I could tell in looking at it, it would probably hold, comfortably, 15 to 20 people.

Well, that wasn't going to transport all the apostles, and Jesus, and all the disciples who were following Him across, so there were other boats. Everybody else who had a boat and was a follower of Jesus joined, and you had this little flotilla going across the north end of the Sea of Galilee, headed to the other side – “other boats were with Him.”

Luke tells us “they were sailing along,” and Luke uses a very specific verb; the verb is pleō, and it means to sail, not elaunō, which means to row. You row when there's no wind, you sail when there's wind, so it was an ideal situation. The water was calm, they were sailing along, and those boats had the capability of being rowed; they had oars, but they also had a mast and a sail, and when the breeze came up, they would sail. They launched from the shore, and they were sailing along, with a gentle breeze, in the calm waters of dusk, pushed toward that eastern shore; off they go.

At this point, we check in with Luke, and Luke says as the boat began to sail, Jesus fell asleep – “He fell asleep.” Mark 4:38 says, “He was asleep on the cushion” – literally, the pillow. It contains the word - that word for cushion contains the word kephalē, which is the word for head; something to put your head on. So that's the kind of cushion it was, it was a pillow for His head, some kind of pillow that sailors used when they needed to lie down and get a bit of a rest.

So, He lay down in the boat, and immediately fell asleep. This is a beautiful picture of the truly human Jesus, who is exhausted, who is weary. He is the very one who created the water. He is the very one who created the sky. He created the wood the boat was made of. He even created sleep. And now, He employs these things for His own benefit, and He goes to sleep in the boat. Trailing along behind that boat are all those who were followers of His.

It turns out they're not all true followers; some of them are rocky soil, some of them are weedy soil, as we saw in the parable earlier in the chapter, because John 6:66, which comes later, says that many of His disciples “walked no more with Him.” So, they're not all going to be the real deal, but they were, at least for now, following Him, and this is what we'll call the calm before the storm. A beautiful picture of Christ, totally exhausted, and asleep in a comfortable place.

Well, the calm before the storm leads to the calm during the storm, because the storm breaks out, according to verse 37. “And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.” A fierce gale of wind - fierce gale is a term for hurricane. We're talking about - we're talking about a huge wind. We could be talking about a 70-mile-an-hour wind; the word for wind is just that. What kind of wind was it? A fierce gale kind of wind, a wind that could be classified as a hurricane; very descriptive language, very strong language. And Luke says it “descended on the lake” – katabainō - it came down on the lake. It just came racing down the slopes. The language is very, very strong.

The best calculations would put this likely in the winter of the year 29 A.D. This would be the time of the worst winds, cold air furiously funneling down the ravines and the slopes, gaining speed as it descended, colliding with the warm air in the low basin of the lake, creating violent turbulence that began to whip and swirl the water, turning it into foam and very, very high waves. And because the lake is so small – 13 by 8 - once those waves hit the shore, they just explode back and collide again, and again, and again, and again, wreaking havoc.

They all were familiar with storms on the lake; they lived around the lake, and they were in one now that was over the top. Here was a God-ordained storm. We could assume that these were specially-chosen winds to accomplish this miracle, to put our Lord in the position to demonstrate that He is, in fact, the one who controls His creation. This is – this is to be a lesson. What's it supposed to teach? Look at verse 40. "Why are you afraid? How is it you have no faith?" This is a faith lesson; this is a faith lesson.

The point here is, that our Lord wants to teach His disciples that He can be trusted in the most threatening of circumstances.

Now, Matthew, in his account, in Matthew 8 - this account repeats in Matthew 8 and Luke 8, as well as here in Mark 4. In Matthew 8:24, what happens is described as *seismos megas*. *Seismos* we understand; a seismic event of mega proportions. Now, that's really basically the word for earthquake, *seismos*, so this like this is of massive proportions, like a violent shaking of the earth, this violent shaking of the water, generated by hurricane-force winds. And it's so severe, verse 37 says that "the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up." Luke 8:23 puts it this way: "They began to be swamped and to be in danger." They can't get the water thrown out, bailed, as fast as it's pouring in.

Matthew 8:16 says it's now night, so they're in the dark, just to add to the terror. Matthew says the boat was covered with the waves; they're just literally swamping this little boat. They're breaking so fast that they can't deal with them. Matthew says that in spite of the storm, Jesus remains asleep.

And now, does that give you some idea of His true humanness? He sleeps through the storm; that's how weary He was. Verse 38. "Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion."

Have you ever been that tired? Man, that is really tired. I can think back to a few times in my life. I can think back to one trip I took to Russia, and they had me speaking - I don't know - eight hours a day for two weeks, I think, and it was exhausting. And I remember getting on a plane in Moscow, and having someone wake me up to get off the thing when it landed in New York, and not remembering anything between. And I remember then getting on the next plane in New York, and not waking up till the wheels hit in L.A. I think some of us have experienced that, in ways that we would identify as a very human response to being exhausted, worn out, and that's exactly what our Lord experienced. Again, we see the truth of His humanity, don't we? He's a real man, a real human being. He understands weariness, and He's so tired that He sleeps with water smashing over the boat; sound asleep, peacefully asleep. I call that the calm during the storm. Fatigued, totally calm, in the stern with His head on a pillow, He is the calm one in the midst of the storm, like the eye of the hurricane.

Now, nobody else was calm. Verse 38 says, "They woke Him" - aware of the danger – "and said to

Him, 'Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?'" "How can You just sleep when we're going through this? Don't You care that we're perishing?" - the word to be destroyed. Now, they understood this was - this was inevitable death. They would not survive this. And there would be on that boat - perhaps His apostles were together on that boat, perhaps there were men and women in the little flotilla, and they were all in the same situation. They were very clear as to the severity of the danger. They knew the situation they were in. They panicked. Panic was a normal human response to that kind of circumstance. They knew Jesus had power over demons, they knew He had power over disease, they knew that He had power over the natural world, as well as the supernatural world. Could He save them in this circumstance? Could He - could He deliver them from a storm?

I don't think it entered their mind that He could stop the storm, but it probably entered their mind that if they were going to be spared death, He was going to have to be the one that would come through to make some kind of miraculous exit possible. They had nowhere else to turn. It's pandemonium, by the way, it's panic. They're yelling, over the loud wind and the crashing water, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Luke says they said, "Master, Master," Matthew says - and that's a word, *epistata*, which means commander - then Matthew says, "Lord," So, He's Master in one thing, Lord in another, and Teacher in another. Somebody says, "Well, that's scriptural inconsistency." No, it's not. Now lookit, this was not a - this was not a one-time statement; this is panic and pandemonium. They used all the words they could come up with. They were - they were firing at Him from every angle. Teacher, Master, Lord - this is not an organized speech, this is the cries of terrified people, and Matthew 8:26 says they were terrified. Of course, they were going to die; that was - that was inevitable, if something didn't happen. It's a dark day, you know, when the sailors call on the carpenter to get them out of the storm. Nazareth is a long way from the sea. Jesus wasn't raised on the sea.

So, they - they're not looking for a carpenter's solution to a sailor's dilemma; they're looking for a divine solution. By now, they know He has connections with God, and they know that they're going to have to have some divine intervention; that's their only hope. They know that. Maybe the one who has divine power over illness, the one who has divine power over demons, maybe God will dispense to Him something that will get them out of this. And you know, they were, after all, raised on the Old Testament, very familiar with the Psalms, so they would have known things like this, Psalm 65, verses 5 to 7: "O God of our salvation, You who are the trust of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest sea, who establishes the mountains by His strength, Being girded with might; who stills the roaring of the seas, The roaring of the waves." The psalmist had said that God has power to still the roaring sea and the roaring waves. Or they might have remembered Psalm 89:9: "You rule the swelling of the sea; When its waves rise, you still them."

Or perhaps, they remembered that very familiar and beloved 107th Psalm, that in verse 23, it says this: "Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters; They've seen the works of the Lord, And His wonders in the deep. For He spoke and raised up a stormy wind, Which lifted up the waves of the sea. They rose up to the heavens, they went down to the depths; Their soul melted away in their misery. They reeled and staggered like a drunken man, And were at their wits' end. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, And He brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to be still, So that the waves of the sea were hushed."

Maybe they remembered Psalm 107, that God is the one who has the power to still the storm and hush the waves. We don't know what they were thinking about, but they knew that there was no human solution. They knew that Jesus had access to God. They knew that He had access to divine

power. They had never seen anything like this; they had never seen Him act in any situation like this. Of all the miracles that He had done, none of them was to deliver them from danger. There had not yet been any miracle in which Jesus had delivered His own from danger and death.

But where else are they going to turn? So, they go to the one that they know has connections with God - and some of them even knew that He was God - and so, they apply their simple, humble, weak, little faith - as it's called also - to this plea. Which then leads to the calm after the storm, verse 39: "And He got up" - got up off His bench in the stern, up off the pillow that was under His head - "and rebuked the wind...He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Hush, be still.'"

Wow. They broke in on Jesus' sleep - typical of people in distress, in desperation. Maybe they were thinking of Psalm 10:1: "Why do You stand afar off, O Lord? Why do You hide Yourself in the midst of trouble?" Or Psalm 44: "Arouse Yourself, why do You sleep, O Lord? Why do You hide Your face?"

And the Lord heard their desperate cries, and He got up, and He rebuked the wind, and then He said to the sea, "Hush, be still." No theatrics. No effort. He spoke to the wind, and the wind stopped instantaneously; He spoke to the water, and the water stopped instantaneously. The water and the wind recognized the voice of their Creator. Just as He would tell death to release Lazarus, He tells the wind and the waves to obey His will.

Both stopped, and Mark says "it became perfectly calm." Perfectly is really probably not an accurate translation, although I understand what the translators meant. It's megalē - mega, something mega is great. Megalē is the greatest calm; the whole lake was as placid as a pond. The wind stopped immediately, and the waves flattened out. That wouldn't happen; if the wind stopped, the waves would still go, hit the shore, bounce back, collide. That would go on for quite a long time after the winds had stopped. But He stopped the winds, and at the same time stopped the water, simply by speaking. These men had seen the winds come up, and they had seen the water whipped up, and they had seen the winds die down, and the water continue to boil. But here, the wind and the water stops, and there is a perfect, supreme calm.

The supernatural power of Jesus is such that, with a word, millions of horsepower of wind force is halted; millions of gallons of water are stopped, and made placid. And what is Mark telling us by this? That we're looking at the Creator here; this is the Son of God. He is the Son of God proven by His birth, proven by His victory over Satan, proven by His teaching, proven by His miracle power, and proven by His tremendous control of creation.

Yes, He can bring the new creation. Yes, He can restore the earth to Eden-like characteristics. Yes, He can make the desert blossom like a rose. Yes, He can open a river in Jerusalem that flows out into the desert, turns it into a garden. Yes, He can change nature, so the lion lies down with the lamb, and a child can play in a snake pit. Yes, He has the power over His creation to change life span, so that in the Kingdom, somebody who dies at a hundred dies like an infant. Yes, He has that power. He has complete power over nature, and He controls it. He created it, He sustains it, and He'll bring it to its recreation in the millennial kingdom in the future, and He will one day eliminate it, in an un-creation where it will melt with a fervent heat. It will have an atomic implosion, and be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth. I just wish the people in our world who think they can control the future of the planet understood what the Bible says. They're not in charge of the planet; none of them are, and they aren't collectively, and they're not going to make this planet last one split second longer

than the Creator has designed for it to last. They have nothing to do with it. All of that is nonsense, absolute nonsense.

First of all, it's nonsense scientifically, but even more so, it's nonsense theologically. The Creator is the sustainer and the consummator of His creation. This miraculous demonstration of His power would seem to be enough to convince me who I'm dealing with, and it was a lesson in faith for them, so He said to them, "Why are you afraid? How is it that you have no faith?" "I'm looking at your panic and your fear; how is it that you have no faith?" Or, in the words of Matthew, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" And again, He stops the storm, and points out the weakness of their faith. "You didn't have enough faith to believe that I could care for you. You didn't need to be in a panic. You didn't need to be terrified."

So, there they sit, in the placid silence and the calm after the storm, and Jesus says, "Why such fear? Why such lack of faith? Haven't I proven that you can trust Me already?"

Well, their faith must have received a big boost that day, must've; but their reaction really doesn't demonstrate that, and we'd like to have them say, "Lord, we'll never - we will never fear again, as long as You're around. Hey, we're not going to worry about anything. We've seen enough. We're convinced." But that's not their reaction.

Their reaction is predictable - verse 41, it's the last point - this is the storm after the calm. "They became very much afraid." Please notice verse 40. They were afraid during the storm; now, they're very much afraid. Why? Well, what's worse than having a storm outside your boat, is having God in your boat; that's enough to panic you.

They knew what they were dealing with. The living God was in their boat, the Creator, the controller of His creation. Terror set in. Panic set in. You remember, on another occasion on the sea, when Peter couldn't catch any fish? Luke 5, and Jesus said, "Try this side of the boat." Peter threw his net over there, and they had so many fish they couldn't bring them in, and what was Peter's response? "Lord, depart from me for I am a sinful man."

Well, what kind of reaction is that? That's the reaction of somebody who knows that the Creator controls all of the living animals, all the fish in the sea, and they go where He tells them to go. That's frightening, because if you see God, then God sees you. You see His glory, He sees your sin. That's a very normal response through Scripture.

Abraham - Genesis 18:27 - had the same reaction, a sort of immediate panic, when he had an encounter with God, and realized the kind of man He was. Manoah, the father of Samson, came home and said to his wife, "We're going to die. Write the will, we're done." And she said, "Well, why?" "I saw the Lord, and if I saw Him, He saw me, and if He saw me, we're dead."

Job had the same experience. Isaiah - Isaiah 6:5, he pronounced a curse upon himself: "I'm a man of unclean lips" - he cursed himself. Ezekiel had the same experience, in the vision of chapter 1. Daniel had the same experience, in chapter 10. John the Apostle, in Revelation 1, when he saw the first vision of Christ, says he fell over like a dead person. It's a terrifying thing to realize that you are in the presence of God; the presence of God.

They – they - there was no other explanation; they knew this was supernatural, and they said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?” That’s a rhetorical question; it doesn’t have to have an answer. Mark doesn’t even give an answer. “Where is this person from? Not from around here. This is an alien person. This is a foreign person, from another place, with that kind of power,” and of course, the implication is that they were talking about one who had come from heaven.

Matthew 14 – there’s another occasion of Jesus on the water, and this time He walked on the water, remember that? And when He got in the boat, it says, after walking on the water, he says, “O you of little faith” - same thing - “why do you doubt?” Here we go again - “the wind stopped. And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, and said, ‘You are certainly the Son of God.’”

The second time that they saw an incident on the water in which He controlled the water, walked on the water, stopped the storm, they answered their rhetorical question. Here, they say, “He’s not from here.” Next time, they say, “He’s the Son of God.”

I think that was what was in their minds here as well. There’s no reason for Mark to answer that rhetorical question; there’s only one possibility. Only God controls the elements, and He does it at His own discretion, and in this case, for the protection of His own disciples and apostles. They needed to know that the Lord not only was God, but that the Lord was their protector.

Psalm 55:22: “Cast your burden on the Lord and He’ll sustain you.” Or, 1 Peter 5:7, as Peter puts it, “cast your care on Him, because He cares for you.” So, the Lord is communicating two things here. He’s communicating His deity, in the expression of power, and He’s communicating His sympathy, His compassion, and His care for his own, in protecting them from premature death. Does that mean that Christians don’t die? No, but they don’t until their time has come, and until that time, the Lord protects, and cares for, and preserves His own, as He did here. This is a story that has no explanation apart from the deity of Jesus Christ. There is no explanation, humanly, for this. Even if you could suggest that the winds stopped on their own, there’s no explanation for the water flattening out. And if they thought it was coincidental, they would never have responded in terror because they knew divine power was present, nor would have they suggested that this was a divine person, not someone from around their neighborhood. And they also said, “The wind and the sea obey Him,” which means that the stopping of the wind and the stopping of the water was directly connected to His words.

Well, it was an interesting trip to get to the other side, and it was equally interesting when they arrived, as we will see next time. Let’s pray.

Your Word is always so fresh to us, Lord, and so encouraging and inviting, and - and that’s because it presents You in all Your majesty and glory. And particularly when we look at the incidents regarding the life of Christ, and the majesty of His person, the wonder of who He is, both as man and as God, and we see that brought together in such a beautiful way here. So weary that He can sleep in a storm, so powerful that He can stop the storm in its tracks. This is our Christ, fully God and fully man, so that He can provide the infinite sacrifice for sin, and die in the place of man.

Thank you again, Lord, for Your Word. We are always enriched by it; we’re always thrilled at its glorious truth and consistency. And may it be that we have come to know this Christ in the true

sense, beyond those of little faith or no faith, beyond those that are still asking the questions about who He is. Bring us to the full conviction that Jesus is the God-man, the Christ, Your Son, the Messiah, and the Savior, and may He become the object of our faith, a true and saving faith, we pray for Your glory, and our own eternal blessing. Amen.

END

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