

## **Mark 4:35-41**

### **Calming the Storm**

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## **Introduction**

We celebrated the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Jesus existed in Heaven before His earthly birth. Isaiah stated that He would be “Immanuel” which means “God with us”. Mark has given evidences of Jesus’ claims to Deity.

The religious leaders understood these claims and wanted to put Him to death.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus gave evidence of his Deity. He forgave sins, healed those broken by the curse of sin, and fed the multitudes.

2

## Introduction

Jesus was also 100% human. This was necessary for Him to identify with humanity and as our representative pay our sin debt. As human, he grew, learned, and lived as we all do, yet without sin.

Jesus is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-49; Romans 5:12-21). God gave dominion over creation to man, Jesus as the perfect man reclaimed Creation back to Himself. Though all Jesus' miracles can be attributed to His deity, some also point to His dominion over Creation.

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## Mark 4:35-41

On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."<sup>36</sup> Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.<sup>37</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.<sup>38</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

<sup>39</sup> Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.<sup>40</sup> But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?"<sup>41</sup> And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

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## The Calm Before the Storm

Mark 4:35-36

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Jesus had been teaching the multitudes in parables from a boat. As the day came to a close, Jesus told His disciples to cross to the other side. That area was less populated so would give some relief from the crowds. Jesus also knew that He had a divine appointment on the other side.

The boat was most likely a small open fishing boat that may have belonged to Peter, James, John, or Andrew as they had been fishermen before they followed Jesus.

It appears that there was a larger group of disciples that were following Jesus, so other small boats were with Him.

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The Sea of Galilee is subject to violent storms. There are steep hills that surround the lake which funnels the winds. It is also an area where the cooler air coming from the mountains collides with the warm air in the lake's basin. Since the lake is deep it allows for large waves. During one recent storm, waves were measured at 10 feet.

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## The Calm During the Storm

Mark 4:37-38

And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. <sup>38</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

Though the sea was calm when they started their journey, a fierce storm arose as they crossed the lake. The winds were whipping down the mountains creating waves that were breaking over the side of the boats causing it to fill with water. I am sure that the disciples were bailing as fast as they could, but the incoming water threatened to swamp and sink the boat. They were in real danger!

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In the midst of the storm, Jesus "**was in the stern, asleep on a pillow.**"

Not even the severe rocking of the boat, the thunderous roar of the wind, or the sloshing water in the boat awoke Him. Presumably soaked to the bone, Jesus slept soundly on the hard wooden planks with only a small cushion as a pillow for His head. Perhaps nowhere else in Scripture is the humanity of Christ more dramatically juxtaposed with His deity. The one sleeping in the stern of the boat, exhausted after a day of intense ministry, is the very one who would awaken to stop the massive storm with a word.

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Many of the disciples were seasoned fishermen. They did their best against the storm, but to no avail. Finally, they awoke Jesus and accused Him of not caring about their situation.

We all face fierce storms in this life. We do our best to deal with them through our own strength and ability only to discover that the storm is greater than our abilities.

Like the disciples, we can draw the wrong conclusion that "**God does not care that we are perishing!**"

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## The Calm After the Storm

Mark 4:39-40

Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?"

Jesus **arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea,**

**"Peace, be still!"** God (Jesus) spoke creation into existence. His word carried authority and power. He turned to the storm and said "**Peace, be still!**" The Greek word "Peace" used here means "to hush or be quiet." It is the same term that Jesus used commanding that demons be silent.

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In response the wind and waves ceased. The Greek tense implies that it was not a gradual subsiding but an immediate response. The sea went from waves that were threatening the boat to silence. Mark uses the same Greek word "great" (megas), to describe both the storm and the calm. This implies that the wind and sea became instantly still. Some believe that the sea became like glass.

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Jesus then turns to His disciples and asks, "**Why are you so fearful?**  
**How is it that you have no faith?**"

The answer to Jesus' first question is implied by the second: the reason they were afraid (the Greek meaning cowardly or timid) was because they still had no faith. They knew He possessed divine power, having seen Him perform miraculous healing for many others. Yet, when their own lives were at stake, the inadequacy of their faith was exposed. Jesus and those with Him were under the protection of the Father. His destiny was to go to the cross and there was nothing that could stop that plan!

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Jesus was teaching the disciples a critical lesson; **they could trust Him even in the most treacherous and helpless situations**. Even after Jesus' ascension, they would need to be reminded of that truth. As the author of Hebrews reminded his readers, "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?'" (Heb. 13:5-6). The apostle Peter similarly encouraged believers to cast "all [their] anxiety on Him, because He cares for [them]" (1 Peter 5:7; cf. Ps. 55:22). Writing to the Romans, Paul expressed that same kind of confident trust in the permanence of divine love: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39).

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## The Storm After the Calm

Mark 4:41

And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

The reaction of the disciples is understandable considering what they just witnessed. Mark's statement "**they feared exceedingly**" can be translated "**they feared with great fear**." The miracle they witnessed caused them to consider who Jesus really was. They asked each other a rhetorical question that they most likely already knew the answer to, "**Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!**" The awe of the one in the boat outweighed their fear of the storm. Later in Jesus' ministry, after He miraculously walked on water, the disciples would articulate their answer: "those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, '**Truly You are the Son of God.**'"

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## Scripture Fulfilled

Psalm 107:23-31

Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters,

<sup>24</sup> They see the works of the Lord, And His wonders in the deep.

<sup>25</sup> For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea.

<sup>26</sup> They mount up to the heavens, They go down again to the depths; Their soul melts because of trouble.

<sup>27</sup> They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, And are at their wits' end.

<sup>28</sup> Then they cry out to the Lord in their trouble, And He brings them out of their distresses.

<sup>29</sup> He calms the storm, So that its waves are still.

<sup>30</sup> Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven.

<sup>31</sup> Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!

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## Why Does God Allow Storms?

We want a nice calm life, but that is not reality. We are going to face storms. A bigger question is **why does God allow them?** This is not a complete list.

1. Storms Build Character - Romans 5:3-5
2. Storms Strengthen Faith and Draws One Closer to God.
3. Storms Shows us our Weakness and Cause us to Rely on God.
4. Storms refine us and Make One More Like Jesus.

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## So What ...

As fallen human beings we tend to be self-reliant and desire a quiet easy life, but that is not reality. We live in a fallen world where creation is moving from order to chaos. We live in a world with other fallen people who see life through their own eyes. Storms happen!

Human nature wants someone to blame, but that is not always the case. We often feel that we are alone a fighting a losing battle. We ask, "where is God?"

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## So What ...

Let me encourage you – You are never alone. Jesus told the disciples that He would always be with them (Great Commission). In my life I have found that God waits for me to come to the end of myself and yield to Him. I need to remember that I have the Creator God with all His power and attributes in my boat! He is able to lead and guide me through the storm.

**Sometimes God calms the storm; sometimes He lets the storm rage and calms His child!**

Regardless, You are Never alone!

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