

Mark 4:35-41 – What Fear Can Do!

TSK, GreekLexicon, INT, Handfuls, Gill, JFB, Henry, Robertson, Rienecker, Geneva, Trapp, Poole, Spurgeon, Clarke, Calvin, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Is this passage a picture of your journey through life and that you will have troubles - storms, but if Jesus is in you, he will calm the storms in your life and you will make it safely to the end? Or is this a picture of death...that though you might have a rough time passing from this world, you will make it to heaven because Jesus is with you. Is this story really a picture of the journey of life? Is it really a picture of coming death? Both of those applications are true, but neither application is based on this text. Let us examine this passage and see what God intends to teach you.

Our headings are:

The Call To Spread the Gospel

The Commotion动荡 because of Trouble

The Calming of the Sea

Our goals are: **That you will know that nothing will stop the kingdom from spreading if you have faith in the Lord Jesus.**

The Call to Spread the Gospel

35 On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side."

36 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.

1. After spending a long time on the West side of the Sea of Galilee teaching and confirming his words by miracles, Jesus then called his disciples to cross over to the other side.

The Sea of Galilee was about 20 miles long and about 8 miles wide. It was called many other names including Sea of Tiberias. The disciples would have crossed this lake many times, mostly for fishing, and also for travel.

2. Jesus went to the other side because the people there also needed to hear the Gospel...not just Jews. The east side of the lake, while technically part of Israel, was different. They had departed from much of the teaching of the prophets. You will notice that in the next chapter the people there were herding 放牧 pigs, something clearly forbidden by Jehovah through Moses.

3. Jesus did not say: "I need a shower...a change of clothes...a warm meal...and a clean bed." The need of the Gospel was too great. He instead took a boat, probably smelly from fish, endured the cold, and just wrapped himself in his coat.

4. The common large fishing boats at the time were about 20 feet long and not more than 8 feet wide. So he and his 12 disciples could travel in relative safety. And there were others who accompanied them in smaller boats. Maybe they wanted to hear more from the Savior, or maybe they were returning home. We don't know. They are mentioned for a reason though.

5. Lessons:

a. It is wrong to think selfishly...that somehow God's kingdom is limited to you. Think of this neighborhood that so badly needs the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Think how you can be involved. The comfortable life is desirable, but you can wait a little for your comforts to come from heaven. This life will soon pass and you will have an eternity of comfort.

b. Think of missionaries宣教士 who live in dangerous places...and the difficulties of their lives...and learn to pray for them...and encourage them. Have you written to a missionary lately? Do you know any missionary? See the bulletin board.

The Commotion because of trouble

37 And a **great windstorm arose**, and the **waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling**. 38 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?"

1. The first sign of trouble was the arising of a sudden storm. These storms were not uncommon, though this was an exceptional one. The warm Mediterranean air rises and is cooled by the mountains. That heavy cold air from the mountains then can rush down into the Sea of Galilee and in a short time the entire place could be black with wind and rain. The storm caused a "shaking of the seas" according to Matthew. This type of stormy wind was called Laelap. They were a hurricane 飓风 type storm. This is word used to translate "whirlwind" from Job in the Septuagint – the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

2. Trouble became more evident when the water started filling the boat.

3. In the meanwhile, a tired Jesus, showing his humanity, was trying to get some sleep. The fact is, only his human body was asleep. His Divinity 神性 was always watching over his people. (By the way, this is why movies like the Passion of the Christ fail. They limit Christ's suffering to his physically present body.)

4. The 2nd sign of trouble was the rising, not of the wind and waves, but of the doubts that were in the minds of the disciples.

They knew Jesus had come to preach the Gospel. They knew he sent them everywhere to preach and this was part of their training. They knew that the Gospel had to go everywhere, but because of the storm they thought everything Jesus said would come to nothing. Why?

a. They forgot that the Lord would never leave them nor forsake them.

Psalms 121:3 He will not allow your foot to be moved; **He who keeps you will not slumber 打盹.** 4

Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The disciples evidently put more faith in his humanity, which was sleeping, than his Divinity, which is everywhere present.

b. That loss of memory caused a lack of faith. That faithlessness is like the weeds that grow up and choke the plant described earlier in chapter 4. So they ran as a little child might run to his parents when there is thunder. There is no danger, but because of immaturity, he thinks there is danger.

c. That lack of faith caused them to fear. They forgot the words they had sung all their lives.

Psalms 89:9 You rule the raging of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them.

Psalms 93:4 The LORD on high is mightier Than the noise of many waters, Than the mighty waves of the sea.

5. That internal doubt then caused them to sin greatly. They sinned greatly by **accusing the Lord of not caring for them.** More, they were saying that the Lord had just called them to a great work and now **he did not give them what they needed to complete the task.** They were going to die!

6. Lessons:

a. Let the memory of what the Lord has done for you and his presence with you remind you of how you are to live.

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conduct be without covetousness 贪爱钱财; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "**I will never leave you nor forsake you.**"

If you know you are the adopted children of God, and you know the Lord is present, you will not fear. Isn't it true that you if you are in a room with someone, even if you don't talk to him, your presence there is an assurance? Even so, nothing can take away the peace that God puts in your heart because his Divinity is not absent for a moment.

b. On an even bolder note, Christ is not only near you, but in you.

Colossians 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

You have no basis of fear or hesitation in doing the work the Lord has called you to do. Look also:

1John 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you **is greater than he who is in the world.**

Can you fail with Christ in you? Can you sink, to use the prevailing analogy 类比? No, cast your cares on him for he cares for you.

Psalms 46:5 God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

c. When you are in trouble, don't complain - pray. Don't act as if God were absent. He never leaves you nor forsakes you...ever. Like the burning bush that Moses saw, you shall not be consumed.

2 Chronicles 20:12 "O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

The Calming of the Sea

39 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. 40 But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?"

1. The disciples should have known that where Jesus was there was safety, but being where Jesus was did not mean that there wouldn't be troubles. Using our lips and our lives for Jesus is often accompanied with troubles...sometimes serious troubles.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 "For I will show him how many things he must **suffer for My name's sake.**"

2. But in spite of their doubts and fears, Jesus did not abandon them. Jesus did not abandon Israel in front of the Red Sea...even with all their complaints against them. **He rebuked the sea** and it became quite. Literally he said: "**Shut your mouth**" or "put on a muzzle."

What is stunning here is the quickness of the seas becoming calm. After all, after the wind dies down, the seas usually take a while to calm down. But this was instantaneous 即时的.

3. Jesus also rebuked his disciples, but only after he had removed the threat that they faced. According to Luke, Jesus said: “Where is your faith?” They were not exercising their faith. They were not exercising their faith because they had forgotten Christ’s words from earlier. And because they did not have faith, fear took over.

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

4. The disciples then took the rebuke. But don’t misunderstand this last verse to think that the disciples were “scared,” - having a sinful fear of God...or that they were uncertain who he was. They weren’t. They had reverential 表示尊敬 fear and they knew who Jesus was. They had seen his miracles. **This was just part of their way of speaking in amazement.** Let me illustrate how context is important for interpreting words: If you do something really sweet for your wife and it’s not Valentine’s Day, she might say: “Who are you?” She would be amazed that you would be so thoughtful and sweet! And we can confirm that they were not “scared” or Christ because of Matthew’s account. He said that they “marveled.” This is consistent with reverential fear.

5. Lessons:

a. Meditate on God’s Word regularly so that you can be reminded of his nearness. When you know he is near, you won’t panic when troubles come. Panic leads to inappropriate words and actions – sins.

Romans 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

b. Know that Jesus never abandons you, though you do from time to time. You don’t raise your children alone. You don’t evangelize by yourself. You don’t speak up for the cause of the persecuted by yourself. By yourself you will freeze...or panic.

c. Don’t let your sins overwhelm 压垮 you, though. That is what the Devil would like...for you to feel so guilty of sin...that you leave the Lord from shame. No, brethren, all of us are sinners who need to daily repent. Only in heaven will all doubts be removed from us.

d. See how covenant blessings came upon people in the more dangerous small boats as well.

Conclusion:

As Jesus and his disciples moved to the east side of the lake to take the Gospel to the semi-pagan peoples, a great storm arose. This storm exposed the weakness of faith of the newly appointed preachers. So Jesus had to calm the storm on lake and the storm in their lives. With the danger removed and their faith strengthened, the disciples then could go about their work with more courage...and they would need it soon as they would be sowing some seed on dry ground shortly! They needed faith to handle the rejection.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

The task you have is too important to be distracted by troubles. You have to build a kingdom for Christ. You have to spread the message of the cross and of the precious blood of Jesus. So when there are “fightings and fears within and without” remember to:

1. Pour those fears...fears of children straying...fears people mocking you when you speak... out to the Lord. He will remove them.

2. Remind yourself of Christ’s presence with you. Yes, it is true...with Christ in the vessel you can smile at the storm.

Finally: You see how God preserved his people from the greatest troubles they face. He is even patient when we complain. But Jeremiah 31:35 teaches that the wicked will be overthrown by the sea that God stirs up. Unless

you are able to call on him for help...you will drown in your sins. But you can escape if you have access to him...and you can have access to him if you become his child by trusting in Christ and his work.