

Research: Jesus Stills the Storm

Mark 4:35-41

35And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

“*he saith unto them*] The three Synoptic Evangelists all agree in placing the Stilling of the Storm before the healing of the possessed in the country of the Gadarenes.

“*the other side*] After a long and exhausting day he needed retirement, and repose could nowhere be more readily obtained than in the solitude of the eastern shore” (Cambridge Bible, www.biblehub.com).

“*And on that day*, - the day, that is, on which the parables were delivered, at least those recorded by St. Mark - *when even was come, he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side. And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, even as he was, in the boat.* It was the boat from which he had been preaching. They made no special preparation. They did not land first to obtain provisions. It would have been inconvenient to go ashore in the midst of the crowd. They made at once, as he told them to do, for the other side. *And other boats were with him.* This is another interesting circumstance. Probably those who were in these boats had availed themselves of them to get nearer to the great Prophet, the boatmen themselves having seen the vast crowd that was gathered on the shore, and so having been attracted thither. Thus he had a large audience on the sea as well as on the land. And not it was so ordered that he was surrounded by a fleet and by a multitude of witnesses when he stilled the tempest” (Pulpit Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

36And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

“A *ploion* (“boat”) was a vessel of almost any size and description. Here it is doubtless a fishing boat, big enough for a dozen or more men and a good catch of fish, but not large, and without sails” (EBC 8.214).

“His disciples – not merely the apostles, but probably many others. There were many other ships in company with him. Mark 4:36” (Barnes 40).

37And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

“It is well known that violent squalls (the term *seismos* can refer to an earthquake or a sea storm) develop quickly on Lake Galilee. The surface is more than six hundred feet below sea level, and the rapidly rising hot air draws from the south-eastern tablelands violent winds whose cold air churns up the water. Those among Jesus’ contemporaries who really knew the OT would remember that in it God is presented as the one who controls and stills the seas (Job 38:8-11; Ps 29:3-4;10-11; 65:5-7; 89:9; 107:23-32)” (EBC 8.215).

“The word *tempest* here means earthquake—a word eloquent of sudden fury. The Jews were

never fully at home on water: heaven to them was “no more sea.” Thus the Sea of Galilee is a fit symbol of our life, with its alternate shine and cloud” (*IB* 7.345-346).

“*covered with waves*. The billows dashed against the ship, so that it was fast filling and in danger of sinking” (Barnes 40).

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

“*he was asleep*. On the hinder part of the vessel, on a pillow. It was in the night, and Jesus had retired to rest. He was probably weary, and slept calmly and serenely. He apprehended no danger, and showed to his disciples how calmly one can sleep with a pure conscience, and who feels safe in the hands of God” (Barnes 40).

“The disciples were in panic, and panic multiplied the threat. Their language was disjointed and distraught. The disciples found in Christ a deliverer. He would have slept through the storm. Wearing by intense effort, he slept when and where he could—at peace with men, and in trust toward God. When they work him, he was immediately master of the storm. . . . He broke through their fears, and convinced them of the power and presence of God; and that is the essence of miracle” (*IB* 7.346).

“*Save us*. Save our lives.

“*We perish*. We are in danger of perishing. This showed great confidence in the Savior” (Barnes 40).

“[the disciples] may have hesitated long before they ventured to arouse him; yet at last the extremity of the peril overcame their hesitation, and they did so, not without exclamations of haste and terror; as is evidenced by the double *Master, Master* of St. Luke” (Trench 90).

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

“The word *oligopistoi* (“you of little faith,”) occurs five times in the NT (Matt 6:30; here; 14:31; 16:8; Luke 12:28; Matt 17:20) and always with reference to disciples. Lack of faith among those for whom faith must be central is especially disappointing” (*EBC* 8.215).

“Here the *faith* is trust in God. Matthew omits Mark’s words of rebuke, “Silence! Be muzzled! . . . Note that the great calm after the storm corresponds to the healing of the demoniac in the next story” (*IB* 7.345-346).

“He spoke first to his disciples, calming their agitation with a word; and then, having quieted the tumult of the outward elements, he again turned to them, and more deliberately *rebuked* their lack of faith in him. . . . We must not miss the force of that word rebuked, preserved by all three Evangelists; and as little the direct address to the furious elements, *Peace, be still*, which St. Mark only records” (Trench 91).

“*Rebuked the winds*. Reproved them; or commanded them to be still. What a power was this! What irresistible proof that he was Divine! His word awed the tempest, and allayed the storm!

There is not, anywhere, a sublime description of a display of power. Nor could there be sublime proof that he was truly the Son of God” (Barnes 40).

“*Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm:* being awaked by his disciples, he raises his head from his pillow, stands up, and with a majestic voice, in an authoritative manner, showing some kind of resentment at the wind and sea, as if they had exceeded their commission; and the one had blown, and the other raged too much and too long; he rebukes them in such language as this, “*peace, be still*”; as it is in Mark, be silent, hold your peace, stop your mouth, put a bridle on it, as the words used signify; and go on no longer to threaten with shipwreck and loss of lives; upon which the wind ceased, the sea became calm, and the ship moved quietly on” ([Gill](#) online).

“The calm and exalted thought or spiritual apprehension is at peace” (*S&H* 506).

“Truth, and not corporeal will, is the divine power which says to disease, ‘Peace, be still’” (*S&H* 144).

“Christian Science saith to the wave and storm, ‘Be still,’ and there is a great calm. Material sense asks, in its ignorance of Science, ‘When will the raging of the material elements cease?’” (*Ret.* 60).

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

“*Men marveled.* Wondered; or were amazed. . . . No scene could have been more grand than this display of the power of Jesus. The darkness; the dashing waves; the howling winds; the heaving and tossing ship; the fears and cries of the seamen; all by a single word hushed into calm repose; all present an image of power and divinity irresistibly grand and awful. So the tempest rolls and thickens over the head of the awakened sinner. . . an indescribable peace takes possession of the soul; and he glides on a tranquil sea to the heaven of eternal rest” (Barnes 40).