

Jesus Calms the Storm

GraspingGod.com's Bible Study Lesson #6.09

Jesus Calms the Storm Bible Verses:

They came to Jesus, and woke him up, saying, "Save us, Lord! We are dying!" And he said to them, "*Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?*" Then he got up, rebuked the wind and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, "What kind of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" Matthew 8:25-27 NHEB.

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

- 1) Was there only one boat with disciples on this journey?
- 2) What sea was calmed after Jesus performed his miracle?
- 3) What other Bible miracles involved water?

You're in for a special treat today. Thanks for stopping by for another great lesson.

God's biblical account of Jesus calming the storm reveals our Creator maintaining his authority over creation.

The wind and waves obey his commands!

We self-professed intelligent humans choose to disobey God. Wow. Here we discover that we're more foolish than the wind and waves.

Let's bring our troubles, problems, issues, and pains to Jesus today. He wants to command peace to enter our hearts. He wants us joyful and excited about life again. What are you waiting for? Let's get started, seeking peace for our raging, out-of-control lives.

Please read Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; and/or Luke 8:22-25 before starting the Bible study.

Jesus Calms the Storm - the Setting

Jesus was teaching the crowds in parables, specifically about faith. He shared the powerful Parable of the Soils, which gave reasons for the discrepancies in how people handled the gospel. The disciples learned much about God, the devil, people, the world, and their own personal faith.

But then Jesus unleashed an incredibly challenging call on people. This was a call to real discipleship. Jesus addressed the young man who wanted to first take care of family matters before joining him, saying, "*Follow me NOW. Let the spiritually dead bury their own dead*" (Matthew 8:21-22).

Jesus pressed his curious followers, those who had been enamored with his preaching and awe-struck by his miracles. He drew the line. He said in no uncertain terms, "There shall be no one, or

no one thing, standing between you and me."

If you love anyone or anything more than Jesus you're unworthy to be his disciple. Do you qualify?

The work at Capernaum was finished for now. Jesus now embarked on his new mission, telling his wider circle of disciples, *"Let's cross to the other side of the sea."*

So, he and the disciples got into their boat and headed across the Sea of Galilee. They would soon arrive on the shore of the Gadarenes, where Jesus would meet Legion Demon and the man whom the devils possessed.

Mark tells us there were more boats full of disciples alongside them (Mark 4:35-36). Luke adds that there were "several formerly demon-possessed women" with them on this trip (Luke 8:2-3). So, there was a large group of witnesses watching Jesus calm the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus Calms the Storm - the Miracle

Jesus' heavy teaching load wore him out after several days, so he was ready for a nap. While the sea was still smooth, and the breeze yet gentle, he hunkered down for a nap. Jesus grabbed a cushion and laid down at the stern.

The voyage was pleasant as everyone settled into a comfortable seat. All 12 disciples were in Jesus' boat and they all had their specific assignments. Jesus' miracles and the meaning of his parables were the main topics with the young men. **Jesus intrigued them by always challenging their beliefs.** The same should be said of Jesus' relationship with each of us.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, a fierce storm arose on the sea. The waves soon broke into the disciple's boats! The water was rising inside the boat, so the men feverishly bailed water.

The storm wouldn't relent and the disciples were losing the battle with the crashing waves. This was serious! The boat began sinking into the Sea of Galilee!

Wait a minute! The thought hit them all at once. Where is Jesus? They all cried out, "Jesus! Master! Lord! Save us! We're going to drown!" (Matthew 8:25).

Jesus heard their cry. He watched the disciples struggle for a moment, while evaluating the entire scene.

A disciple grew impatient waiting on Jesus' instructions, shouting, "Teacher, don't you care that we're going to drown?!" **The disciples were hoping Jesus' rescue efforts could help save the boat!** They needed a command from their Captain!

Boy, they had a surprise coming.

Jesus, somewhat disappointed at the disciple's fear, arose to his feet, asking them, *"Why are you*

so afraid?"

He watched their panic attack for another moment, then pinpointed their problem, *"You have so little faith!"*

Jesus raised his arms, looked up to God in prayer, and instantly received the blessing from heaven.

Jesus forcefully commanded the ferocious winds, *"Silence!"*

Jesus harshly commanded the violent waves, *"Be still!"*

Immediately, the winds submitted to their Master. The sea buckled under the supreme authority of its Creator (Mark 4:39). The gales disappeared, with not so much as a puff of breeze remaining. Complete silence. The raging waves smoothed over into a glassy mirror-like finish across the sea.

Peaceful order was restored on this ever-unpredictable Sea of Galilee.

Jesus Calms the Storm - the Response

The disciple's hearts were filled with terror. They were afraid - struck with shock and awe.

They were left standing with their jaws gaping open, feeling so, so, so... human. They felt like grasshoppers that just missed getting squashed by a giant gardener's boot... **Helpless, but fortunately still alive.**

The disciples looked down at the oars and buckets in their hands. They looked at one another.

Each of them turned their eyes upon Jesus. **They felt the hand of God upon them.**

Jesus, his voice as calm as the submitted sea, asked, *"Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

The men dropped their buckets and oars, totally afraid of this Man, unable to respond to his questions. They ignored their Master's query. He was too powerful; too superhuman; too God-like. **They just witnessed the Creator in action, and no words could address him.** They were in the presence of holiness and the source of all power.

In perfect fear, they asked their own question amongst themselves, "Who is this man?"

In wonderment they acclaimed, "Even the wind and waves obey him!" (Mark 4:40-41).

Placing yourself in the disciple's boat for a moment,.. trying to make sense of what you just witnessed,.. does the name "SuperMan" come to your mind? Aside from the comic book hero, doesn't Superman fit what was just witnessed? **The disciples just witnessed a "super-human" miracle.** Jesus calms a storm. Jesus calms a sea,.. the Sea of Galilee, mind you!!

Jesus discharged nature's elements that produced a violent storm. No mere human could ever dissolve a storm.

No winds and no waves would ever listen to a simple verbal command from a mere human. Jesus, the disciples just realized, is no mere man. He speaks, and nature bows to his command. "Who is this man?"

Jesus often referred to the disciples as the *"little-faith ones"* (Matthew 14:31; 16:8).

They often perturbed Jesus with their inability to understand spiritual matters (Mark 6:6). In a cute, lovable way, they were kinda dumb about spiritual matters (Mark 8:21).

In other words, they couldn't make the jump from the physical to the spiritual (Mark 4:13). There was a disconnect for them.

But, in this instance, after watching Jesus calm the storm, the disciples came to a higher level of belief in this person named Jesus.

Jesus Calms the Storm - the Meaning

The most significant meaning of Jesus calming the storm and sea, then, is to open the eyes of the heart to this incredible Jesus.

Jesus calmed the storm to reveal his supremacy over the created world. He created the world by divine fiat (John 1:3), and now he controls the created world by divine fiat.

Jesus calmed the sea to unveil the disciple's eyes to the mystery of Immanuel, *i.e.* "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14; 8:8; Matthew 1:23).

Jesus created the world in ages past, and now he visits the world, as God's Son. **This validates his authority as the Master over the universe.** The elements, both organic and inorganic, must heed his commands.

The inorganic winds and waves listened to Jesus, as did the demons he was casting out earlier (Mark 1:25-26).

However, humans are a different type of creation. They have a freedom to believe in Jesus, or not. Humans are given the power to listen to Jesus, or not. People can read, believe, and obey God's Word, or not.

All people are born in a "not believing" state of mind and heart. We are ALL born unbelievers (Colossians 1:21; Romans 3:10-12).

However, there is great news! **God is always working according to his plan of salvation, helping unbelievers believe in him** (John 5:17). He is working to lead people to belief in God,

his Son, and his Word.

Belief is faith. Belief is trust. Believing in God means believing also in his Son, whom he sent to save us. Without believing in God through Jesus, one cannot be saved and forgiven (Acts 4:12).

The disciples, and us by association as hearers of God's word, have to know and understand things about God, his Son, sin, and ourselves to place our belief in him and become saved (2 Peter 1:8-9).

Jesus, in calming the storm and the sea, is building the disciple's faith in him as Creator. Jesus is giving them important knowledge for believing in him.

Jesus created all things and he sustains all things (Colossians 1:15-17). Jesus holds this entire universe together. Without his supervision over creation it would completely blow-up in a monumental, universal, catastrophic atomic explosion.

Little-Faith Ones:

Having little faith is not good. Jesus corrects his disciples when they "don't get" what he's teaching, or if they don't get why he works miracles. **Having little faith is shameful for any human being.** Are you human? Yes. Do you have little faith? If so, listen up!

Here is a list of reasons for having "little faith," based on the faith-based parable of the soils:

- **Stupidity? Low IQ?** No, there are no excuses here. If someone is "too stupid" or has learning issues, or is even mentally retarded, they'll receive God's grace for salvation. We trust God with such things. So, if you're intelligent enough to claim "low IQ" as an excuse for your little faith, you're wrong. If you're intelligent enough to recognize that you're stupid, then you're intelligent enough to increase your immature, baby faith in Christ alone. Get busy.
- **Bad education?** No, this is no excuse. Many ordinary people in the Bible, and in the history of the church, had a terrible formal education (Acts 4:13). Strong faith is the ability to understand spiritual matters, not worldly matters, of which most formal education consists.
- **Spiritual blindness?** Yes, this is seriously the biggest problem with humans, for several reasons. First of all, every person is born spiritually dead (Matthew 8:22; Ephesians 2:2). We all begin life as the "rocky path" in the parable of the soils. This is a condition that leaves one with little or no faith, yes, but it isn't an excuse. If you're spiritually blind you're under God's eternal wrath. Prepare for judgment, or, of course, you're welcome to repent and believe in Jesus. Make your choice.
- **Hard heart?** Again, like spiritual blindness, this is a large problem with humans. A hard heart is the "rocky path" in the soils parable. Hard hearts come from holding God accountable for one's personal tragedy. A hard heart blames God for misfortune. Many of the disciples started their journey of faith here (Mark 8:17).

- **Rebellious heart?** Yes, another issue that stops God's Spirit advancing on a person. A rebellious heart dislikes and doesn't trust authority figures. A rebellious heart doesn't want to submit to a higher authority. A rebellious heart wants to do his or her own thing. This person's heart is usually the "rocky soil" but sometimes it sprouts roots and a stem, but it quickly dies from the heat of the Son (Mark 9:49).
- **Money?** Sure, this is another issue with many people. Jesus says you cannot love both God and money (Matthew 6:24). It's really an easy concept. It's just so hard for a worldly person to commit to following Jesus. A person of "faith" who trusts in riches plays dumb with this command. They really have "little faith." This person's heart is the rich soil, where belief springs up into a beautiful plant, but soon, the worries and temptations of the world choke-out the good plants (Mark 10:21-23).
- **Sinful heart?** Yes, same as with money. A heart set on sin is a heart full of idolatry. This type of person many times adds Jesus to their list of loves. They try and squeeze Jesus into their idol-filled heart. Jesus will have none of it, though. This person can have rich soil, but the worries and concerns of the world, and the love for physical things, are the weeds that choke-out the plant of faith. Repentance is badly needed for a sinner (Luke 14:33; Luke 19:8-9).
- **Unloving heart?** A person who finds it difficult to love is definitely a lost person. He or she is bitter, hateful, and selfish. They blame others for their misfortune and hate the people responsible. If a person hates his neighbor, he or she is no child of God. This heart can be on bad or good soil, but, the plant of faith will not grow in an unloving heart. Things must change, and they do, when God invades the heart (Mark 12:29-31). Be the miracle!

Jesus calmed the storm on the heels of teaching his Parable of the Soils (Mark 4:3-20), aka Parable of the Sower. Do you get the connection?

God creates and manipulates his creation. Jesus created the world, and now he controls creation. **A person must know and believe this so his heart can change from unbelief to belief.** If a person doesn't believe in Jesus and the accounts of creation found only in the Bible, then they are unbelievers. You cannot dance around this fact (Matthew 19:4; Mark 8:38).

Do you believe Jesus calmed the storm? Do you believe he calmed the sea?

Jesus made a storm to drown Jonah, and a fish to swallow him (Jonah 1:17). He could split the Red Sea for Moses (Exodus 14:21-22), and the Jordan River for Joshua (Joshua 3:15-16). He could withhold rain from falling (James 5:17-18), and he could turn water to wine (John 2:7-9)!

Jesus controls our earth's water supplies. Is there any doubt?! He can even give the woman at the well Living Water! (John 4:10). And, someday soon, the River of Life will flow through our heavenly home (Revelation 22:1-2)!

Let's return to the miracle. Jesus brings a calm (Gr. *galene*) at his command. The storm didn't "pass" as we like to say of a terrible thunderstorm. The disciples didn't need to "ride the storm out." Jesus completely removed all conditions of the storm. This is important...

Jesus obliterated the storm. He stopped nature's elements that caused the storm, thereby instantly discharging the storm's power source.

That's what God does. He takes something that's corrupted, or something that's sinful, and obliterates it. He doesn't waste his time massaging it, lessening its destruction, or letting it "pass." No, Jesus makes something that has gone bad, new again. He takes corruption and immediately heals it back to new. **He's both the Creator, and the Re-Creator.**

In the case of this storm, Jesus brought calmness back into the chaos.

Miracles and Belief

Jesus completely renews things. He brings peace to turmoil. He brings calm to a raging storm.

He does the same with human hearts. He wants joy and trust, not fear, turmoil, and faithlessness in his believers.

Do you get it? Do you believe? Is your heart jumping for joy? If not, you still have a hard heart.

You should be in utter amazement of Jesus after reading about this incredible miracle. You should be standing there with a gaping jaw, just like these disciples. God expects you to believe in this miracle event even though you're not an eyewitness.

The imagination of your heart should place you in this boat with Jesus. You have the responsibility to believe the account where Jesus calms the storm.

The 12 Disciples of Jesus were an interesting model from whom to learn. **We all start our spiritual journey with no belief. Belief usually happens over a course of time, as the Holy Spirit patiently shows a person spiritual matters concerning the Savior** (Psalm 119:18; John 9:39).

The eyes of the heart see the things of God and are slowly enlightened and opened (Ephesians 1:18). The ears of one's heart start hearing the word of God, and the person's faith grows (Romans 10:17).

Most of the disciples eventually became believers, but not all of them, *e.g.* Judas Iscariot and "many" disciples (John 6:66). They took the entire three years to finally become true followers of Jesus. But, again, that was all God's work (Luke 24:45; John 3:6-7; 20:22).

Jesus only wants belief, not effort, from us for salvation (John 6:29). Effort comes later, in the form of Christian service and charity (James 2:17), after receiving the free gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23).

Jesus Calms the Storm - Grasp This!

Jesus created us, all of us; but, unfortunately, original sin curses us with a darkened, unbelieving heart (Romans 3:23). **We're born in a state of disbelief in God. We're born to fear the threatening things of this life.**

God's one and only perfect plan of salvation demands us to believe in God through his Son, Jesus Christ. Salvation rids us of disbelief and fear as we grow in the knowledge of God and our commitment to God.

Jesus did everything necessary in his life, and on his cross, so that you could be found worthy to stand before God Almighty (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Is a storm raging in your heart today? Will you let him calm your soul (Gr. *galene*). That's what God does - he brings peace. Do you crave God's nurture, his peace, his calm? Be still and know that he is God.

Listen to King David, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants after you, God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" Psalm 42:1-2 NHEB.

Jesus desires that you don't possess and express fear in the storms of this life. Walk up to him, as a deer to a refreshing stream.

He wants you to fully trust in him and his word for all the raging waves and blowing winds that threaten you.

He desires that you come to him, seeking eternal life (Matthew 6:33). He gives freely and fully. He wants to re-create you into a brand new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Jesus Calms the Storm Bible Study Questions:

- 1) Jesus' disciples were referred as "little-faith ones" for what reason(s)? How do we avoid being ones of little faith?
- 2) Many people in the Bible were left stunned when meeting God, with an inability to communicate with him. Realistically, how do we prepare to stand in God's presence and power, and maintain our composure and wits?
- 3) How can this miracle, where Jesus calms the storm, help counsel the messed-up lives of unbelievers?

Jesus Calms the Storm Bible Verses:

They reel back and forth, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end. Then they cry to the LORD in their trouble, and he brings them out of their distress. He makes the storm a calm, so that its waves are still. Psalm 107:27-29 NHEB.

I have told you these things, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! I have overcome the world. John 16:33 NHEB.

Jesus Calms the Storm Miracle Prayer:

Dear Father, I hear you today. Thank you for speaking to my heart. I praise you. I praise your

Son, Jesus. Lord, my life is a raging storm. My little boat is breaking apart, and I'm tired of being the captain of my own ship. I want to jump in your boat and let Jesus be my Captain. I want Jesus to be the Captain of my soul. Lord, I want to see your throne that sits atop the crystal river. Lord, save me. Save those I love. Save my neighbors. Let me assist you. I will close my mouth and let you continue speaking to my heart. In Christ's name. Amen.

Read more: <http://www.graspinggod.com/jesus-calms-the-storm.html#ixzz2QwI8POIm>

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