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The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Stilling a Storm

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THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST

THIRTEEN: Stilling a Storm (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-29)

SURVEY

The disciples were caught in a furious storm on the Sea of Galilee which threatened to sink their boat. Awakening Jesus, who had fallen into an exhausted sleep in the ship's stern, the terrified men cried out: "Lord, save us from drowning!" The Savior then stood up and rebuked both the wind and the waves, resulting in a great calm.

SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only recorded reference to Jesus being asleep.
- It is the first of two occasions where Jesus saved His disciples from drowning. See also miracle 20.

SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- One of the most famous Old Testament miracles had to do with a sleeping Hebrew prophet in a boat during a storm. One of the most famous New Testament miracles also had to do with a sleeping Hebrew prophet in a boat during a storm. The Old Testament prophet was Jonah. The New Testament prophet was Jesus. The second would later use the experience of the first as a sign to an unbelieving generation:
"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whales belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." (Mt. 12:40)
- Note the phrase, *"they took him even as he was."* Our Lord was a real man, with dirt under His fingernails, sweat on His brow, and on this occasion, weariness in His bones.
- The Greek word here refers to a violent storm, a furious squall of hurricane proportion. The Sea of Galilee, situated in a basin surrounded by mountains, is particularly susceptible to sudden, violent storms. Cool air from the Mediterranean is drawn down through the narrow mountain passes connecting the two bodies of water, and clashes with the hot, humid air lying over the lake. Thus, in a matter of seconds, the quiet Galilean waters can be turned into a howling, life-threatening watery nightmare for all those sailing upon it.
- Note the words as recorded by Mark's account:
"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." (Mk. 4:39)

The language of this verse strongly suggests that the vicious storm may have been caused by satanic activity, perhaps in an attempt to drown Jesus.

1. The Greek word for rebuke is *epitimao*, a word Jesus used in denouncing both Satan and his demons.
 - a. The rebuking of demons (Lk.9:42; Mt. 17:18)
 - b. The rebuking of Satan (Mk. 8:33; Jude 1:9)
 2. The Greek word for peace, *phimoo*, used only here and in Mk. 1:25 (where Jesus denounced a demon), means literally, "be muzzled, be gagged." This action often referred to the muzzling of a wild dog.
- There are many lessons to be learned today from this miracle. Three questions should be asked when the storms of life beset the Christian.
 1. Is this storm one of punishment or purification? That is, am I being chastened for my sin (as was true in the case of Jonah), or is this simply a trial allowed by God to purify me (as was true here with the disciples)?
 2. Have I made room for Him on board? Am I aware of His presence?
 3. What does He want me to do in the time of the storm? In a nutshell, three things:
 - a. He wants me to thank Him for the storm. "*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" (1 Thess. 5:18)
 - b. He wants me to fellowship with Him in the storm. "*Pray without ceasing.*" (1 Thess. 5:17)
 - c. He wants me to trust Him through the storm. "*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*" (Prov. 3:5-6)