

Personal Storms

Harmony M.B.C., April 13, 2008 (Morning)
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Mark 4:35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let **us pass over unto the other side.**

Mark 4:36 And 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.

Mark 4:37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

Mark 4:38 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?

Mark 4:39 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.

Mar 4:40 And he said unto them, **Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?**

Mark 4:41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

This account of interaction between Christ and His disciples in the presence of a threatening storm gives us great biblical information from which to gain understanding about human fear in the face of threats. It also gives us a lot of information from which to understand human nature and the Lord's forbearance regarding that human nature. Here, we have a biblical account which contains many features that are parallel to life situations we see when we go through personal experiential storms. May the Lord help us today to use this text to aid us in our own personal conflicts as we seek to be spiritually stable in a world full of upheaval.

I. V. 37: Storms of Life Are Often Beyond Our Control

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

Controllable storm not perceived as threat

Storms we can't control produces fear and uncertainty

Storms take many forms:

Our livelihood is in trouble (we hear the thunder of threatened money troubles; job troubles)

Our kids are in trouble (the lightning bolt of sudden problems involving our children strike in our hearts)

A series of downturns in our personal peace, security, comfort (come tearing through our lives like little tornados)

Problem upon problem may come like torrential rain storms to soak our lives with bewilderment, uncertainty, sadness; raw fear.

Our biggest task in dealing with such storms is to acknowledge that they are out of our control

Attempting human solutions without divine direction usually makes for more fear

and worse conditions
Fighting a forest fire with a squirt gun
Driving blindfolded (you can steer, you can push the accelerator, you can shift gears, but...)

II. V. 38. The Lord May Seem Unaware or Uncaring In Such Times

“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? “

The greatest difficulty we find in dealing with our storms is that sometimes we feel the entire universe doesn't seem to care

This translates into a feeling on our part that the Lord does not care or He doesn't fully see how deeply the experience is affecting us

When you think the Lord isn't paying attention, it may be you who aren't paying attention

Storms are sometimes sent by the Lord to wake us up

- Illustration: Notice how booming thunder and flashing lightning wakes you up in the middle of the night!
- They are sometimes sent to refine us (describe the imagery of the refiner in Mal. 3:3) “And he shall **sit as a refiner** and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and **purge them as gold and silver**, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.”

III. What is the Solution?

V. 38 “...they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?”

A. Notice the simplicity of the solution - call on the Lord

B. Some observations about the way they called on the Lord:

Typically, for us these storms are all about us perishing...we think in terms of earthly fates. So, our pleas to the Lord often show that overpowering obsession. In thinking that way, our prayers even get marred with worldly-mindedness. It is absurd to think that the Lord does not care about our welfare.

- Luke 12:6-7 **Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? 7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.**

C. Despite the fact that these disciples were insolent and could not see the larger view, Christ gets up and comes to their rescue.

D. The important lesson here, though, is that they called upon Him for help in their personal storm.

About letting the Lord take the burden of it - 1Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

About doing the right thing when overwhelmed - Psalms 61:2 “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed....”

Psalm 102:1 “A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.”

About giving the Lord credit for knowing what we are going through - Psalm 142:3 “When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path.”

About being bold to ask for rescue in plain language - Psalms 69:15 “Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up....”

E. Storms Cease When We Bring The Power Of The Lord To Bear On Them
“Peace, be still.”

IV. v40. A Pointed Question From The Lord Because of Their Fear

“Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?”

Fear in the face of natural peril makes the natural man react with survival behavior

This survival behavior ignores trust in anything

Faith says, “trust in the Lord to rescue”

Let this question from the mouth of our Savior be one for us personally when we go too far with doubting and fearing; when we allow our personal storms to override our dependence on Him.

V. V41. Watching the Lord Calm Our Life Storms Should Instill Holy Fear and Reverence In Us.

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