

Daily Bible Study

“Lord of Nature”

Mark 4:35-41

April 4-10, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – We return this week to our study of The Gospel of Mark and take as our text, **Mark 4:35-41**. Up to this point in our study of this gospel we have seen Jesus exercise His Lordship in many areas. We will mention them later in the week as this study unfolds. Suffice to say at this point, we will find that Jesus shows His power and authority over nature in this text as He “Calms a Storm” or “Stills a Tempest on the Sea” to take the language from some of the headings given through history to summarize this passage. This particular story is found in both Matthew and Luke as well but like we often see, although Mark is the brief Gospel, he gives us certain interesting specifics which the other Gospel writers do not thus giving some credence to the point of many scholars that it appears Mark is writing with the assistance of an eye witness to these events; namely, Peter. In regard to the story itself, there is so much more for us to learn Beloved than the mere fact that Christ, as God is all powerful, even over nature although that is a clear, unmistakable and comforting fact that is obvious to the text. We will also see that Christ is the ever loving Savior as He deals with His followers and alleviates their fears and at the same time impresses on them in great magnitude exactly who He is and what He is capable of which has a profound affect on them from then on. **Mark 4:35-36** *“On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.” 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.”* In these two verses we find more evidence for an eye witness helping Mark in his writing as only he records the details such as, this was *evening* when they set out and that they *took Jesus along in the boat* and there were *other little boats with them*. It had been a busy day for Jesus as He had been speaking to the people from the shore (**4:1**) and then among other things had been explaining His parables to the disciples when they were alone (**4:10, 34**). This was a day of activity, preaching and teaching so it is no surprise that as Mark will inform us later on and as Luke records right away in his account, *“...as they sailed, He fell asleep”* (**Luke 8:23**). So Jesus says, *“Let us cross over to the other side”* as He wants to move from this busy western shore of the Sea of Galilee to the eastern side or shore. Being both fully God and man we understand He is in need of rest and apparently sees this move to the other side as a break from the crowds for a moment of rest. Incredibly we find as Mark chronicles that the curious followers even surrounded Jesus in *other little boats*. As mentioned earlier; although Jesus gives the order to move out, it is the boatmen, the mariner disciples who spring into action and *took Him along in the boat as He was*.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Meditate today on this matter of Jesus getting tired and needing rest. We know how irritable and sinful we can get when short on rest. Praise Jesus today for His perfect sinlessness even when tired. Father, as I look at Jesus I am made more

aware of my sinfulness. Thank You for granting me forgiveness and covering me with Jesus righteousness.

TUESDAY – **Mark 4:37–38a** “*And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow.*” The type of storm that came upon the disciples and our Lord in this text is described in terms that stress the violence and force of the storm. Mark speaks of it as a *great windstorm* or in the Greek language a mega (*great*) lailaps (*storm*) anemos (*wind*). We are familiar with and understand the word mega to speak to something being great or large in form or space. This was not a small passing shower. The word lailaps and anemos both could be simply defined with the word *wind* but both words stress a violence and power and severity as can be seen in the full definition of the word lailaps from the Greek lexicon: “a whirlwind, a tempestuous wind, a violent attack of wind, a squall, never a single gust nor a steady blowing wind, however violent, but a storm breaking forth from black thunder clouds in furious gusts, with floods of rain, and throwing everything topsy-turvy”. This was a wind that swirled down violently upon the sea and threw it into turmoil; so much so that the experienced mariner disciples thought this would drown them. The Sea of Galilee is about 700feet below sea level. It is surrounded by hills and has places where there are deep cliff ledged valleys and passages. It is the lowest freshwater lake on Earth and the second-lowest lake in the world (after the Dead Sea which is saltwater). The winds would blow and funnel their way through the hills down upon this low lying lake and it would explode if you will into a violent turbid body of water. This is precisely what took place here in our text and Jesus and the disciples go from sailing a manageable lake to sailing in what could be described by the original language as a “hurricane” of sorts. Matthew even uses the word seismos in the Greek to describe the “*tempest*”. Seismology is the study of earthquakes and this word means exactly that; an earthquake, a shaking, a commotion. We get the picture that this is not your ordinary rainstorm but rather it is one of incredible strength and ferocity. Amidst all this incredible and intense commotion we find the Lord *in the stern, asleep on a pillow*. The original language stresses the comparison of these two facts as it places the word *asleep* at the very end of the sentence. In the midst of this chaos, Jesus was on board, back in the stern, on the pillow....*sleeping*. Here the prince of peace slept as the waves crashed, the wind roared and blew water into the boat. It was this Jesus who said to the great and mighty ocean at creation, “*This far you may come, but no farther, and here your proud waves must stop!*” (**Job 38:11**)

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus here demonstrated to His disciples and to us that He was unwavering and complete in His trust in The Heavenly Father; His own Father. Father, help me to trust You as Christ did no matter what the circumstances of life may be.

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 4:38b** “*And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?”* In the middle of this mayhem; we find that while Christ was sleeping the disciples begin to cry out to Him for help. We get a variety of reports from all the gospel writers most likely telling us the variety of different things being said by the different men involved in this situation. **Matthew 8:25**, “*Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Lord,*

save us! We are perishing!” Luke 8:24, “And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And finally in Mark we have “Teacher do

*You not care that we are perishing?” Common sense would tell us that rather than their being a contradiction here between the gospel writers; instead we are treated to listen in to the individuals that make up the whole as they react to this scene. Mark’s phrase is hard to do anything with except to see and say that this is apparent criticism of Jesus for sleeping while the storm raged. The harsh and critical nature of this statement is obvious. We are about to die here Jesus, Don’t YOU care? We also need to remember we are dealing with your everyday sinners here in the form of the disciples and sometimes we say in folly things that we later would regret. Another plus is that although they are critical; they are coming to the only guy in the world who can help them; there is a level of trust seen here in that simple fact. Interestingly, the mariner fishermen are turning to the carpenter for help. Matthew informs us in **Matthew 8:26**, “*But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?”* The only guy in the boat who was not frightened was Jesus. Why do you panic when the storm is raging and I, the creator of the universe who loves you am right here? Read **Psalm 55:22, Philippians 4:6**.*

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: How do you react when things get a bit stormy in your life? Who do you turn to for help? Remember the Scripture tells us to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Father, please strengthen my faith and help me to turn to you and trust You in difficult times.

THURSDAY – **Mark 4:39-40** “*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. But He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?”* Jesus awakens and delivers a miracle of epic proportions. The scripture tells us that He *rebuked the wind*. In an authoritative and majestic way He shows His rulership over the wind and water and He addresses them as if He were speaking to a slave. Mark’s record gives us some very interesting facts which we need to note. He records Jesus speaking to both the *wind* and the *sea*. He merely *rebukes the wind* and then He tells the *sea*, “*Peace, be still*”. The two words He speaks to the *sea* both are used of silence. They mean literally to be silent, and to close the mouth with a muzzle. What is incredible is the result of His words on the elements of nature. Mark tells us that *the wind ceased and there was a great calm*. Anyone at all familiar with being on the sea, lake, or any body of water including a small pond knows that once the wind stops or the commotion ceases the waves still church around until they subside or in the case of ponds, reach the shore. Not here Beloved, this approximately 40,000 acre sea, is commanded by its maker to “quiet down and hush” if you will and it turns *calm*. The aorist tense in the original speaks of something immediate. How *calm*? *Great* (Megas) *calm*. In light of **verse 38** where the disciples seemingly criticize Jesus for a lack of concern for them and their well being it is a great comfort to the children of God to see the response from Jesus here in **verse 40**. He does not swing a hammer of stern rebuke just putting them in line for such foolish and stupid comments; rather, He puts a couple of questions to them and makes them think about why and what they were saying, feeling, and doing. What is amazing is what we learn from our text and **Luke 8:25**. Look carefully at our text where it says, “*Why are*

you so fearful? Notice why ARE and not why WERE.... In **Luke 8:25** AFTER Jesus calms the storm and questions them we read, “*And they were afraid...*” They had been frightened by the storm but now they are frightened because they stand in the presence of the man who stopped the storm. This is the reason for Jesus question, “*How is it that you have no faith?*” In spite of what you have just seen are you still without faith to believe? Jesus is saying “*fellas, these circumstances in life are all for a purpose and this one is to strengthen your faith.*” Even difficult and unpleasant times are for a reason; namely, God’s glory and our good. Notice David’s response in **Psalm 119:71**.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Instead of a cavalier and casual attitude about the person and power of God we need to have the attitude expressed by the prophet in Isaiah 6:5 when He came to behold the majesty of God. Father, teach me to see You in Your glory and power and fear and reverence You as I ought. Thank You that there is nothing You can’t do.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 4:41 “*And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, ‘Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!’*” We mentioned earlier in the week that these disciples have seen Jesus exercise His Lordship and rule in several areas; among them power and control of the huge crowds, casting out demons and demonstrating His power over the enemy, Satan (The Strong Man) himself as well as His healing of the sick. And among mere humans there are men who show rule and expertise; such as these disciples who were expert fisherman, doctors who could operate and do surgery, and mothers who could comfort and dry the tears of a child. But no one, NO ONE can control and correct the weather. This Beloved is the reason for the *fear* of these men. Luke tells us they also *marveled* or wondered and admired. They had a mix of fear and reverence for Jesus that is most healthy and needed today. Surely the disciples were familiar with **Psalm 89:9** and **93:4** which read, “*You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, You still them.*” “*The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, than the mighty waves of the sea.*” But now, standing in their very boat was the One who fulfills these Scriptures which prompts them to say, “*Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!*” Barton Johnson comments, “They had not yet learned that the word which the sea obeyed was the word in obedience to which the world itself was made.” We see in the disciple’s response and comments that there was a growing apprehension and comprehension of the person of Jesus Christ. There was an awful lot they needed to still learn and would come to know more fully as time progressed. The same is true of us today as believers. We are commanded to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (**2 Peter 3:18**). And as we have seen earlier in Mark, it is only when God The Holy Spirit opens our minds that we can fully comprehend and be taught by Him. One thing is for certain; amidst the waves and the wind and the water filling the boat, there was a majestic sleeping Savior who the disciples saw they were to trust and turn to in every situation. As His Majesty, The Lord Jesus Christ arose from the *stern*, He removed ALL doubt as to who is, “The Lord of Nature” and “The Lord of All”.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth. Father, Son, Spirit; all praise, honor & glory be to You Holy Trinity both now & forever. Teach me to see You more clearly, love You more deeply, and trust You more fully.