

Mark 4 35 - 41

## **The storm at sea. From Fear to Faith.**

**A rich and full Parable** ( well actually it really happened but we draw such truth from this event) **with so much instruction.**

The strong wind and waves caused the disciples to doubt the care of Christ. We also find ourselves doubting and worrying in seasons of danger.

Remember it was the Lord who had commanded them to go over to the other side.

We can learn, *that Christ's service does not exempt His servants from storms.*

The disciple's had been involved in active duty and were obedient to Christ, they were following Christ, they were obedient to His word. They were always testifying and witnessing. They truly Loved the Lord. They had given up everything and followed the Lord. In other words they were good Christians. But here we see them in a terrible storm, tossed about by the waves and in danger of drowning.

Imperfect knowledge of the Lord, their natural impatience, and satanic temptation caused them to doubt.

**Believer do not be amazed.** That you face storms. You must not expect everything to be smooth on your way to heaven. Nor think it strange if we have to suffer Losses in business even when you have conducted your affairs justly and honestly, bereavement, and disappointments. **Free pardon and full forgiveness, grace as we are on the way of life, and glory at the end**—all this our Savior has promised to give. But He has never promised that we shall have no affliction.

**The trial happening to you, can very well be chastisement of the Lord?** So many are taught that if its bad, if life is hard, it can only be the devil. They have never considered A discipline or correction often comes from the Lord. *I believe that God is in all things—that there is neither power, nor life, nor motion, nor thought, nor existence apart from Him. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."* **Colossians 1:17** And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

He is timeless the Alpha and Omega, He holds all things together, if he didn't all things would fall apart. He holds our lives guides us, cares for us as a Father.

If a trial is from the Lord, we don't resist it, for *it would be wicked to do so.* If it is the Lord's will, let it be so. To put our will against His will is sheer rebellion against Him! Besides how can we expect to oppose the Lord and win?

Absolute submission is not enough—we must go on to *joyful acceptance* in the will of God. If the cup is bitter and it involves correction and discipline, we accept it and must take it as cheerfully as if it were sweet. That's too hard, you say. But its only hard for hard hearts, But when our hearts are right with God, we love Him and fully trust Him. Whenever there is conflict between our will and His will, we immediately end the conflict by saying, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." It is nothing but wickedness, whatever form it assumes, when we attempt to resist the will of God.

By affliction He teaches us many precious lessons, which without it we should never learn. By affliction He shows us our emptiness and weakness and lack of faith, draws us to the throne of grace, purifies our affections, weans us from the world, makes us have a longing for heaven. At the end of it all we will be able to see it and say truly I thank God for every trial. It served to strengthen me and show me my great weakness, it served to remove dross as when gold is refined and make me more Godly.

I think of **1 Peter 4:12** Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

**1 Peter 1:7** That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

The testing or proving of your faith\_much as **gold is refined by fire** when its dross is removed, and trials prove the reality of one's **faith**. Faith is more precious, **of greater worth, than gold**. Even refined gold, though it lasts a long time, eventually perishes. It will be valueless in the marketplace of eternity. But faith "purchases" an inheritance that can never perish. How we should rejoice when our faith which is eternal is made to grow.

**The Storm.** This storm was a trial and affliction to the disciples, it was so exceedingly severe and more than they had ever experienced. They had often been tossed by the waves on that lake, but this time the waves seemed stronger than ever—the winds poured down in all their force and fury. The war of Nature raged around their boat which was on a mission.

The storm was even more trying because it came upon them **when they were in the path of duty**. Their Master had commanded them to cross the sea—they were not going on a holiday trip. They had not even followed the suggestion of a brother who had said, "I go a-fishing," but they were sailing under their great Captain's orders.

**They were doing right and suffering trouble in consequence.** This has often perplexed good men. Believers sometimes say, "I prospered more before I was a Christian than I have since becoming one. Things went smoothly with me before I knew the Lord. How can these things be? **This is no new thing.** The child of God will have to swim against the stream. We will have to fight and then we will win a crown!

**The storm came when Jesus was in the ship.** Had the Lord been absent, maybe they could have understood it—but He was in the vessel with them! How could the sea be so boisterous with Christ in the vessel? If I am out of communion with Christ, then I can understand why I am chastened. But if I am walking in nearness and fellowship with Him and even *then*, tried and perplexed, how can I account for it? What must I do when I don't understand? I must recall Gods former dealings with my life, The times He has helped, delivered , given wisdom. I must remember the charicator of God, He loves me, cares for me, is faithfull. I must remember I have been made and adopted into His family, I am His child.

**Here lies the test of faith!** *"Whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."* we forget this and tend to think that trials must mean The Lord is angry, but that is not true they are often tokens of His great *love!* The old Commentator Poole says it like this :- *every child, that God the Father choicely loveth, taketh into his bosom, cares as a parent doth a child, he nurtures, instructs, corrects by his word and rod in its personal measure, for their spiritual profit and advantage.* All these things we are afflicted with are to be connect with unto the sovereignty, wisdom, and goodness of God. Trusting that He has our best interests at heart.

**THE Lord shows PITY in the storm.** *And they awoke Him, and said unto Him, Master, care You not that we perish? And He arose and rebuked the wind—*

The trembling and shaken disciples, remember at least 4 of them were fishermen and had been on those seas since youth, but this storm shakes even seasoned fisherman! They Wake up the Lord who is asleep with His head upon a pillow at back of the boat.

We forget that the Lord walked the earth as a man. He got Hungry and He got tired just like any man. He has been busy all day at His Father's business, Preaching the Gospel, no wonder He was tired. A sleep He well deserved.

The Lord as a man experienced all the difficulties we face and many many more, and can fully identify with us. **Hebrews 4:15** *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.* **Hebrews 2:18** *For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour – (come to the rescue of, come to the aid of) them that are tempted.*

**When they woke Him,** and He is perfectly calm although the noise of the storm must have been overwhelming, normally one would be alarmed to wake to that, but there is such peace. He looks at them with pity that and he asks, *"why are so fearful"*. How did the Lord see they were fearful, well perhaps with the urgency they awoke Him Master! Don't you care we are perishing! In a way they accuse The Lord of such hard-heartednesses to let His faithful disciples perish when He has power to deliver them?

**Their fears had made them so unlike Him.** He is full of peace, yet they are full of fear. He called them to follow Him, He drew them to Himself. The Lord who gives rest to all who come unto Him.

**Now they were missing out on this blessing that was theirs to have.** The Lord Pitied them. Dear friends the Master looks upon us, some who have been with Him for many years and yet are so unlike Him, some of us getting grey in His service yet we are so far short of His Glory.

**How is it that we are so fearful when Christ is so calm?** Is this how we are to imitate the Lord? Our doubts, fears, alarms and mistrusts of God—is this the behavior a *follower of Jesus* should display? No not at all! So **What is the secret of tranquility in a storm? Meditation on God** – His word – His promises- His faithfulness. **Prayer-** Be anxious for nothing -*Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* **Resignation** – accepting and not fighting against correction, trusting it is for our good.

*And He arose and rebuked the wind- And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.* Not only was the wind silenced and the sea calmed to rest, but a deep calm transformed the lake to as smooth as a mirror! Normally when the wind stops the sea takes time to calm down, but at the masters word a great calm came. When Christ stills winds and waves, it is "a great calm."

Have you ever experienced "a great calm?" It is much more than ordinary peace of mind—it is to your heart as if there were no further possibilities of fear! Your troubles have so completely gone that you can hardly remember them.

There is no one but the Lord, Himself, who can speak to produce "a great calm."

**Bible example.** .... Paul was in a severe storm neither sun nor moon nor stars were seen in many days, the situation looked impossible, yet he is encouraged Acts **27:24** *saying, Fear not, Paul! You must stand before Caesar. And behold! God has given you all those who sail with you.*

Therefore, men, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it will be so, according to the way it was told me. Just a note that the storm continued up until the 14<sup>th</sup> day but **The Apostle was so sure of God that he had no shadow of doubt.**

**Calm came to Paul.** Master, we ask that You to speak such a calm to those of us who need it!

**With the Lord Jesus Christ nothing is impossible.** No stormy passions are so strong that He cannot tame them. No temper is so rough and violent that He can change it. No mind can be so worried, that He can't speak peace to it, and make it calm. No man ever need despair, if He will

only bow down his pride, and come as a humbled sinner to Christ. Christ can do miracles. **Isaiah 14:3** And it shall be in the day that Jehovah shall give you rest from your sorrow, and from your fear, and from the hard bondage which was pressed on you,

No person ever needs to worry they will not reach their journey's end, if they have committed their life and heart to Christ's keeping. **The Lord will carry him through every danger.** Christ will make him conqueror over every foe.

Even if our relations oppose us? Even if our neighbours laugh at us and make fun of us, Even if our very daily life be hard, Even if our temptations be great, all these many things are nothing, if Christ is on our side, and we are in the ship with Him. **Greater is He that is for us, than all they that are against us.**

He pitied them, next, because *it made them so unlike themselves.* They had been on the rough seas from youth, now unbelief had crept in, and it caused them to stagger and stumble. If they had kept looking to the Master, they would have weathered the storm they would have stood.

**With compassion the Lord looks upon them who ought to have been strong.** How are the mighty fallen! Alas, **Psalms 78:9** The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. Those who once were patterns of courage become cowards when faith fails. **What happened?** they forgot His works, and His wonders that he had shewed them. Fathers in Israel act like babes in Grace when faith flows away!

Our Lord is grieved for us when He sees us fall so low that instead of being like He is, we are not even like ourselves! **But when we have Holy Confidence in our God** – It honours Him. – It blesses our own soul- It blesses those around us.

Jesus pitied them, again, because *their fears made them so unhappy.* Terror was shown on their faces. They were white as a sheet when they saw that the boat filling up with water and sinking. What caused their terror? Were they afraid of *death*? Their fears were causing them more pain and anxiety than death itself. We "feel a thousand deaths in fearing one." **To die is *nothing compared with fearing to die.*** All the agony of death lies in the thinking of it— death itself is the end of all agony. Death for the believer is gain, it is to be with the saviour forever.

Fear arises thinking about it, no, rather let us strive to be courageous.

The commentator says we should crush the eggs of unbelief, vipers of unbelief while they are still in the nest, crush them beneath your feet.

**Our sorrows are mostly manufactured at home,** beaten out upon the anvil of unbelief with the hammer of our predicting what could happen. May the Lord forgive us! Jesus pities us that we should tear ourselves by our needless fears and miss the joy of a restful faith.

we learn from this passage, *that our Lord Jesus Christ is exceedingly patient and pitiful in dealing with His own people.* We see the disciples on this occasion showing great need of faith and giving way to such great fear. They forgot their master's miracles and care for them in days gone by. The Lord Jesus is very pitiful and of tender mercy. *Psalms 103:13 As a father pities his children, Jehovah pities those who fear Him.* He does not deal with believers according to their sins, nor reward them according to their iniquities. He sees their weakness. He is aware of their shortcomings. **He knows all the defects of their faith, and hope, and love, and courage.** He knows our folly and yet He will not cast us off. He bears with us continually. He loves us even to the end. He raises us when we fall. He restores them and makes whole.

**Suppose the disciples had been in faith and not fear.** Perhaps the story would have been recorded something like this ... and there arose a great storm... but the disciples believing their master trusted that He would not let them perish, and waited till He awoke. And when Jesus arose he said, great is your faith and saved them. What Joy the memory would have brought to their hearts in later years!

The disciples were so full of fear when the wind and waves were boisterous. Fear sometimes makes people say things they wouldn't normally say. We read in V38 *And they awakened Him and said to Him, Master, do You not care that we perish?* In other words, **don't you care for us.** Isn't it strange we too in moments of fear can say Lord why is this happening to me. Don't you care Lord? **But how wrong,** The Lord who cared so much, He went to Calvary to die for our sins. He came from heaven to earth knowing fully the suffering He would face. Yet He Loved us so much He still came. **Isn't it fear speaking when we say Don't you care Lord!** Dread and fear had gripped the disciples. **But now the Lord speaks to the wind and waves and they calm instantly.** *Mark 4:41 And they feared exceedingly and said to one another, What kind of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?*

But now this fear is not like the fear of the wind and waves. It's a reverential fear. Its an awareness of the mighty Lord who is with them. The Lord who has authority over nature, the wind and the waves. They realise just how powerful He is. And He is with them in their situation.

They realise He is the one who calls forth the stars by night and names each one, and not one is missing.

He is the one who measures the oceans in the palm of His hand.

He is the one who upholds all things and propels the entire universe by the word of His power.

He is the one who created the Heavens above and the Earth below.

**This is who is with them in the boat.** In the Gospel of Matthew it is said, The men marveled.

They were Amazed at His greatness! This Holy fear, and amazement totally overshadowed the previous fear. When they feared the wind and the waves it was because they forgot how mighty

He is, that was with them. Great reverence, Great amazement at The Lords majesty and power. They exclaimed, what manner of man is this? Surely more than a man, for even the winds and the seas obey him. Who is this savior in my boat in my Life?

*Near though the enemy may be, the Father is nearer. The everlasting arms are beneath you. You are beset behind and before, but no boat can sink when Christ is on board.*

**Once it is real to us, that the saviour is near.** We begin to speak in a way so as to console others: our calm shall work marvels in the little ships whereof others are captains. We, too, shall say, "Peace! Be still." Our confidence shall prove contagious, and the timid shall grow brave: our tender love shall spread itself, and the contentious shall cool down to patience. **Only the matter must begin within ourselves.** We cannot create a calm till we are in a calm. It is easier to rule the elements than to govern the unruliness of our wayward nature. **When grace has made us masters of our fears, so that we can take a pillow and fall asleep amid the hurricane,** the fury of the tempest is over. He giveth peace and safety when He giveth His beloved sleep.

If we only dispute, complain, and worry, our afflictions have not yet done nothing effectually for us. But when they cause us to turn from **earth to heaven**, from **time to eternity**, from the **creature to God**, they are working together for our good, and made to yield unto us "the peaceable fruits of righteousness"-

I Close now repeating the words May Grace enable us to be masters of our fears, full of trust in the Lord, and not fear we will sink. May that confidence in the Lord be so real we take a pillow and fall asleep in the storm. May our calmness speak to all around us.

May this bring great honor to the Lord. Amen.