

# Calm Hearts and Raging Storms

Phyllis Corbin

I want to focus on two portions of scripture in this little message. The first one from the Gospels and the second one is taken from the Acts of the Apostles concerning the life of Paul. These are the accounts of two storms. More than that there are disciples of Christ in both storms.

## Marks Storm:

Mark 4:36-41 (KJV) 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. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 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? 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. 40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 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?

The Mark account takes place on the sea of Galilee. Jesus had spent a full day teaching and healing. On this occasion they waited for nothing before they went across the Sea. Other vessels went with them. Jesus was dead tired so as they moved across the Lake Jesus fell asleep in the stern of the ship on a pillow.

The Sea of Galilee is nearly 700 feet below sea level and is situated in a basin surrounded by mountains.

It is particularly susceptible to fierce storms and on this occasion a storm was unleashed without warning. The disciples fought the storm until the boat was filled with water. We can almost see them bailing and rowing with growing panic. In the meantime Jesus is still asleep.

Finally they woke Him up with words of rebuke. We're going to drown for all you care. It was a rude awakening. Understand that the disciples are still rookies. They have seen a few things happen, but Jesus' ministry is still young. They are still quite a distance from believing Jesus is God. They saw Jesus as a Teacher not God.

Jesus faced a terrified group of disciples as He stood in the nearly swamped boat. He rebuked the wind and said to the waves, **Peace Be Still!**. The wind died down immediately.

and the sea became immediately calm I: ve lived by the ocean enough years here in Canada to realize that after a storm it sometimes takes another day or two for the heavy swells to subside. But here it was calm immediately. The sovereign Lord had spoken and creation had responded.

Jesus then rebuked His disciples for their lack of faith. It seems that they were more terrified of the miracle than they had been of the storm.. We dont know how long the storm lasted; A few minutes or an hour or two; but it was over quickly. The disciples shook their heads in amazement. What kind of man is this. Even the winds and the waves obey him.

### **Pauls Storm:**

Acts 27:20-25 (KJV) 20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. 21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. 22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Acts 27:31 (KJV) Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

The voyage begins with fair winds, but the rest of the story Luke relates with tense details. A storm with hurricane force winds struck. The KJV calls it Euroclydon or a Northeaster as we would know it today. I have been in many a Northeaster as many of you likely have. In any case it was a fierce, tempestuous wind often experienced by navigators, especially in the spring, in the eastern Mediterranean. Sometimes of hurricane or typhoon force., this tremendous wind is so called because it blows from the northeast or east-northeast.

After two weeks they were weak from lack of food and perhaps they were too seasick to eat. Ever been seasick. At this point in the story Paul stood before them and addressed the storm weary crowd. Sirs, ye should have heartened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

Acts 27:22-29 (KJV) 22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no

loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it wastold me 26 Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. 27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country 28 And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms. 29 Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

The conclusion of the storm and the voyage and the storm came quickly on the 14th day . The sailors began to sense that land was near. They sounded for the bottom and determined the water was getting shallower. Paul reiterated his warning that they should stay with the ship. He urged them to eat something in preparation for the ordeal they had yet to face. He said grace over a meal and then they lightened the ship to help it float closer to shore.

**ASIDE:**Can I stop here for a brief moment. When things go wrong too many people immediately abandon ship. When there is pressure and stress in business relationships, families and church, it may not be an indication these ships are sinking.. I admire the people who have stayed in their church despite some decisions that have been made contrary to Gods Word. They felt they can do more to represent God on the inside then they could by abandoning their faith community.

Folks , the Church of Jesus Christ is the best ship afloat. We have choises. When things go wrong we can abandon ship and try and tread water on the outside until we lose stength and drown. Or, we can work on the inside to help repair the damage that sometimes can get done. Lets stay with the ship.

Paul had never shrunk from his vision. He promised the 276 people aboard that they would all be survivors. In a little while the ship ran aground. The pounding surf broke the ship apart. It was every man for himself, but all 276 made it to shore safely. Paul would continue his trip to Rome later.

### **The Storms Contrasted:**

These are the stories of two storms. That seems to be the constant factor. Storms come . We will see raging billows and wonder if we will make it through. These storms were similar in their intensity and in their potential to take the lives of thosewho went through them In both cases there is a miraculous delivery.

There are a few key elements about the stories, however, that are different. The duration of the storm on Galilee was likely only hours long but we know that Pauls Northeaster lasted at least two weeks. We will find that some issues in our lives are like these storms. Some blow in with vengeance and test us a while, others last for weeks and months . Some bring us to the point of

despair and we feel as if this long, dark night is never going to be over.

Sometimes the calming of the storm takes place instantly. On Galilee Jesus intervened immediately and dramatically. We can see Him standing in that fishing boat, waves dashing against the boat nearly full of water., His hair wet from the spray and He stands and cries out **Peace! Be Still!!** Jesus brought immediate answers many times. The centurion had a sick servant that Jesus merely spoke the word and he was healed. The crowds who came to hear Jesus teach were so hungry . Within minutes 5,000 were fed with bread and fish that earlier constituted a little boys lunch. We all like immediate answers to our needs and our problems . Lord, do it NOW!!

Sometimes, however, we take the buffeting of the gale much longer. The answer to prayer seems delayed in coming. Like the sailors on Paul's ship we want to find our own ways God, move NOW or I've got to try some other way. Folks, there are times we have to endure the storm, torturous days of toil, wind and rain lashing us, no sleep, disaster on every wave. We may wonder ,Lord , will I ever reach my destination. We may get like Job. Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him..

Ever lose hope. Ever feel you would never make it Mary and Martha must have endured difficult days as their brother Lazarus sickened grew worst, finally died and Jesus didn't show . Ever wonder if God really caresses Has your Christian joy been overshadowed with disappointment. Lord, where are you when I need you .

## **Conclusion:**

We don't prove our seamanship in calm waters. We prove it in the storm. We prove God in adversity. When the storm has lasted for two weeks or two months or two years or two decades, we need assurance that He is with us. I have been in storms when I felt my frail ship would be blasted to bits, but like Paul there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am , and whom I serve , saying .Fear not

In the storms we prove that our lives are hidden in Christ .We need security that gets above the storm and allows us to see that God never forsakes us. Our assurance must be rooted in the faithfulness of God to keep us...for better for worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness, and in health and in life and in death.

It is very difficult to second - guess God We are the creature, He is the Creator; We can't insist He do everything the same in every occasion. We can't make up the rules of life and expect God to submit . Maturity means I submit to Him I acknowledge His lordship His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Maturity means I don't always get angry because the storm came up The Christian life is not a bed of roses . In the storm I ask Lord , what can you teach me in this.

Folks you will see storms. Some will blow up and calm down in a hurry. Some will last a while and threaten to defeat you You may even see a few shipwrecks, but if you stay with the swif you will make it safely to the other shore.

I have found that since I came into this wonderful truth of Acts 2:38 which says:

Acts 2:38 (KJV) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

I found the answer to help me endure through any storm that comes into my life and there have been many . Once I received the Holy Ghost in my life and was baptised in Jesus name for remission of sins I had the power to help me handle the storms in my life . All power is in the name of Jesus folks and in not other name . I just have to call on the name of Jesus and He is always with me and He calms down the storms that hit me.

If you are going through any kind of storm in your life today I ask you to turn to Jesus and follow the simple plan of salvation found in Acts 2:38 and many other verses are also there to back up this one . If you obey the word of God completely you will have the power to handle any situation that you may face in life. and Jesus never fails us. He is the same today as He was yesterday and will be. and He loves you and me so much .

You are in my prayers . I know of late I talk so many people who are going through so much physically, spritually, emotionally, financially and some are in bondage or in prison literally and also within themselves and they dont know the the answer . I feel a compassion for these folk for I for years was in that situation with no hope until I found Jesus and the real way to be saved and now the void I felt in my life is filled and I have never been so happy in my life . I am here for any of you that may need prayer or encouragement There is hope real hope and it is found in Jesus name

God bless

His humble servant

sister phyllis

Prayer Intercessor and bible teacher.

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