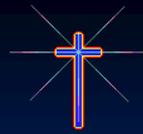




Jesus' Authority over Nature

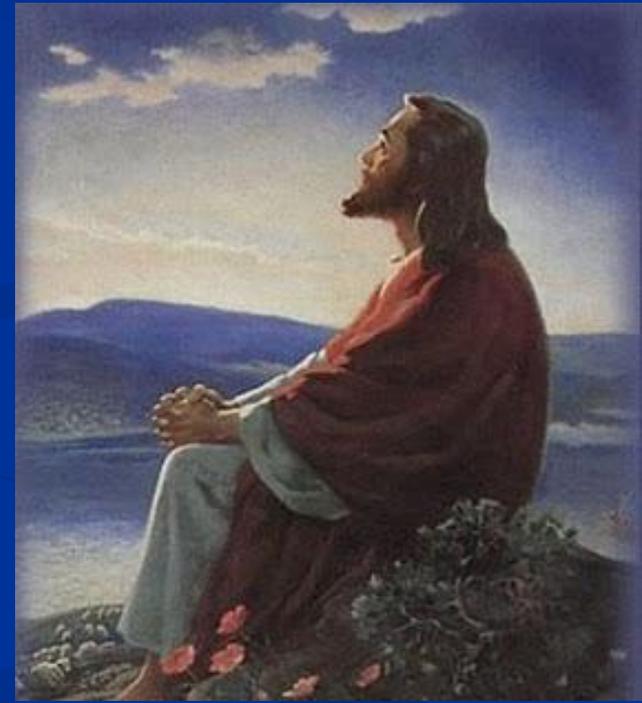


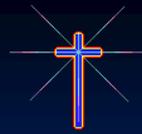
*When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What
is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man
that You visit him? (Ps 8:3-4)*



All About Nature

- **Nature Teachers About God's Character**
 - In Psalm 19, God reveals Himself through nature (19:1-6), we learn about His power and our finiteness.
 - As God reveals himself through Scripture (19:7-11), we learn about his holiness and our sinfulness.
 - As God reveals himself through daily experiences (19:12-14), we learn about his gracious forgiveness and our salvation



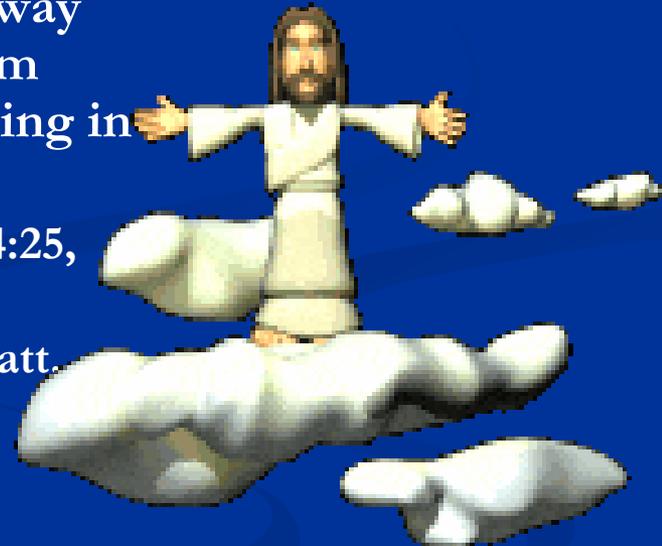


All About Nature

■ Miracles Drew Attention to Jesus' Authority and Uniqueness

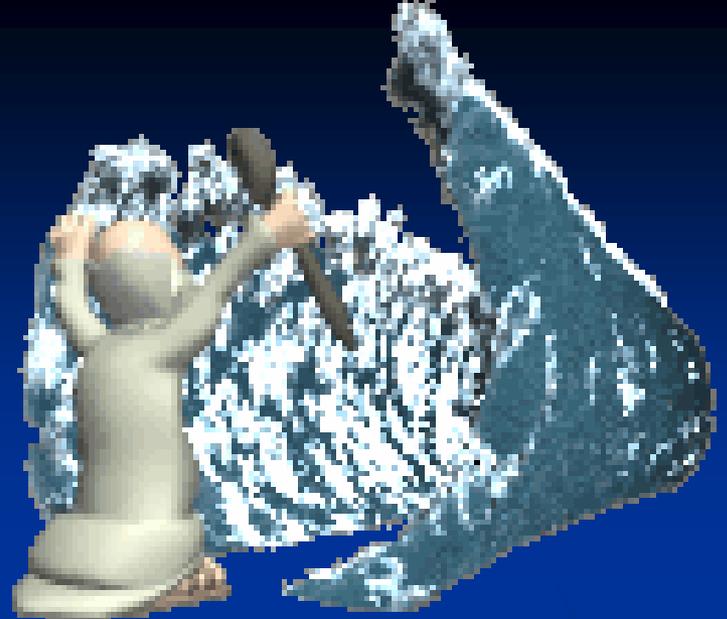
- When the disciples saw Jesus' miracles related to nature, they believed. These miracles showed his power over nature and in this way revealed the way His great authority. These miracles showed Him helping others, speaking with authority, and being in personal touch with people.

- Walking on the water – John 6:16-24, Matthew 14:25, Mark 6:48
- Authorizing St. Peter to walk over the water – Matt. 14:22-33
- Calming the storm – Matt. 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41
- Catching a great number of fish – Luke 5:1-10
- Darkness in the time of His crucifixion – Matt. 27:45, Luke 23:44-45
- Catching 153 big fishes after Resurrection – John 21:3-11
- Signs of the End of the Age – Matthew 24:1-35





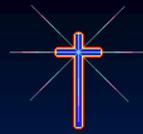
All About Nature



■ The Old Testament and Nature

- God created nature as we read in genesis but why? – Genesis 1:26-29
- The Father created the whole creation with the Son, Who is eternal with the Father before all ages and before the incarnation – John 1:1-5 and Hebrews 1:1-3,
- God made sure that nature was in Adam's favour, He wanted Adam to enjoy it. However, when Adam and Eve fell in sin, they lost this privilege. – read the contrast in Genesis 1:26-29 and 3:17-19
- All through the Old Testament God used nature to help His people, He sometimes listened to the His prophets but the prophets did not have a direct authority over nature.

- Also, Nature was used as a punishment for sins. – Exodus 14:20-21, Joshua 10:5-14
 - Examples for punishment – Genesis 7:13-23, Deuteronomy 11:13-17, 1 Kings 17:1-4 and 18:41-46, Jonah 1:1-15
 - All through the Old Testament people feared nature. It was a huge power that they have no control over.
 - That would explain why idol worshipers could worship the sun etc., so instead of the sun being created for that man's benefit, Man started worshipping it being only a created thing rather than worshipping the creator.



All About Nature

- **The New Testament and Nature**
 - In the New Testament, Jesus showed the people his direct authority over nature, as to prove His Divinity – Mark 4:41, John 6:16-21, Matthew 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25, Luke 5:4-11





The Storm Obeys Jesus

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. 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. And they awoke Him and said to Him, Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing? 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? And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him! (Mark 4:35-41)





The Storm Obeys Jesus



- 4:35 That day. This story comes at the conclusion of a day of teaching by the lake (see Mark 4:1 where this day starts). Jesus is teaching in a boat that is anchored just off-shore. This was necessary due to the growing crowds and the people who were “pushing forward to touch him” (Mark 3:9-10). Such behavior was understandable. Who wouldn’t want to touch Jesus or ask Him to heal in a day when there were no hospitals or reliable medicine? Being out on the lake also provided natural amplication for Jesus. When it is time to leave, Jesus does so by simply staying in the boat and sailing across the lake.
- When evening came - This voyage begins as the sun is setting.



The Storm Obeys Jesus

- 4:36 *There were also other boats with him.* Although these boats do not play any other role in the story, their mention, as well as that of other details not mentioned, as well as that of other details not found in the parallel accounts (Mark 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25), indicate an eyewitness testimony of the event. Presumably the people in these boats were also saved when Jesus stilled the storm.

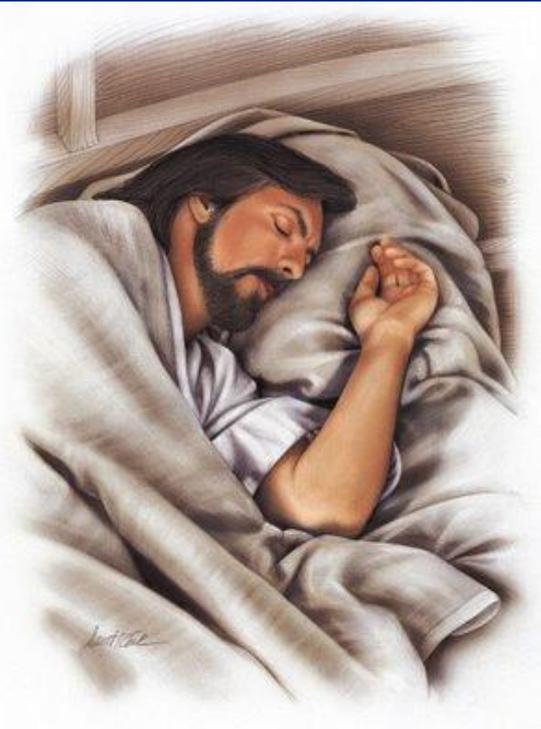
- 4:37 *A furious squall:* The Sea of Galilee was a deep, fresh-water lake, 20 kms long and 11 kms wide at its widest point. It was pear-shaped and ringed by mountains, though open at its north and south ends. Fierce winds blew into this bowl-shaped sea creating savage and unpredictable storms *waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.* In this succinct phrase St Mark identifies the problem. The boat was filling with water. This reduced its maneuverability and, eventually would sink it. Bailing the water out of the boat was, therefore, of utmost importance.





The Storm Obeys Jesus

- 4:38 *Sleeping.* In the OT sleeping peacefully is a sign of trust in the power of God (Ps 4:8) The fact that Jesus was asleep during a storm is also a sign of His exhaustion from a day of teaching. Jesus slept in the back of the boat on the seat normally used by the helmsman.
- *Teacher.* Up to this point, the disciples understood Jesus to be a rabbi.
- *Don't you care if we drown?* The disciples are scared. The storm threatens to swamp the boat. They need all the help they can get to bail out the water, but Jesus sleeps through it all. So they rouse Him with this rather rude assertion. (St. Mark's Gospel does not glamorize the Twelve.
- See also Mark 5:31 ;6:37 ; 8:4). As their later response indicates (v 41), they had no expectation that He would have any power over the storm.





The Storm Obeys Jesus

- 4:39 Instead of bailing, Jesus commands the wind and the waves to be still.... And they obey.
- Thus, He demonstrates His power over the very elements in the same way that God does (see Ps 65:7; 106:9). This was something no ordinary rabbi could do.
- *Be still!* This is literally, “Be muzzled!” as if the storm were some wild beast needing to be subdued. The same word was used to cast out the demon in the story in St Mark 1:25. This command to silence presses God’s peace into the strife that fights against God and His ways. completely calm. This was a genuine miracle. When Jesus spoke it was not a matter of the wind beginning to slacken and the waves starting to die down. At one moment the Sea of Galilee was beset by a raging storm; at the next the lake was smooth and placid. What Jesus has done here reflects God’s power and authority over the sea (Ps 65:7; 89:9; 106:9; 107:23-32). Perhaps the most vivid example of God’s power over the sea was His opening of the Red Sea so that Israel could pass through.





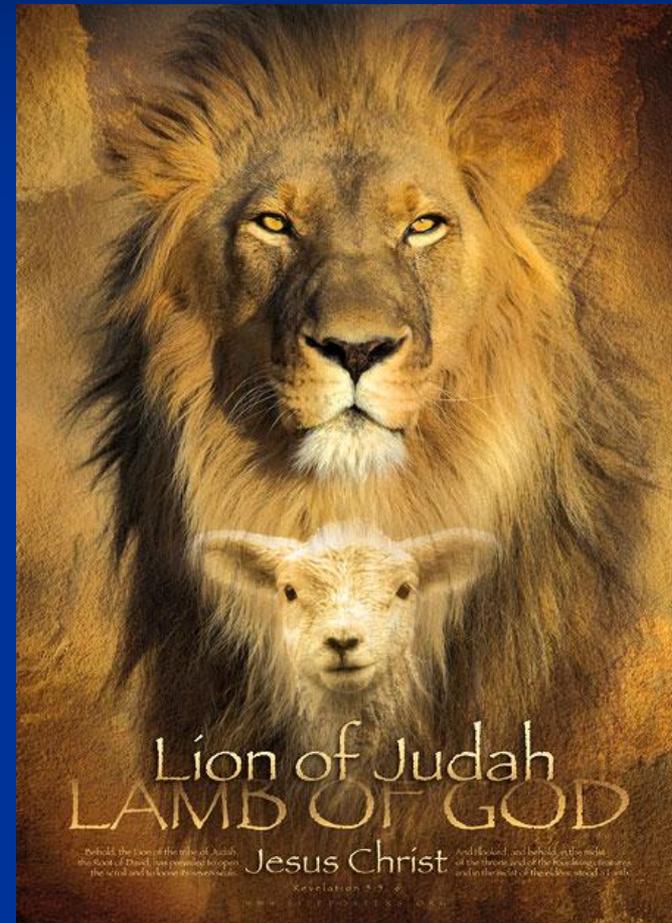
The Storm Obeys Jesus

- **4:40 *afraid*.** Some of the disciples were fishermen who knew how serious their peril was in the face of the storm. Because of the danger, actual fear for their lives was not inappropriate!
- However, once Jesus displays His power, their fear of the storm turns into fear of Jesus. This is the fear of the unknown and the unexplainable. The disciples were totally unprepared for his action.
- ***Do you still have no faith?*** Faith here is “faith in God’s helping power present and active in Jesus”. Although Jesus had not yet performed any miracle of this nature, the disciples “should by this time have learned something of the secret of the kingdom of God, which is the secret that the kingdom is come in the person and work of Jesus”. This miracle would force the disciples to reconsider all they had heard and seen from Jesus: What had he said or done that should lead them to expect he could act like this?
- **4:41 *terrified*.** Terror replaced fear. This is what is felt in the presence of an unknown force of power. It is the response a vision of a demon, angel, ghost or some other strange, supernatural experience would inspire.



The Storm Obeys Jesus

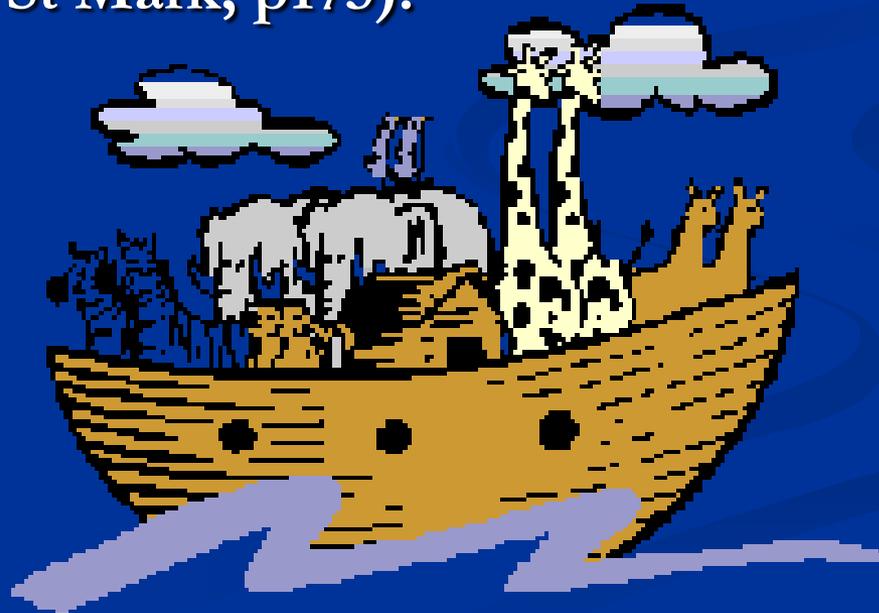
- *Who is this?* This is the key question with which Mark wrestles in his Gospel. The congregation in the synagogue where Jesus did his first miracle in Mark wondered about this (1:27). The religious leaders asked this question (2:7; 3:22).
- Now his disciples discover that even they do not understand who he is. Only the readers of the Gospel (1:1) and the demons (1:24, 35) know his true identity.
- The rest of Mark describes how the disciples, in particular, overcome their culturally conditioned assumptions about who Jesus is and, step by step, discover his true nature. “In addition to the miracle’s significance as a pointer to the secret of Jesus’ person, Mark probably saw in it, and meant his readers to see, a symbolic significance.

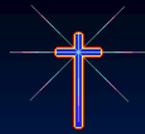




The Storm Obeys Jesus

- The parallel between the situation of the disciples on the lake and that of the Church in the midst of persecution would naturally suggest itself. (Very early a ship was a symbol of the Church in Christian art.) In the midst of persecution and all manners of perils, if Jesus be truly with his Church, then, even though his help may not at once be felt, his own must never doubt him, and need have no fear”.(Cranfield, St Mark, p175).

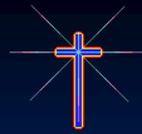




Some Questions about the Story

- Why do you think Jesus suggested that they take this boat trip across the lake?
- If you had been one of the disciples in the boat when it was about to sink, what would you have done?
- Why do you think the disciples awakened Jesus?
- What was the tone in Jesus' voice when he said, "Why are you frightened?" Was he angry? Disappointed? Upset? Or just inquisitive?
- In this miracle, what did Jesus show he had the power over?
- What is the difference in the fear of the disciples in the storm and the fear at the end of the story?

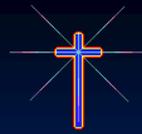




Some Questions about the Story

- If you could compare your own life to the storm in the Bible, where are you right now?
 - ... Smooth sailing? Sensing a storm brewing? Cleaning up after the storm?
- **Quiet! Be Still!** If Jesus were to speak these words to you today, what would they mean to you?

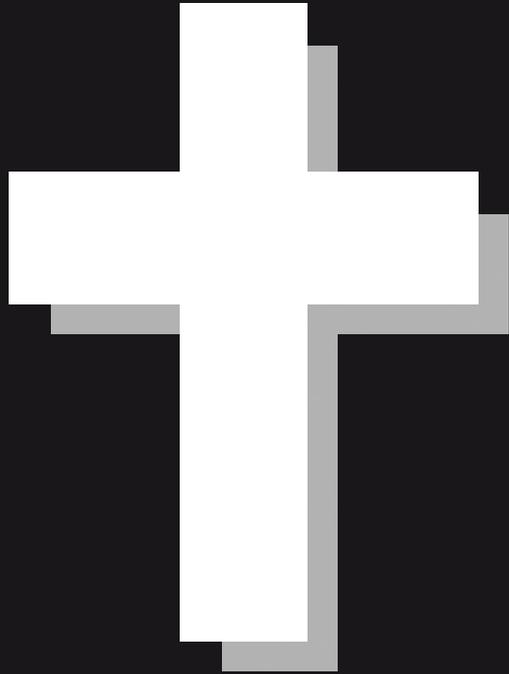




Some Questions about the Story



- As you grow in your spiritual faith, are you seeing any improvement in the way you handle storms in your life?
- How do you feel about sharing your fears and needs with God?
- How can God help you based on what you learned from the story and the authority and power of God?



**Be still, and know that
I am God (Ps 46:10)**