

June 28, 2009

**THE LORD'S VICTORY OVER THE MIGHTY WATERS  
MATTHEW 14.22-36**

Passage is a continuation of the foreshadowing of what is to come. Deals more with the future commission of the disciples.

*Jesus sends his disciples out into a stormy sea but saves them from its power and puts them in a position to bring healing to the people.*

**1. THE LORD'S VICTORY OVER THE SEA (22-33)**

**The Lord's Commission (22):** It is toward the evening (14.15). Jesus *compels* his disciples to get into the boat and go before him to the other side (i.e., of the Sea of Galilee).

Hint of the "Great Commission" when Jesus commands them to go to the nations, which here = sea.

Note: the command is also a promise. Jesus is not commanding something of his disciples that he himself will not give them everything they need to accomplish the task; something that is made obvious within the story itself.

**The Lord's ascension up the mountain (23):** Mountains = places where people meet God. Note in Matt: 5-7, 17, 28

Looks forward to Jesus' ascension here.

Jesus ascends *by himself*. He is the forerunner, the first man to enter behind the veil (Heb 6.19-20).

Jesus ascends the mountain by himself in order *to pray* for them (cf. Heb 7.25).

**The Lord's presence in the midst of the storm (24-27):** "tormented" by the waves. The mission runs into trouble. Cf. Acts.

Note that they are in this situation *because they obeyed Jesus*. The disciples did not strike out on their own in disobedience and are now experiencing the consequences of their sinful actions.

4<sup>th</sup> watch = between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m.; the darkest hour of the night.

Jesus "went to them." Immanuel, God with us (1.23) and "behold I am with you" (28.20).

Jesus comes to his disciples *walking upon* the water. YHWH is the one who walks upon the waters/has control of the waters in Scripture; cf. Job 9.8; Ps 77.19; Isa 43.16

Note also that the waters are beneath his feet. Cf. Ps 110.1; also 1Cor 15.25

The disciples believe that what they see is a phantom or a phantasm. Possible allusion to Jesus coming in the Person of the Spirit. (cf. John 14-16 where Jesus will come to them in the Person of the Spirit.)

Jesus speaks to them at their greatest point of fear. The words of Jesus are aimed at bringing comfort to them, just like they do with us.

"Take courage, I am; do not be afraid." Structurally is at the center of this whole episode.

"It is I" = "I am." References back to the revelation of God to Moses in the context of the coming exodus (Ex 3.14). "I am" = God's constancy and his immutability (i.e. God never changes).

The name reflects who God is *for his people*. B/c God has chosen to create and redeem us, he exists *for you*. That is, God is who he is for the sake of his people. God never changes *for you*. He will always be faithful. This is who Jesus is.

**The Lord's saving of Peter (28-31):** Why does Peter want to go out with Jesus? Right then maybe to be with Jesus. Picking up on themes, Peter wants to participate in the victory of Jesus over the nations.

Man was to have dominion over the waters from the beginning. Peter is fulfilling that purpose *with/in Christ*. Jesus approves.

Peter's fear and sinking reflect Ps 69.1-3 concerning fear of sinking in deep waters (which is image of being overwhelmed by enemies).

"Lord" - reflects that Peter believes that Jesus shares in the sovereign lordship of YHWH.

The Lord's hand saving - cf. Ex 3. 8, 20; Isa 59.1 Ps 138.7; 17.7; 44.3; 60.5; 108.6.

Jesus gives Peter a mild rebuke. The command of Jesus to come to him implied the promise that he could walk on the water.

Encouragement: Jesus saves despite the small faith and the doubt! Faith, no matter how small, looks away from itself to Jesus.

***The Lord's calming of the storm (32):*** After Jesus reaches out his hand to save Peter, they obviously walk back to the boat together; Peter with Jesus walking on the sea. As we, the church, are joined to Christ, we will be victorious over the waters.

The storm is calmed. God is the one that calms the storms (Job 26.11-12; Ps 65.7; 89.9-10; 107.29).

Certainly power over the actual waters, but also symbolic of the nations (Mt 28.18).

***Worship: the response to the Lord's victory (33):*** "Truly you are the Son of God" = Messiah, the Son of David.

Again worship points us to the end of the gospel where the disciples worshiped (Mt 28).

When God delivered the people of Israel from the Egyptians, the response was worship (Ex 14-15). When God calmed the waters when Jonah was thrown into them, the sailors worshiped (Jon 1.6). Worship is the proper response to God's deliverance.

## **2. THE LORD'S VICTORY OVER SICKNESS (35-36)**

***They came to the land (34):*** Not separated from what just happened. This was the purpose from the beginning; i.e. to cross over to the other side.

Note: they made it to the other side.

***Salvation under Jesus' wing (35-36):*** "hem" = "tassel." Worn on the *wings* of the garments in Israel (cf. Num 15.37-41; Dt 22.12)

Tassel had blue/violet thread that connects it to the Tabernacle and the priests. All of Israel were priests to some degree.

Jesus as Israel is fulfilling the mission of Israel to bring healing to the nations. Physical deformities would keep them from drawing near to God (cp. 9.18ff.). Jesus is preparing them to draw near.

They touch Jesus' tassel coming, as it were, under the wing of his garment. They recognize him as the true husband in Israel to whom Israel needs to be married; or, in biblical terms, under whose wing they must come in order to be healed.

"Made perfectly well/whole" is same family of words as Peter used when he cried out "Save me." This is the salvation that Jesus brings. It is not just about what is invisible or "immaterial" about us but our whole bodies. In Jesus the resurrection of the body is/will occur.

This is also the mission of the disciples (cp. ch. 10). The church is to bring healing to the nations.

1. *Sometimes trials come because you are obeying Jesus.*
2. *Your faith need not be great and your doubts need not be completely dispelled for Jesus to save you.*
3. *We need to follow the example of Jesus in spending time alone in prayer.*
4. *The mission Christ gave his church will be successful.*