

Take Courage, It is I! Don't be Afraid (Exodus 14:10-22 and Mark 6:45-56)

03-Aug-25

Exodus 14:10-22

¹⁰ As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. ¹¹ They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"

¹³ Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

¹⁵ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. ¹⁶ Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷ I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen."

¹⁹ Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, ²⁰ coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, ²² and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

Mark 6:45-56

Jesus Walks on the Water

⁴⁵ Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray.

⁴⁷ Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. ⁴⁸ He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, ⁴⁹ but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, ⁵⁰ because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” ⁵¹ Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, ⁵² for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

⁵³ When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. ⁵⁴ As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. ⁵⁵ They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he went—into villages, towns or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

It would be good to have your **Bibles opened** at both passages – Mark 6:45-56 and Exodus 14:10-22 – we will be flicking back and forth.

There's an **outline** for you to take **notes**. Let me **pray** first.

Let's pray...

Intro/Chaos of the Sea

Our **2 Bible readings** this morning are stories that **involve challenging encounters with water**

In the **Old Testament** (OT) reading – the **Israelites** are confronted by The **Red Sea** that they need to cross

And in the **New Testament** (NT) reading – **Jesus' disciples are in a storm** on a Lake [or Sea of Galilee]

[Slide-Sea]

Encounters with the **sea can be problematic...**

We only have to go to a **beach on a windy or stormy day** and see the **raging sea** in action OR go on a **cruise** and stand on the **deck** and look out at the **vast expanse of water and the waves crashing against the ship**

It really makes you **see how powerful seas and oceans are**

[Remember the container ship – the Pasha Bulker – that ran aground at Nobbys Beach in Newcastle on 8th June 2007]

In the Bible – **the sea often represents chaos** [ask Jonah]

To God's people – the **Israelites** – who were **not really a sea-faring nation** – the seas represented **chaos** and they were **menacing to them**.

But **there is ONE who can control the chaos of the sea!**

There is ONE who can control the storm!

So, we're going to look at the **story from Mark 6** – verses 45-56 – and **in parallel** we will look at the Old Testament **story from Exodus 14:10-22** as well

The **1st point** this morning then is – **Jesus SEES us in our Storms**

[Slide-1st point]

Jesus SEES us in our Storms (Mark 6:45-48a; Exodus 14:10-12)

We pick up the story in Mark 6 verse 45 – where **Jesus makes His disciples get into a boat** and head to Bethsaida – while Jesus **dismissed the crowd**.

What Jesus is doing here is **avoiding a potential “storm”**

Remember, **last week He fed 5000 people** with five loaves and two fish.

In John's version of that same story – the **people were so enthusiastic** about Jesus' power – **they were going to make Him their King by force.**

Jesus doesn't want this happening – that's not His agenda – and He **doesn't want the disciples caught up in this “storm” or “chaos”** – so He **sends them off** – and **disperses the crowd**.

Jesus SEES this potential STORM

Once He's **calmed that potential "storm"**

Verse 46 – Jesus went up a **mountainside to pray**

His intense **ministry would have taken a great toll on Him**; so Jesus **needed time alone with His Heavenly Father**

Prayer and communion with His Heavenly Father are **paramount**; not an **optional extra**

Application

For us...

Jesus **models** the concept of **balancing serving the Lord** with **rest and prayer**.

Jesus **prioritizes time with God** ahead of being **popular**. What about us?

(pause)

Jesus' **heart is set on pleasing God** – not **pleasing people**. What about us?

(pause)

Our strength to face the "storms of life" comes from **dependence on God** – not independence from God!

(pause)

Whilst Jesus is praying

We read in verse 47 – that the **disciples are in the boat in the middle of the lake** (Sea of Galilee) – and verse 48 – the disciples are **rowing the boat but getting nowhere because of the strong wind** against them.

It's just before dawn – so they've been **rowing for about 9 to 12 hours**. They'd have to be **exhausted** and **afraid** by now!

But look at the beginning of verse 48 – **Jesus saw them!**

And - Jesus SEES us in our storms

Likewise, in our **Old Testament reading** – Exodus 14:10-12

The **context** is **Pharaoh** has **allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt** where they were **slaves**

But after a while **Pharaoh realizes he's lost his Israelite workforce of slaves** – so **Pharaoh and his army chase after the Israelites**

The **Israelites are terrified** – because they **have to cross a Sea** – and there's **no bridge** – and there **seems** to be **no escape from Pharaoh ...**

And true to form – **the Israelites grumble** (we don't do that – do we?)

Here's what **they say...**

“Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die?” (verse 11)

“It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!” (verse 12)

But **God SEES them in their storm!**

Application

I don't know what “**storms**” **you're facing** in your life **right now...**

- A **sickness or illness** storm?
- A **mental health** storm?
- A **family** storm?
- A **relationship conflict** storm?
- A **financial** storm?
- A **grief or loss** storm?
- A **temptation** storm?
- A **failure or disappointment** storm?
- A **fear or doubt** storm?

Whatever the storm – **I DO KNOW** - both these stories tell us **without any doubt**

Jesus SEES us in our storms

We can **take great comfort in that** – can't we?

[Slide-2nd point]

2nd point – **Jesus COMES to us in our Storms – with Divine Power and Presence**

Jesus COMES to us in our Storms with Divine Power and Presence (Mark 6:48b-50; Exodus 14:13-14)

Picking up the story again from Mark 6 – and the middle of verse 48 – shortly **before dawn, Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.**

Nothing like a leisurely walk on water!

(pause)

And notice **He was about to pass them by!**

And the disciples – verse 49 – well **they think Jesus is a ghost** and they are **terrified**.

Because they are exhausted it's quite **likely** they **thought they were seeing things**.

In their culture - a **ghost was seen as a sign of danger or imminent death** –
especially in threatening situations at sea!

When they **cry out**

Jesus comes to their **rescue**

Verse 50 – Jesus reassures them ***“Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”***

Jesus COMES to them in their Storms

Likewise, in our **story from Exodus 14** – verses 13 and 14

Moses reassures the Israelites:

V13 - “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again”

And I just love **verse 14**

Moses says ***“The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still”***

How good is that!

God comes to them in their storm!

Application

For us it means

- Jesus not only SEES us in our Storms – but **He COMES to us** in our darkest hour, in our greatest need, and in a totally unexpected way! **We don't have to be afraid of anything!**
- Also, Jesus was about to pass the disciples by, but they cried out. Likewise, Jesus wants us to cry out to Him for help! And **He won't pass us by!**
Sometimes we need to realise or admit we need help!

And the reason we can be confident that Jesus comes to us in our storms is because of something He says to the disciples in verse 50 – when Jesus says “Take courage! It is I” – the “It is I” is literally **I AM!**

The **I AM** should remind us of when God revealed His identity to Moses [Exodus 3] by calling Himself “**I AM who I AM**”. The Hebrew for “**I AM**” is where we get the name **Yahweh [YHWH]** for God. **Yahweh is the name used for God when He is in close relationship with His people.**

By using these words **I AM**, **Jesus is subtly revealing His divine identity** – showing He is not just a teacher or miracle worker, but God in flesh, the **Great “I AM”** – and **He as the ultimate power and authority over everything.**

And if Jesus is fully God as He is stating here – then it means God is with us in our “storms” in life – and He is in “our boat” with us too!

Jesus COMES to us in our Storms – with Divine Power and Presence

[Slide-3d point]

3rd point – **Jesus gives us PEACE and HOPE in our storms**

Jesus gives us PEACE and HOPE in our Storms (Mark 6:51-56; Exodus 14:15-22)

Look at Mark 6 verse 51 – **Jesus climbs in the boat with the disciples and immediately the wind died down**

Jesus brings immediate peace from the storm!

The **disciples are completely amazed!**

Along with that amazement – the disciples – verse 52 – **haven't quite understood the miracle of the feeding of the 5000 yet** – this **hasn't quite penetrated their hearts yet**

They were **still looking at Earthly categories** – they saw Jesus as a powerful prophet or Messiah but not as fully divine – so when they were in the storm – they **didn't believe** Jesus had power of that too!

Their lack of faith was a failure to consider Jesus' workings in the past and to apply that knowledge to the present situation. We often share that problem!

Meanwhile back in the **Exodus story**

God brings peace to the Israelites by telling Moses in Exodus 14 verse 16 ***Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.***

And **God brings further peace** to the Israelites by **keeping them invisible** from the Egyptians by using a **pillar of cloud** (verse 19&20)

And **God brings even greater peace** when the **Egyptian army** chasing the Israelites is **swept into the sea** and the **whole of Pharaoh's army and horses are covered by water!** [[verses 26 to 28 which we didn't read](#)]

Jesus gives us PEACE and HOPE in our storms too

Application

From these two stories **we can say**

- **Both stories involve rescue in water** – and **water is a picture of baptism** – the **water of baptism is a symbol of Jesus rescuing us from sin and washing our sins away!**
- **We have peace knowing Jesus is with us always**
- **We have peace knowing Jesus is in control** – He has **power over nature, sickness, sin and even death.**
- **We have peace with God because Jesus died on a cruel cross for our sins, to bring forgiveness and to bring us into a right relationship with God**
- **And we have peace and hope because Jesus rose from the dead and He promises us eternal life and peace in Heaven in the future – even if for now – the “storms of life” rage around us!**

But Jesus hasn't quite finished yet

See Mark 6 verse 53

Jesus and the disciples' boat, finally **crossed the lake** and they **land** at **Gennesaret** and **anchor** there

Verse 54 - As soon as they got out of the boat, the **people recognized Jesus**.

Now this is the **same area** where we learnt a few weeks ago that people told Jesus to go away

But now they **respond with urgency and enthusiasm** – and ran around the whole area **bringing the sick people on mats to Jesus for healing**

They truly believed that Jesus could heal them all. Even just a touch of His cloak was enough!

Jesus gives PEACE and HOPE in their “storms”

Application

I don't know about you but

- I am challenged to trust Him more deeply, instead of being fearful, anxious or doubtful – even when I **don't understand what is going on**
- **It's time for me to trust Jesus instead of trying to row my boat harder!**
- I am challenged that I **need to lean on Jesus more**; in **prayer, trust in His presence** - rather than **trying to control everything myself.**
- You see – **sometimes we can focus on the problems** (the storms) instead of Jesus – **we make our problems BIG and Jesus small!**
- Sometimes **our faith in Jesus is surface level-faith** and not **deep heartfelt faith**
- Sometimes we **put human limitations on Jesus** – and **we forget He is in the miracle business**

- And sometimes we get hard-hearted because of past disappointments or seemingly unanswered prayer – instead of realizing that God makes us wait sometimes – and God says NO sometimes because it's not His will

Jesus gives us PEACE and HOPE in our storm

In the last book of the Bible...

Revelation 21:1 in the Apostle John's vision – he says – *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth... and there was no longer any sea.”*

This **doesn't** mean a literal absence of oceans, but symbolically, the **chaos and fear are gone** — God's peace reigns

Conclusion

To finish up then – what if we have a storm in our life – and Jesus sees us in that storm – and He comes to us in that storm – but things don't pan out the way we thought they would. Will we still have peace and hope?

Let me share a true story to explain...

Eric Barker was a missionary from Great Britain who had spent over a long time in Portugal preaching the gospel, often under adverse conditions.

During World War II, the situation became so critical that he advised to send his wife and eight children to England for safety. His sister and her three children were also evacuated on the same ship.

Barker remained behind to finish some mission matters.

The Sunday after Barker's loved ones had left, he stood before the congregation and said, "I've just received word that all my family has arrived safely Home." He then proceeded with the worship service as usual.

Later, the full meaning of his words became known to the people. He had been handed a telegram just before the service, informing him that a submarine had torpedoed the ship, and everyone on board had drowned. Barker knew that all on board believed in Jesus, and the knowledge that his family was now experiencing the joy of heaven enabled him to have peace and hope in this storm - despite his overwhelming grief.

[Slide-2 Corinthians 5:1]

2 Corinthians 5:1 says

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.

Let's pray...

Lord Jesus, Thank You that You see us in the storm and come to us with power and peace. Help us to trust You when we are afraid and to remember that You are always near. Soften our hearts to know You more and respond in faith.

In Your name we pray, Amen.

Benediction

The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." (Exodus 14:14)

