

The Storm Before the Calm

Mark 6:45-56

Jesus reveals himself in the storms of life

Walking on Water (45-52)

Immediately after feeding the 5,000, Jesus “made” the disciples get back in the boat and head for the other side of the lake.

Bethsaida was a fishing suburb of Capernaum on the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The disciples set sail for this village, but were blown off course southward, eventually landing at Gennesaret on the western shore.

After dismissing the crowd, Jesus went up on a hillside to pray. He prays until early morning.

Even in poor conditions, the Sea of Galilee can be crossed in 6-8 hours. The disciples are helpless in the face of a hard wind from the north and they made little headway.

In the dim light of early dawn (between 3-6am), Jesus saw the disciples straining against the oars. He went to them, walking on the choppy waters.

The words “pass by them” does not mean to bypass them, but rather to “pass beside” them in the sense of an Old Testament theophany (Exodus 33:19-34:17; 1 Kings 19:11-12). Jesus would pass by and reveal himself to his disciples.

The disciples thought Jesus was a ghost and were terrified.

Jesus calmed their fears and spoke words of reassurance.

When Jesus joined them in the boat, the winds died down. It was one more indication of his mastery over nature.

The disciples were completely amazed at the miracle. They had not understood the meaning of the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 as it pointed to Jesus’ true identity.

Healing the Sick (53-56)

The whole countryside came out to see Jesus and to seek healing. The healing took place wherever Jesus went, whether villages, cities, fields, or marketplaces.