

Fil-Am Community Church  
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Key verse: Matthew 8: 23-27

### **“When Jesus Calms the Storms of Your Life”**

Good morning Fil-Am! Today we will continue with the next sermon in the series of “It’s A Miracle!”

Now we are really going to have a wild time sorting thru the scriptures as God has given me a special message that will rock your world. Today’s message comes from the scripture reading at Matthew 8: 23-27. Now this came about as I was preparing this message and God asked me a question; “What do you think was going on in this passage?” How many of you know that when God asks you a question it is a good idea to listen very intently as He already knows the answer to the question. So as we get started, let’s read together the scripture passage from Matthew 8:23-27.

- Then he (Jesus) got into the boat and his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup> Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. <sup>25</sup> The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”
- <sup>26</sup> He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.
- <sup>27</sup> The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

Now we are going to break these scriptures down and get into the word to reveal what is really going on. First off, this set of events documented here in Matthew

8 consists of three or four events that are paralleled within the gospels of Matthew 8, Mark 4, and Luke 8. In these three books are the same events documented in the same sequence, and almost within the same exact context. When studying the scriptures I would tell you this is big. All three versions (Books of the Bible) describe the discussions of the parables, the analogy of the Light on a Lampstand, and then they go into who is allowed (permitted) to receive the parables. But let's break this down so you can see what is happening.

First, it states in Matthew that Jesus, who had just finished preaching to a large group of people on the shores of Galilee, told his disciples "Come, and we will go to the other side." What was Jesus saying? I have something to show you - apart from what you have just heard - that is, Jesus preaching to the people on the shores of Galilee. This is something I want you to see. Now this is interesting because Jesus spoke in parables time and time again and then, just prior to a major event, 'The Transfiguration', he told his disciples, "Some of you who are here will not experience death until you see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Now what happened almost immediately (a few days) after this statement? Well for one, he went up to Mount Tabor (or Mount Hermon as it is believed where this really happened) and was transfigured - with Peter, James, and John all eyewitnesses to this occurrence while Jesus spoke with both Moses - who represented the Law and the Prophets of old who died; and Elijah - who represented the Prophets of Old who did not die (but were "taken"). And, there were 8 on that mountain in that time - Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, along with Peter, James, and John, and God and the Holy Spirit. This Transfiguration, where Jesus spoke to both Moses and Elijah at the same time, demonstrated to his disciples who Jesus actually was and that he transcended time between those prophets

who had passed away and were able to speak with him and the prophets of old who never died (Elijah), who he also could converse with. And the Holy Spirit and God the Father were there – with the Father speaking out of the cloud - telling all who were there that He (God) was well pleased and to listen to His Son! This was, in effect, a mini type of Rapture if you will, as it demonstrated what will happen in the future when Jesus returns to welcome to heaven the old prophets who have died, the old prophets who have never died, and those who are disciples of the Lord still living on earth. And now He is prophetically demonstrating to His disciples exactly what he told them only days prior in their “experiencing all this prior to their death.” So, Jesus says to his disciples “Come, let’s cross over to the other side.” And the disciples followed him. Does anyone think that Jesus didn’t know that His Disciples would follow Him? No, certainly you don’t, because Jesus already had planned what He was going to do.

Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. (So Jesus allows [PERMITS] A FURIOUS STORM TO ARISE SUCH THAT WAVES BEGIN TO SWEEP OVER THE BOAT.) Why does He do this? What is He trying to accomplish here? He is creating a teachable moment. He is doing what every mother does with her children. Let me ask the mothers here - What do you do when you tell your children to behave or to not go near the flame or fire? Here’s what you do. You tell them “Don’t go near the fire or it will burn you.” Then you watch them as they edge closer and closer to the flame. And you tell them again, and again, until they become “tone death” – They will, thru their own curiosity, get closer and closer until they experience the flame or until you yell at them or tell them to stop. Let me show you what other cultures do. My wife and I had the experience of visiting the Pueblo Indians in Colorado awhile back and here is how

they train their children: They tell their children one time – “Do not go near the flame as it WILL burn you!” Then they sit back and watch .....until the child sticks his hand in the flame and learns his lesson once and for all.

Question! How do we best learn our lessons? Do we learn when everything goes well and we have lots of success? Or do we learn from our failures when things go bad? You are correct. We learn best from our failures – those instances when we experience tough times and trials and we do not do the right thing.

That is exactly what Jesus is doing here; He is creating a “Teachable Moment” when He is – now watch this - going with His disciples (He is not absent) but He is taking a nap? He is out of the way - in the boat, but not really paying attention. Church, Jesus is listening with his heart to what is about to happen and He knows all too well what it is that will happen.

The scripture says; “**But** Jesus was sleeping. (Why? - HE NEEDED THAT SLEEP – TO CREATE A TEACHABLE MOMENT) One thing to mention here is the word But; Whenever you see BUT in scripture it signifies either a conditional statement or that there is a hidden truth - something else is about to be revealed. There is something more to be mentioned. In Psalms 121, called the Soldier Psalm or the Traveler Psalm, (specifically because it is believed that David wrote this while on maneuvers with his Army or while running from Saul) it is interesting to note that THE Psalmist writes “I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?

2 My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. 3 He will not let your foot move (translated “slip”); he who watches over you will not slumber; 4 indeed, he who watches over Israel (God) will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The Lord watches over you— the Lord is your shade at your right hand;

6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The Lord will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life; 8 the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.” So it states that the God who watches over Israel does not slumber or sleep. So what is Jesus doing? He is ‘watching the disciples’ to see what they will do when He allows (permits) the wind and the waves to roll over the boat during their “Tribulation event.”

Another verse I have noted on the slide here is what Jesus told his disciples in (John 16:33) – “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: **but** be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” Again, look at that BUT – there is the Hidden Truth – I (Jesus) have already overcome the world. So..... What is the problem?

So in the next verse we see “He (JESUS) replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” It doesn’t sound like He rebuked the winds and the waves first – No, not at all. First Jesus Rebuked the Disciples – Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. Can you imagine that?

Next verse; “The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!” What is the paradox or comedic element here is this: The winds and the waves obey Jesus – Sure they do! And why wouldn’t they - HE IS THE CREATOR OF THEM. Jesus created the wind, the waves, and the storms. The winds and the waves obey Him But..... WHAT ABOUT US ?

Do we obey Jesus?

Let's look at the points we have made here about how Jesus works: First point is that during the storms (call them what you want: trials, earthquakes, hard times, emotional-financial storms) of your life:

- **Point 1: Jesus SETS THE STAGE.** In the scripture ““he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.” – “Suddenly, a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat.” Jesus allowed/permitted this to happen. And He needed to as we discussed to create a teachable moment but, first, I want you to understand the difference between God's permissive will versus His perfect will.

So when God states, as in (1 Peter 1:15-16) that you should “Be Holy for I am Holy” that is an example of God's perfect or desired Will. He desires you to be Holy – for that is what He wants you to be. You may or may not attain this (and most of us sadly to say are not as Holy as God desires.) Now, God's sovereign will is another thing. For instance, God's sovereign will acknowledges that, because He is sovereign, He must at least permit or allow whatever happens to happen. This aspect of God's will acknowledges that, even when God passively permits things to happen, He must choose to permit them, because He always has the power and right to intervene. God can always decide to either permit or stop the actions and events of this world. But remember this: God is always less interested in how it comes out (the situation) than how “you come out of it.” I am not being flip about this but God does not care so much about your situation as He does about how you react to it – what you learn and how you deal with it. Why is this important? Because YOU ARE THE OBJECT OF HIS AFFECTION! He cares about YOU! Deuteronomy 32:10 states it like this; “He shielded him and

cared for him; he guarded him as the Apple of His Eye;"Deuteronomy 10:14-16 states it another way; "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. 15 Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is to this day. 16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." You are the Apple of His Eye! He loves YOU! The Creator of this universe desires You - He desires Your TRUST - Your DEVOTION – Your LOVE – Above everything else in ALL OF CREATION! Now if that doesn't Light the Fire of Your Faith .....Your wood is Wet!

**Point 2: JESUS CREATES (ALLOWS THE SITUATION TO HAPPEN.)** Is Jesus surprised by the situations in life? No, He is not; We have already discussed how Jesus allows/permits things to happen IAW His will. So, when we pray – who is the prayer for? Is it for Jesus? God? Your Loved Ones? Your Christmas wish list? The answer is none of these; Prayer is for You!

Prayer is your supplication to a Holy God to build your faith and for you to recognize that you need God to help you. And that is the first step towards REMAINING STEADFAST THROUGH TRIALS and building a foundation of faith in Christ as an overcomer! This is what we see in Revelations 2:26. In Revelations it describes what we, who are overcomers, will receive. Now as overcomers you should read this as meaning "You are victorious." You have succeeded in coming thru the trials and overcoming the various tests, tribulations, and things that have been allowed to come into your path. Revelations tells us that overcomers will enjoy three huge benefits: One; We will be allowed to eat from the Tree of Life; Two, we will be able to rule and reign with God during the Kingdom Age (Just imagine, David (Co-Pastor) will tell you that Impact Class starts in 2 minutes, and,

if you are late, there will definitely be consequences); During the Kingdom Age, the age after this one we are in - The Age of Grace, we will reign with Jesus; And, now, this is the most amazing promise, we who are Overcomers will be allowed to share the Throne of Jesus with Him. What a promise to the Overcomers!

Point 3 is this:

**POINT 3: JESUS DELIVERS YOU FROM ANY SITUATION IF YOU ASK HIM BUT, YOU MUST KNOW WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST.**

This means that you need to know who you are in Christ; And who are you? Folks, you are a child of God - THE MOST HIGH GOD – “EL ELYON” – The MESSAGE OF the GOSPEL IS THIS: JESUS IS PREPARING YOU FOR “KINGDOM LIVING” - YOU WILL RULE & REIGN FOR ALL ETERNITY WITH CHRIST; However, YOU MUST TAKE AUTHORITY IN CHRIST AND BEGIN THIS PROCESS. And what does this connote? This is spiritual warfare - You have got to get an attitude about you as to who you are, and what you do not have to put up with.

ELYON is Jewish for Most High God; It is used in the Old Testament some thirty-one times. The equivalent Aramaic word is “Hilay” which is used ten times - all in the book of Daniel. Elyon is always translated “Most High”. When it is preceded by “El” – the Hebrew word for God, it is translated “God Most High”. In the New Testament the Greek equivalent to Most High is used nine times. And what is the name or title “Elyon”? It is the name that emphasizes God’s uniqueness and his supremacy above all others. It reminds us that HE is the Creator of heaven and earth and the Owner of all. He is not merely mighty, but Almighty. He is the Sovereign Possessor and Controller of all things. Elyon sovereignly delivers his children and sovereignly accomplishes his purpose even in their suffering, which

itself is temporary and will be followed by the eternal refreshment he promises to bestow on them.

Elyon empowers his children through drawing on his own omnipotence, which makes all creature claims to power (whether by fallen angels or by man) utterly presumptuous and laughable. Now you may ask, when is this name used in the Bible? Well here are a few of the times when it is referred to in the Bible - all of these major events where you can well understand something big is happening. For example when Melchizedek, King of Salem in Genesis 14:18-19, was approached by Abraham, Melchizadek was referred to as a Priest of the Most High God. Melchizadek blessed Abraham and stated "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he (Abraham) gave him tithes of all. 19" El Elyon was also used when Daniel received his interpretations and his vision of the last day events; It was used when the Angel appeared unto Mary and told her that she would be the mother of Jesus; and it was used in Mark 5:1-20 when the Demon possessed man whom Jesus assisted was confronted by Jesus and immediately addressed him as "Son of the Most High God." So there is a type of recipe here that is given to us in scripture that is quoted in Joshua 1:9. And it states "HAVE NOT I COMMANDED THEE? BE STRONG AND OF A GOOD COURAGE; BE NOT AFRAID, NEITHER BE THOU DISMAYED, FOR THE LORD THY GOD IS WITH THEE WHEREVER THOU GOEST."

In Matthew Henry's commentary on this passage he says this: "FAITH AND FEAR TAKE THEIR TURNS WHILE WE ARE IN THIS WORLD; BUT ERE LONG, FEAR WILL BE OVERCOME, AND FAITH WILL BE LOST IN SIGHT." What is he saying?

Where there is fear, there is an absence of faith; but - once you have built your faith up, fear will be overcome and you will not need to focus on anyone, anything, or any substance - YOU WILL JUST HAVE A MATURE, GROWN, AND “DEVIL YOU ARE GONNA DEAL WITH THIS” KIND OF FAITH!

SO.....WHAT DOES GOD DESIRE OF YOU TODAY?

In closing I want to read to you David's answer: He wrote this (Psalm 51) after he had sinned with Bathsheba and was caught in the act of adultery. “Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. 15 Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. 17 My sacrifice, O God, is [b] a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.”

David it was said was a man after God's own heart and, when he had failed, he knew that God did not desire a sacrifice - No, he knew that God wanted David to come to him with a contrite heart and a broken spirit. As we close I want to invite you who are willing to come before God with a contrite heart and spirit; Maybe you want to rededicate your life to God; Maybe you desire to receive the Lord. I will have Pastor David come forward and be ready to receive you and pray with you as I close with a song (Fear Not My Child) that sums up the entirety of this message. Let us pray!