



35 With the coming of evening that same day, Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us cross over to the other side.' **36** And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. **37** Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. **38** But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep. **39** They woke him and said to him, 'Master, do you not care? We are going down!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Quiet now! Be calm!' And the wind dropped, and all was calm again. **40** Then he said to them, 'Why are you so frightened? How is it that you have no faith?' **41** They were filled with awe and said to one another, 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.'

Other readings: Job 3:1,8-11 Psalm 106 (107) 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

The early chapters of the Gospel of Mark record Jesus' activity in Galilee, as he preaches the good news of the kingdom of God and performs mighty works which point to the approach of the kingdom. All this precedes his journey to Jerusalem, and his ministry there which leads to his death and resurrection. The mighty work, or miracle, about which we hear in today's gospel reading, is the calming of a storm on the Sea of Galilee.

Most of the miracles of Jesus are healings. The first healing in Mark's gospel was that of the possessed man in the synagogue at Capernaum. The evangelist also gives summaries of various healings worked by Jesus. Along with the parables, the miracles are a major feature of Jesus' ministry in Mark's gospel. This miracle shows the power of Jesus over natural forces, as his words calm the sea and the winds.

All four gospels recall such an event. The disciples call out to Jesus in alarm, while he is asleep in the stern. His powerful word recalls the word spoken by God in creation at the beginning of the Book of Genesis. Our first reading from the Book of Job gives a poetic description of God's power in limiting the extent of the seas.

The effect of the words of Jesus is instant. He has the power of God. Jesus questions the disciples about their fear and their lack of faith, but the passage ends with their question about Jesus. 'Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.' The awe they experience - the Greek text says 'they feared with a great fear' - is the reaction of someone in the presence of God. The disciples will be searching for an answer to their question throughout the gospel.

What is the meaning of the miracles of Jesus?

Does it seem strange to you that Jesus should put on such a display of power to calm the storm?

Pray for a deeper awareness of the purpose of Jesus and the gospel.

Pray for those who struggle to accept the truth about Jesus.