

Dear Hopeful in the Lord:

We all at one time or another go through the “storms of life.” We may experience the...

- loss of a loved one
- loss of our personal health
- loss of our job or financial security

We may have the same questions that have been asked for centuries...

- Why must I suffer?
- Why must I endure this calamity?
- Does the Lord understand what is happening to me?

The prophet Habakkuk in the Old Testament lived at a time when God’s people were experiencing great loss and tragedy. The prophet had some of the same thoughts we have when we enter the “storms of life.”

Habakkuk wrote:

“How long, O Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds.” 1:2-3

There are times in our lives that we can relate to these words. Have you ever been able to relate to the words of Psalm 10: “Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” v.1

How does Jesus calm the “storms” of our lives?

I. By Coming to His Disciples vv45-52

A. The storm without Jesus vv45-48

1. Disciples leave by boat

- Jesus sends off his disciples in a boat
- Jesus stays behind and dismisses the crowd of 5000 plus that had just been fed

- Jesus then went away into the hills to pray by himself....he wanted to be alone for prayer
- The Gospel writer John also says this: “Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again into the hills by himself.”
- He did not want to be made king by the crowd and he did not want his disciples to see this.

2. Jesus prays v46 “He went into the hills to pray...”

3. Meanwhile, the disciples are on the lake...

- evening came and the disciples were in the boat in the middle of the lake
- Jesus was alone on the land
- The disciples were about 3-4 miles out into the lake

The Gospel John’s account of the disciples on the lake mentions that it was dark and “A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough.” 6:15

The Gospel of Matthew says that the disciples boat “was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.” 14:24

Mark says in v6 that Jesus saw “the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them.” The word “straining” means they were in distress, depressed and tortured. They were in pain in the midst of the storm.

How about our “storms” of life?

We feel the distress and the pain. Yet, as with the disciples Jesus is with us...He is praying for us....He can see us as he saw the disciples.

It’s one thing to be in the “storm” with Jesus, but imagine to be in the “storm” without Jesus.

Yet, there are many who deny Jesus or don’t know about Him and face daily life without Him.

So many people try to find substitutes for Jesus. Yet, only He can help in the storm.

Still, even we may feel like King David when he wrote these words in Psalm 13:

How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?

B. The storm with the unknown Jesus vv48-50

1. Jesus approaches the disciples in the storm about 3:00 AM (the 4th watch of the night)
 - He sees their great difficulty they are having with the boat in the storm
 - Jesus walks out on the lake - He walks on the water and was about to pass them by when they saw Him.

Why would Jesus walk as if to pass them by?

The answer: To test His disciples.

The Apostle Peter would write later that one way our faith is strengthened is to experience the trials of life as we trust in Jesus and learn to persevere through Him. Remember that in the storm Jesus is with us.

“No darkness, tempest or billows can keep him away from those who are very, very, dear to his heart.”

2. Seeing Jesus they do not know him - The disciples thought Jesus was a ghost at first. V49 v50 “They cried out, because they all saw him and were terrified.”

- they “cried out” meaning a cry from the depth of the throat – a blood curdling cry
- they were “terrified” meaning they were violently shaking, they were agitated, they were agitated

Yet, Jesus says “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” V50

Jesus said the same in John 14:1 **“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.”**

Perhaps we should not be too hard on the disciples. For to see someone walk on water as they saw Jesus would shake up anyone. People just don’t walk on water...It can’t be done, unless you are the Lord Jesus or as in the case of Peter he allows you to do it.

At this point the disciples saw Jesus but really did not perceive Him.

C. The storm with the Words of Jesus

1. He spoke to them – words of relief, peace and safety.
2. He climbed into the boat with them and the wind died down.
3. The disciples were completely amazed... “They had not understood about the loaves” v52

Still, they wondered about Jesus and how He could have fed the 5000 with five barley loaves and 2 small fish. It says the disciples hearts were hardened.

- they were still in a state of spiritual drowsiness
- they were still having a hard time believing in Jesus’ person and works

Jesus came to the rescue. The Gospel of John says that when Jesus entered the boat “...immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.” 6:21
Jesus Calms the Storm

II. By Drawing People to Himself vv53-56

A. The people recognized Jesus vv53-55

“When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus.”

- the Greek means – “to understand or see someone for who he really is
- Gennesaret was a beautiful, fertile plain known for producing good tasting fruit.
- The people ran to Jesus carrying the sick on mats to wherever Jesus was!
- People ran to Jesus bringing their burdens...may we do the same for the Bible says

Matthew 11:28-29 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

I Peter 5:7 “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

B. The people touched Jesus v56 “All who touched Jesus were healed.”
How can we endure the “storms of life”? How can we be “healed”?
The Bible says:

- “Everyone born of God has overcome the world.” I John 5:4
- “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28

- “But the Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth be silent before Him.”
Habakkuk 2:20
- “Be still, and know that I am God...The Lord Almighty is with us...” Psalm
46

When trials and storms enter our lives the questions that are often on our lips and in our hearts are:

- “Why me, Lord”?
- “Why this, Lord”?

The prophet Habakkuk had the same questions when the Children of Israel were being destroyed by their enemies.

What do we know about God?

God told Habakkuk to stand on what he knew about God...

- that God loves His people
- that God will provide for His people

May we stand on what we do know about our Lord rather than ask questions about things that the Lord has not given us direct answers about.

Listen to how Habakkuk describes his experience with the storms in his life:

I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound;
Decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. 3:16

But listen to how Habakkuk lived through the storms:

Yet I will wait patiently...I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights. 3:16, 18-19

The Lord keeps me going...even through the storms of life.
Jesus calms the storm!

