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## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF JESUS | THE DAY JESUS SILENCED A SUPER STORM (23)

March 1, 2026

Mark 4:35-41

### PURPOSE

To discover and experience Jesus Christ in our midst  
To cultivate mutually encouraging relationships  
To participate in God's mission to the world

### GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

#### Discussion Question

- What is your most unpleasant travel experience?

### WORSHIP 10 MIN

#### PLEASE OPEN IN PRAYER

#### RESPONSIVE PRAYER — Jonah 2

I called out to the LORD, out of my distress,  
and he answered me;

**Out of the belly of Sheol I cried,  
and you heard my voice.**

For you cast me into the deep,  
into the heart of the seas,  
and the flood surrounded me;

**All your breakers and your waves  
passed over me.**

When my life was fainting away,  
I remembered the LORD,

**And my prayer came to you,  
into your holy temple.**

Those who pay regard to vain idols  
forsake their hope of steadfast love.

**But I with the voice of thanksgiving  
will sacrifice to you;**

What I have vowed I will pay.

**Salvation belongs to the LORD!**

### SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 4:35-41

*<sup>35</sup>On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."*

*<sup>36</sup>And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. <sup>37</sup>And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. <sup>38</sup>But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" <sup>39</sup>And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup>He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" <sup>41</sup>And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"*

**BIBLE STUDY**    **Summary**  
**40 MIN**

This week we continue our Lenten series entitled *A Day in the Life of Jesus*, during which we are exploring brief vignettes from the Gospels, seeking a realistic glimpse into a typical day in Jesus' earthly ministry. Before turning directly to the passage, it's helpful to understand the context, both textual and historical, so that we develop a fuller understanding of the narrative. Our text follows immediately upon Jesus' teaching on the nature of parables (Mark 4:1-34), consistent with the broader structure of Mark's Gospel in which word and deed go hand in hand, mutually interpreting one another in order to portray Jesus as the divine herald of the kingdom of God. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus will proclaim the nearness and character of the kingdom in his teaching and then demonstrate his authority and power in his actions.

There are also a few Old Testament connections worth mentioning, the first being obvious connections to the story of Jonah. Both events include a "great wind" upon the sea, a sleeping figure amidst the chaos, and terrified sailors. However, it is where the events diverge that is most interesting. While Jonah's disobedience occasioned the storm, Jesus' sovereign authority silences it. Where one might expect recapitulation based on the story's setup, Jesus decisively shatters expectations. There is also a recall of the Psalms which declare that the Lord alone "commands and raises the stormy wind" and then makes "the storm be still" (Ps. 107:25-29; cf. Ps. 89:9), subtly placing Jesus within the identity and prerogatives of Israel's God.

This passage in Mark 4 bears particular marks of eyewitness testimony: specific time reference, somewhat superfluous mention of other boats, vivid detail about water filling the boat, and the precise location of Jesus in the boat. Such features accord well with the idea that the book as a whole relied heavily on the testimony of Peter, who was an eyewitness to these events and who had a personal relationship with its author, John Mark (Acts 12:12; 1 Peter 5:13). The geographical setting further gives shape to the scene. The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by steep hills and is known for sudden violent storms funneled onto the waters by narrow clefts. Because winds typically intensify in the afternoon, fishing was often done at night, and so when a storm arises in the evening, it is all the more dangerous.

The narrative itself peaks as the disciples, overwhelmed by the storm, wake Jesus with a pointed interrogation: "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (verse 38). Their rebuke of Jesus could be thought of as a sort of crisis of faith, and rather than answering them in self defense, he rises and rebukes the wind and sea, "and there was a great calm" (verse 39). As New Testament scholar William Lane notes, this demonstration of power reveals Jesus as the personal, living God who intervenes in human experience. When he chooses to reveal his will, the forces of nature must submit.

Following the miracle, the focus shifts from the elements to the internal state of the disciples. Jesus rebukes the disciples for the lack of faith revealed in their terror, inaugurating a pattern of correction that recurs throughout Mark (Mark 7:18; 8:17-21, 32-33; 9:19). Despite the privileged revelation granted to them (Mark 4:11, 34), the distinction between the disciples and the multitude is one of degree rather than kind. They have received some insight into the mystery of the kingdom as present in Jesus, yet they remain slow to grasp its implications. Jesus' pointed question about faith concerns not their generic religiosity but their trust in God's saving power as it is present and operative in his own person. Their partial understanding is exposed by their awe-filled response (verse 41). The narrative thus serves chiefly to display the "greatness" of their Lord: a great storm (verse 37), a great calm (verse 39), and a great fear (verse 41) frame the scene, directing attention to the surpassing authority of Jesus. The unanswered question lingers, summoning the reader to reckon with his identity.

## 1. Looking at the Bible

- Share with the group some key phrases or ideas that stood out to you from the passage.

## 2. Looking at Jesus

At Central we believe that all of Scripture points to Jesus. In other words, Jesus is the theological center of the Bible. Every passage not only points to Jesus, but the grand narrative of the Bible also finds its fulfillment in the person and work of Jesus.

- Throughout the Gospel of Mark, Jesus is declared to be the Christ (1:1; 8:29), the Son of God (1:1; 15:39), the Beloved Son (1:11; 9:7), the Holy One of God (1:24), the Son of the Most High God (5:7), the Son (12:6; 13:32), the Son of the Blessed (14:61-62), the Son of Man (2:10, 28), and the King of the Jews (15:2). If the disciples had boarded the boat fully believing these titles were true of Jesus, how might their reaction to the storm have changed?
- Mark uses two different forms of the word “fear” to describe the disciples’ reactions (verse 40 is more akin to cowardice; verse 41 could also be translated as reverence or awe). Which fear (that in verse 40 or that in verse 41) is a more appropriate response to Jesus’ identity? Why?

## 3. Looking at our Hearts

- Read Ephesians 4:11-14. How could an increased knowledge of who Jesus is lead us to better withstand the wind and the waves that so often distract us and trip us up?

## 4. Looking at our World

- The passage ends with a hanging question: the disciples wondering “Who then is this?” Mark leaves it open and impresses it upon his readers. Who does the world say that Jesus is today? What categories do you hear our culture use to explain him?
- In light of Jesus’ authority over nature in this passage, are those common explanations sufficient? Why or why not?
- C.S. Lewis once argued that, given Jesus’ claims, he must be either a lunatic, a liar, or Lord. Mark wants his readers to understand that Jesus is Lord. How might this passage account for that fact, and what might this require of you?

### **PRAYER 15 MIN**

**Pray for each other:** Share any prayer requests you have.

We all strive to react well amidst the storms in our lives, but when they come, we so often lose our heads. Pray for your fellow group members to be rooted in their knowledge of Christ even amidst the wind and the waves.