

Jesus teaches concerning natural disaster.

Mission

We are simply told Jesus embarked on the ship. We learn later that he was going to establish a work in a distressed heart that in time was to affect 10 great Greek cities. There was an extensive divine purpose-as yet unknown-to unfold as a sequel to this boat crossing. But it would appear this mighty work might be aborted right at the outset. Many modern missionary efforts including Carey's early translation of the scriptures in India seemed to be battling against natural calamity. But as in the case of the sea passage of the Lord and His disciples the end was greater faith.

An earthquake in the sea

A seismic shock (Greek original is **σεισμος**) roaring through the placid waters of Galilee is more than a gust on a Peter style boat during a holiday trip. It is more than a tempestuous wind during a fishing expedition. It would create a wave the like of which could only be understood by those who two millennia afterwards experienced the tsunami in the Pacific-though the ferocity and power would be less because the sea is not so deep nor the momentum gained by distance so sizeable.

The Master asleep in the stern

John teaches us the humanity of Christ. Matthew is true to this vital doctrine as well. Jesus had incessantly busy days. He touched numerous lives and accomplished a high volume work load-and with quite unique charm and efficacy. At the stern there was traditionally a pillow and space to stretch and rest. The Lord was taking rest in sleep in the manner many do today whilst commuting.

The boat was covered by the waves

The word in the Greek language that described the disappearing boat is **καλυπτω**. The wonder of this incident is that the Master was asleep whilst the flow of water buried the boat. The passing waves-for they are described as in the plural lifted the boat but also broke right over and into it so that to an aerial view it would have become invisible. That the master should sleep through this was itself testimony to his humanity.

That the boat should itself survive the incident is just as really a proof of the presence of the divine Christ.

Smiling at the storm

During the 1950's the Christian Endeavour movement was in full swing world-wide. Youth of the day loved to sing lively choruses -especially ones with a catchy wee tune. The one I am about to quote was just such and put the truth of the smiling providence of God in the above story into verse.

With Christ in the vessel we can smile at the storm
Smile at the storm smile at the storm
With Christ in the vessel we can smile at the storm
As we go sailing home



From paper to practice

Are natural phenomena like earthquakes twisters and tsunami going to bring God's purposes to a halt?
What evidence do we have from this account that Jesus was truly human?
Why was not the boat capsized, overturned, sunk, and the crew washed away?