

Luke 8:22-25 “22 Now it happened, on a certain day, that [Jesus] got into a boat with His disciples. And He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake." And they launched out. 23 But as they sailed He fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water, and were in jeopardy. 24 And they came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" Then He arose and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 But He said to them, "Where is your faith?"

And they were afraid, and marveled, saying to one another,

"Who can this be?

For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!"”

Job 38:1 “Then Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:

2 "Who is this who darkens counsel By words without knowledge?

3 Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.

4 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

8 "Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; 9 When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; 10 When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; 11 When I said, 'This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!'

Jesus is the Lord of Nature

This morning we continue our journey through the Gospel of Luke & the Book of Acts, coming to a short passage that could simply be seen as a transition.

- **Jesus is moving from one side of the Sea of Galilee to the other, but in doing so the Disciples, and WE here today, learn a very important lesson: Jesus is the Lord of Nature.**

This is especially important for those of us who live in the midst of the 21 Century! However, to properly understand this lesson, we must remember:

1) What these men have seen...

2) Who many of these men were...

What had the disciples already seen?

- **Some were present at the baptism of Jesus seeing the demonstration of the Trinity as the Spirit descended and the Father pronounced Jesus to be His beloved Son who they should hear!**

In this very region the Disciples saw Jesus:

- **Cast out demons at Capernaum**
- **Heal Peter's mother-in-law**
- **Cleanse a leper**
- **Heal a paralytic brought by his friends**
- **Proclaim Himself Lord of the Sabbath**
- **Heal a withered hand in the Synagogue**
- **Saw the Centurion's great faith**
- **Raise widow's son at Nain**
- **Forgive sins**

ALL this they had seen first-hand from the Jesus who now came with them in the boat!

AND we must also remember who these men were?

- **We know that at least four were fishermen themselves**
- **Others were at least friends of these fishermen**
- **It is likely that all came from this local region, knowing these fishing boats & this lake!**

This day, they would be given a great test and learn a great lesson!

[review the story of what happened]

- **They knew they were in real danger**
- **However, they turned to Jesus in desperation, not in faith: Mark tells us they even said, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”**
- **This is why Jesus rebukes them saying, “Where is your faith?”**
- **Their test came right in the midst of what they knew best: Sailing on the lake where many had lived and fished all their lives!**

In our flesh, the more we think we know or can do, the further aside we push God:

Failing to see Him right in our midst!

- **In our youth...**
- **In our vocation or talent...**
- **In our knowledge...**
- **In our wealth...**
- **Yes, even in our churches!**

Jesus must be Lord...

- **Just as we have seen Jesus as the Lord of the Sabbath**
- **Just as we have seen Jesus as the Son of God who forgives sins**
- **Just as we have seen Jesus as the one who can raise the dead...**

Now we see Jesus as the Lord of Nature: We see here, in this simple account, the great truth that Paul proclaims to the Colossians:

Colossians 1:15 [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

- **That is a beautiful and powerful passage: One that we proclaim each time we read responsively the creation account:**
- **BUT it also gives us a great test, just like that storm on the lake did for the Disciples.**

It is where we really confront our lesson from last week about “hearing and doing” the words of Jesus...

- **Is what we confess what we really believe in a time of testing?**

Are we really hearing and doing the Words of Jesus... Consider these examples:

Can Jesus raise the dead?

We all confess that we “believe in THE resurrection”

Is this just academic or future oriented, or would we believe an account from a modern missionary about the Spirit of God raising someone from the dead?

Is Jesus Lord of the Sabbath?

Again, we confess that He is, but do our actions and priorities on the Lord’s Day reflect this truth?

Can Jesus forgive sins?

We all celebrated the declaration of absolution this morning, but will we still carry around the guilt of some sins, or even others as a badge of honor? More importantly, will we forgive others as we have been forgiven?

And finally, the question of the day: Is Jesus the Lord of Creation?

The world wants science and religion to be completely separate and sadly the church has largely embraced this division.

- **To the modern Christian, the passage we just read from Colossians is a beautiful thing to read on Sunday, but it has little to do with what happens in the lab on Tuesday.**

That is exactly the opposite of what Jesus has taught: We must hear and DO the words of Jesus. In the 21st Century, it is truly with this question the rubber REALLY meets the road!

- **This simple account on the Sea of Galilee forces all of us to confront whether we truly believe that Jesus is the Lord of nature**

According to the Bible, Jesus spoke to the wind & waves and they obeyed

- **We must ask, did this really happen?**
 - **Can't we just explain it with what we call the "laws of nature"**
 - **Perhaps Jesus just spoke when he knew the storm was about to end??**

NO, the passage is perfectly clear: Jesus spoke and the wind and waves obeyed:

- **Jesus speaks and the creation obeys!**

This is what we must believe... it IS what really happened!

Our faith must begin with Genesis chapter one:

- **Jesus spoke all that is into existence in six ordinary days**
- **Any child reading this account knows that this is what it says**

It takes really "educated adults" to come up with all the ways around this simple truth that have been invented in the past two hundred years...

Gaps, and ages and frameworks or some poetry to try and explain it away!

IF we understand and BELIEVE what is taught there in Genesis, the account on the lake is no problem...If Jesus spoke these very waves and winds into existence, it is not a stretch to think they would obey His commands on that day.

- **And this is the main point of the passage from Colossians: Not only did Jesus speak the creation into existence, but that today, "by Him all things consist [or hold together]."**

Are there laws in God's Creation we can depend on? Absolutely, because they were designed by the Lord of Nature who demands that all creation obey them to this very day:

- **It was with this understanding & conviction that western science was able to advance and give us all that we are blessed with today...**

But just as those disciples did not have faith in the one who rode in their very boat, we have set God aside in the midst of all the blessings that science, based on God's revealed Truth, has given us. Tens of thousands of hours and pages have been expended or written in the last few hundred years trying to explain the miracles of the Bible in terms of the "laws of science."

- **BUT, there is one and only one explanation for how those winds and waves were calmed during that storm on the Sea of Galilee:**
- **Jesus spoke and they obeyed.**

It is Mark who tells us specifically what Jesus said to the wind and waves, "Peace, be still." The wind & waves were NOT disobeying before He spoke: This storm was not a surprise to Jesus...

Now if some of our modern scientists had been on the scene with all the instruments they needed to measure what happened, they would have been shocked: The "laws" of nature would have been broken... As the waves subsided there was no "equal and opposite force" they could measure that stopped them. As the winds were suddenly calmed there would have been no 'rational' explanation as to how or where the force of that air mass suddenly dissipated!

- **Of course the true modern scientist would still reject this as a truthful account because HE could not measure what had happened!**

This is the great lesson that we must not miss: I included a short passage from Job in our reading this morning to help us understand it: Jesus rightly rebukes the disciples for their lack of faith: They should not have panicked with Him right there with them in the boat...

- **Just as we should not be anxious for anything if we claim that Jesus is our Lord, confessing that He has all authority and power and is with US until the end of the age!**

BUT that lesson is one that these Disciples and Job only began to learn in the presence of the Almighty: It says in the account from Luke that the Disciples were afraid and marveled...

This is exactly what happened with Job as he grew arrogant in his debate with his faithless friends: God came in the whirlwind to remind Him of who He really was and it greatly humbled Job, causing him to say after only a few of God's many questions:

"Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. 5 Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further. *Job 40:4*

What was it that caused the Disciples to marvel and Job to be humbled? It was that great truth that Paul outlined in Colossians:

➤ **Jesus is the creator and sustainer of ALL creation!**

The Lord asked Job the great question that must be asked of ALL modern science:

➤ **"Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?"**

God gave Job a challenge that we must not fail to give ourselves & all those who put their faith in modern science:

➤ **"Prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me!"**

Your homework assignment will be to review all the questions in chapters 38 through 41 of Job... See how many we as modern, advanced people of the 21st Century can answer today!

The short reading that I included this morning contains just a few examples to ponder:

➤ **With all that we claim to now know about our planet, can any modern scientist claim to have been there when Jesus laid its foundation? Few on our planet today can claim to have "been there" a hundred years ago!**

In verse six, the question is “To what were its foundations fastened.”

- **Can any modern scientist give a good explanation of gravity or explain why the atmosphere and the material of the earth do not spin off into space?**

Verse eleven brings a question that really relates to this morning’s account in Luke: “Where were you when I said [to the sea] ‘this far you may come, but no farther, and here your proud waves must stop!’”

- **The destruction that we have seen in recent years from Tsunamis and Hurricanes should remind us of how important it is for the oceans to have limits!**

Dig into these four chapters this week and see how many answers you can find for the questions that God presents to Job... [And by the way, if you have a Bible that says the Behemoth is a hippopotamus and that the Leviathan is an alligator, please exchange it for one that does NOT water down the Word of God!]

- **So again the question to ask this morning is whether we believe that Jesus is the Lord of Nature**

Did Jesus speak all that exists into being with the power of His Word and form ALL of the creation that we know in six ordinary days just a few thousand years ago?

- **Do all things hold together TODAY by the power of His Word?**

These are important questions and if we do not have the right answers Jesus will rebuke us for a lack of faith and we will be humbled as Job was when God had finished His interrogation:

Job 42:1 “Then Job answered the Lord and said: 2 “I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. 3 You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer Me.’ 5 “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. 6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.”

You see if Satan had come to the believing Church a few hundred years ago and said there was a perfectly logical explanation for the resurrection and that it was not a miracle. He would have been thrown out on his proverbial ear!

However, just as he deceived Eve in the garden he instead came saying, hath God said that you must believe the world was created in six days just a few thousand years ago.... Surely you know how old these rocks around you are? You should embrace all that science can teach!

Satan followed that up with “hath God said that Jesus holds all things together?” With modern science we now know about the “laws of nature” run the universe, so Jesus can focus on other things, “Spiritual” things!

And now, after a couple of hundred years of this slippery slope, we have reached the point where even the resurrection is now called into question by many who still remain within our churches!

- **It a story that teaches us GREAT “spiritual” truths!**
- **Whether is happened in history is not really that important.**
- **The division of religion and science is complete!**

To some extend we ALL have been taken in by this massive deception and with Job we must be willing to ‘abhor’ what we have done and “repent in dust and ashes.”

If we are willing to be honest and repent then our loving, covenant keeping God will bless us as He did His servant Job whose later days “He blessed more than his beginning.”

- **When we understand that Jesus is the Lord of nature, we can live in confidence that all things are under His control and that by Him all things hold together.**
- **With this understanding that Jesus is the Lord of Nature, we do not set ourselves in opposition to true science, but rather return to the solid foundation upon which all of our great scientific achievements have been founded!**

Just as Jesus was with His Disciples in that boat, we have the promise that Jesus is with us until the end of the age: In the laboratory, down at city hall and yes, here at Church!

➤ **Even when it appears to us that He might be sleeping!**

In a moment, we will rise and heartily sing our hymn of response given to us by Saints who knew that Jesus was the Lord of Nature!

“Eternal Father, Strong to Save,” This hymn began as a poem written for a student about to sail for America and is sung to a tune that its composer John B. Dykes called Melita after the Island on which Paul was shipwrecked.

I am sure that the words of this hymn’s second verse were penned with this passage we have studied this morning clearly in view:

“O Savior, whose Almighty Word the winds and waves submissive hear, who walkest on the foaming deep and calm amidst its rage didst sleep: O hear us when we cry to Thee for those in peril on the sea.”

Let us stand & sing this great hymn as those who truly believe that Jesus IS the Lord of Nature!

Communion Meditation:

Want to carry on with Paul’s admonition in Colossians: 1: 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. **19** For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, **20** and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. **21** And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled **22** in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- **23** if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.