

Jesus Walks Upon The Sea

When our Lord Jesus Christ graced this earth with His presence He did so as the God Man. There is no end of theorising and speculation by religious experts about what this means but we shall be content to accept the apostolic testimony of John who writes in John 1:14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth".

Our Willing Substitute

The Lord Jesus Christ is fully and completely God and fully and completely Man. As the Great Mediator of God's covenant of peace our Saviour subjected Himself to the will of His Father in all things, taking the human body prepared for Him, willingly subjecting Himself to the constraints of nature and the physical world, yet able at will to alter and suspend those same laws to reveal His Divine nature and saving purpose. Our studies in Mark's Gospel have provided many examples of this, and today's verses are no exception.

Believe anything before the truth

Jesus walking on water is so opposite to our natural instinct that at first it takes us by surprise. At least it did the disciples. Their minds at once ran to ghosts and demons when they saw the figure of the Lord approach them walking on the water. Mark tells us this was because their hearts were hardened and even they struggled to comprehend the power of the Lord, despite all the miracles Jesus had already performed. "They considered not the loaves", says Mark. How quickly we forget what we have learned of the Lord.

Our Fit And Able Saviour

This is the key. Piece by piece, the Lord Jesus was building a picture of Himself for these disciples and for us, one that revealed Him as God, yet traced His steps all the way to the cross, His sacrifice and death. Every miracle of our Lord, every parable, every action and word is full of meaning and heavy with significance. He is our fit and able Saviour. The laws of nature bow before Jesus of Nazareth yet He willingly subjected Himself to death because that was the price of our redemption.

I know that feeling!

The diversity of these miracles; healing, feeding, delivering, quelling wind and waves, everything indeed, from raising the dead to finding a coin in a fishes' mouth provides parallels for the Lord's people in our everyday experience. These disciples were struggling, as we do. They were doing as they had been bidden but the Lord had left them alone. Being without Him and making little headway in their rowing, they feared they were about to be overwhelmed. These are all feelings we can relate to.

Yet, though they could not see the Lord, the Lord saw them. When they were alone and in need, He came to them. To do so the Lord walked over 500 metres (550 yards) across the sea to reach them, neither wind, nor waves, nor distance being an obstacle. When He stepped into their ship the contrary wind ceased and they had arrived successfully at their destination. I do not know how all this was possible, nor can I explain it by natural means, but I believe this Jesus who did all these things once is the same yesterday, today and forever, and that comforts and reassures me in my own life's journey.

A word of comfort and peace

Mark's account of this miracle, unlike Matthew's, does not include Peter's experience of leaving the boat, going to the Lord, beginning to sink, and being saved, so that is a study for another day. However, you and I shall be wise and most blessed if we apply these miracles and the lessons they teach to our own hearts and circumstances. If life may be likened to a sea voyage then with Christ in the vessel we can smile at the storm, as we go sailing home.

Our hymns for today are below.

Hymn 1

Gadsby selection 1135

“Serve the Lord with fear.” Ps. 2. 11

T. Kelly 8.7.4.

1

In thy name O Lord, assembling,
We thy people now draw near,
Teach us to rejoice with trembling,
Speak, and let thy servants hear;
Hear with meekness;
Hear thy word with godly fear.

2

While our days on earth are lengthened,
May we give them, Lord, to thee;
Cheered by hope, and daily strengthened,
May we run, nor weary be;
Till thy glory,
Without clouds, in heaven we see.

3

There, in worship purer, sweeter,
All thy people shall adore;
Tasting of enjoyment greater
Than they could conceive before;
Full enjoyment,
Full, unmixed, and evermore.

Hymn 2

Gadsby selection 1102

“It is I; be not afraid.” John 6. 20; Mark 6. 50

T. Kelly 8.7.4.

1

Why those fears? behold, 'tis Jesus
Holds the helm, and guides the ship;
Spread the sails, and catch the breezes,
Sent to waft us through the deep,
To the regions
Where the mourners cease to weep.

2

Though the shore we hope to land on,
Only by report is known,
Yet we freely all abandon,
Led by that report alone;
And with Jesus
Through the trackless deep move on.

3

Led by him we brave the ocean;
Each tumultuous storm defy;
Calm amidst tempestuous motion,
Knowing that the Lord is nigh;

Waves obey him,
And the storms before him fly.

4

Rendered safe by his protection,
We shall pass the watery waste;
Trusting to his wise direction,
We shall gain the port at last;
And with wonder
Think on toils and dangers past.