

## Luke 8. 22- 25

One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they put out, <sup>23</sup>and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A gale swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. <sup>24</sup>They went to him and woke him up, shouting, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. <sup>25</sup>He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?'

To get the best out of this story you have to *imagine* the scene, not just read it.

Who is here? The disciples and Jesus of course. Whose boat, what sort of boat – fishing boat? Rowing boat? One big enough for Jesus to go and have a snooze in, away from the disciples. Maybe one the Sons of Thunder owned for fishing from?

A storm arose. This may have been something Jesus saw coming as He was fond of suggesting that the weather was something that could be read and planned for. Or maybe He just wanted to push the disciples a little as if they were on a leadership training course (which of course they were).

The disciples were in danger – so it must have been a big enough storm to frighten experienced fishermen. Can you imagine how you would feel if the person whose idea it was to do something then takes a nap and leaves you to cope with whatever the weather throws at you? Which of the disciples woke Him up? On some occasions we are told the disciples were frightened to disturb Jesus because He was prone to be cross with them (see Mark 9 for an example) so who drew the short straw here? John: 'You wake Him up Peter, you're bigger than Him' Peter; I'm not going, He'll be grumpy' James; well He has to be woken up or we'll all go down with the boat, let's all go and Peter you go first' All this done in the teeth of a howling gale where voices can barely be heard as you struggle to move across the boat – and

Jesus was sleeping through this?! Bring on the *Guns of Navarone!* (You're not supposed to be able to sleep through that film either.)

So off they stagger to where Jesus is having 40 winks. They wake Him, he's grumpy.

They shout at Him, He shouts back, not to be heard but because He cannot believe they still haven't cottoned on to who and what He is. Look at what word the Gospel writer uses, He *rebuked* the winds. So maybe, in temper, Jesus, woken from sleep, shouts to the wind 'Wind stop it, back in your place! Waves, pack it in I'm trying to sleep and your not helping here!' Then He turns to the cowering, gob-smacked, awestruck and soggy disciples and tells them to get a grip and smell the coffee. Then He stomps back to bed muttering about how long does He have to put up with the crew His Father has given Him (Matthew 17) pulls His cloak over His head and goes back to sleep.

This is a bit more life-like perhaps than the piety that this passage is often interpreted with but *if* it resonates with Christ's humanity then it also tells us something about His divinity. The things that beset us, trouble us, rock the boat that we want to sail only on calm seas, are things that God can handle and even if we sink or find we cannot walk on the water or even drown, *nothing but nothing* can separate us from the *Eternal Life* we have been given. Death and storms come and God stays, health and happiness go but God stays, crucifixion is imposed but God rises, irrepressibly alive. And understandably perhaps, Jesus gets a bit fed up when woken from sleep from our fear that we will perish although *we are in the same boat as He is.*