

Mark chapter 4:35-41; chapter 5

4:35 Mark's attention on parables concludes and he turns to a group of four miracles, paired as two and two.

All 4 are indications of Jesus authority. As the disciples asked "who then is this?"

Old Testament passages form a background for this "nature miracle" – Ps.107:23-32; Jonah 1:1-16 which describe God's control of the sea.

The phrase, "that day, in the evening" links this story to the preceding narrative.

Because of its position, the Sea of Galilee is subject to storms caused by a sudden inrush of wind that begins and ends abruptly. Some commentaries suggest this was far beyond an ordinary squall, far more destructive and frightening.

The "cushion on which Jesus slept is likely the helmsman's seat in the stern of the boat which would have been comparatively dry.

The disciples cry to Jesus is intensely urgent in the Greek – Teacher, don't you care we are sinking! They are rough and indignant.

Jesus reproved the wind – the same word for Jesus' action 1:37 as he reproved the unclean spirit.

In ancient mythology the sea symbolized the powers of chaos and evil, thus storms were thought to be caused by rebellious powers.

Jesus words to the disciples were also ones of rebuke. "Why are you so cowardly? Don't you have faith yet?" the difference in their behavior and Jesus's is demonstrates their different attitudes toward God – Jesus trusts and the disciples panic.

The disciples "were terrified" - a reaction that will appear several more times as Jesus moves through the narrative. It indicates an attitude that stands in contrast to faith. Jonah 1:10 parallels this story in that Jonah was a sleep; the sailors fear Jonah.

Chapter 5 returns to the exorcism of unclean spirits with a detailed narrative of the miracle. Jesus' expulsion of an entire army of unclean spirits fulfills in a dramatic way the cry in chapter 1:24 "Have you come to destroy us?"

This is the second story – the first the calming of the storm – now the casting out of demons shows Jesus' power is such that he can control raging waves and raging demoniacs. Once again those who witness the miracle react with great fear.

v. 1 the scene changes from Galilee to Decapolis – the other side of the lake - the district of the Gerasenes, gentile territory.

Vs. 2-3 the tombs were thought to be the haunt of demons as well as unclean. Suitable for one cut off from ordinary life and as good as dead.

Vs. 4-5 Greek suggests he was trying to destroy himself. The man's enormous strength is confronted by an even greater strength that has actually bound Satan himself.

V. 7 once again the demon recognizes Jesus as the Son of God.

V. 9 contemporary belief was that if one knew someone's name then one had power over the other.

V. 10 – a Roman Legion was 4000 to 6000 men.

Vs. 21-43 The second pair of miracles – one sandwiched into the other. The life Jesus gives to one is paralleled by the life he gives to another.

One notable feature is that Jairus was a leader in the synagogue. It is unusual in Mark that a member of the Jewish establishment accepts Jesus authority, appeals to him for help.

Jesus re-crosses the lake back to Galilee, remains by the seaside and is surrounded by large crowds.

The synagogue leader retains none of his dignity as he falls to Jesus' feet and begs him. Laying on of hands was considered the normal practice in healing – the child can be both healed and saved.

Greek soso – means physical healing and spiritual healing.

V. 26 the woman's illness was severe – it lasted for 12 years. She endured much from doctors and she had spent all her money. Like the child the woman is beyond human aid. Her ailment made her unclean and an outcast. Because of her position she should not even have been in the crowd, much less touched Jesus' clothes.

V.30 the word used for the power that went out from Jesus is understood to be the power of God and a part of Jesus' very being.

V. 35 the news of the child's death destroys Jairus's hope but Jesus speaks to him, urging him not to be afraid but to go on believing. "Just believe" is translated in the imperative.

V. 40 the child is truly dead but she is to be restored and thus not irrevocably dead.

V. 41 "Talitha cum" is an Aramaic phrase meaning literally "Lamb, get up"

V. 42 the response is dramatic – immediately she got up and walked.