

4th Sunday after Pentecost

June 20, 2021

Collect: O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving kindness through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Lessons: Old Testament: Job 38:1-11

Psalm: 107:1-3, 23-32

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

Gospel: Mark 4:35-41

The Sermon: In last week's Gospel the disciples of Jesus had asked him why he taught lessons using parables. Jesus told them the parables were about things the people had knowledge of or experience with. Now they may have heard scripture read in the synagogue or temple, yet they didn't fully understand it. By using parables, Jesus explained the scripture or concept in a way that made it easier for people to understand. When he was alone with his disciples, he would often have to explain the parable to them. They often didn't understand what he was teaching so Jesus had to explain it further.

He had finished explaining the parable of the mustard seed. The mustard seed is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when planted it grows into a giant of a shrub providing shelter and shade for birds. In this parable, I think Jesus was saying the seed is the word of God and although a few may hear it at first, it can spread and be heard by many throughout the world and help to protect them from destructive evils.

In today's Gospel Jesus had grown tired of teaching the crowd that had been following him and he wanted to go where he could be alone with his disciples and rest. Jesus had decided to go across Lake Galilee or as it also known as the Sea of Galilee to the other side. It was late in the evening, but Jesus wasn't worried. He went to the rear of the boat and quickly fell asleep.

The disciples also weren't worried, they were experienced fishermen and knew the lake. They had at times left the shore when the lake was nice and calm and been on the lake when it suddenly began to storm. They had faced the raging of the sea and knew they could survive its fury.

This time it would be a little different though. Psalm 107 verses 23-32 described a raging storm they may have encountered. It heaved up towards the heavens and fell back towards the depths, The sea tossed them about like reeling and staggering drunkards. They were afraid and at their wits end. That experience, love and knowledge of sea now disappeared and caused them to lose heart and cry out to the Lord for deliverance.

I imagine that the storm Jesus and the disciple were in was just as bad. The raging waters washing over the boat as it bounced up and down on the waves began to fill the inside of the boat and they feared they would be swamped and the boat sunk.

While the disciples were dealing with these raging waters, Jesus was sleeping soundly and quite comfortably in the back of the boat, they in desperation cried out loudly to him, "Master we are sinking Don't you care?" The scripture said he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace, be still." Immediately the wind stopped blowing and the sea became calm.

This mystified the disciples and they began to wonder exactly, who is this that has such power over the wind and sea? They knew he could drive out demons and heal the sick, they were used to it, it had become a common occurrence. But they didn't understand this power to influence the weather

They must have wondered is he a demon, a disciple of Satan or can he be a divine one, an angel. The scripture doesn't give a specific answer to their question, Jesus quickly moves on to another miracle.

Let's imagine you are one of the disciples in the boat and you see Jesus bring calm out of chaos. What would you have thought?

Bringing calm out of chaos, we have an excellent example of this today. The Covid-19 Virus shook up the whole world and shut towns and countries down. Yet God through divine inspiration, allowed vaccines to be produced to handle the virus and calm things down.

What is this? The divine act of a God that loves us. We've seen it before. Look at the eradication of polio, treatment for cancer, diabetes and AIDS.

God is at work all around us—creating peace out of chaos.

Rev. Lionel Starkes