**Is Jesus in Your Boat**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Matthew 8:23-27**

**Sunday Morning**

**September 1, 2019**

**Matthew 8:23-27**

23 Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. 24 And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. 25 Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

26 But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. 27 So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

**We all experience storms in our lives—those occasions that bring pain, suffering, or loss**

Saints, it’s in turbulent times that all sorts of questions come to mind:

**Where is God?**

**Why has this happened?**

**Was it something I did?**

**Did God cause it?**

Saints, the only safe place to go for answers in tumultuous times is:

**God’s Word!**

Saints, the underlying foundation for understanding the storms of life is found in:

**Psalm 103:19**

“The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.”

**Psalm 107:23-32**

23 Those who go down to the sea in ships, Who do business on great waters, 24 They see the works of the LORD, And His wonders in the deep. 25 For He commands and raises the stormy wind, Which lifts up the waves of the sea.

26 They mount up to the heavens, They go down again to the depths; Their soul melts because of trouble. 27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, And are at their wits' end. 28 Then they cry out to the LORD in their trouble, And He brings them out of their distresses. 29 He calms the storm, So that its waves are still.

30 Then they are glad because they are quiet; So He guides them to their desired haven. 31 Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! 32 Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people, And praise Him in the company of the elders.

This is a descriptive example of a literal storm provides insight into the Lord’s role in the various storms that come our way.

The scene is a ship at sea battling the wind and waves. In the midst of misery and helplessness, the sailors call out for God’s help, and He brings them out of their distress by calming the storm and safely guiding them to their desired haven.

In response, they thank the Lord for His lovingkindness and wondrous deliverance and extol Him to the people.

**Was God in the storm?**

According to verse 25, the answer is yes:

**Psalm 107:25**

“For He commands and raises the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves of the sea.”

Saints, sometimes the Lord interrupts our lives by sending turbulence, but on other occasions, we create the chaotic conditions with our sinful choices.

Our troubles could also be the result of natural occurrences. No matter what the source, ultimately, God is in every situation because His sovereignty rules over all.

**There are three kinds of Storms**

**Natural Storms**

Hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes fall into this category.

**Emotional Storms**

These are often worse than physical storms and include the following situations:

**1. Poor Health**

**2. Financial Struggles**

Economic downturns or the loss of a job challenge us to believe the Bible and trust God to comfort, support, and provide.

**3. Relationship Difficulties**

Stormy conditions in the home or feelings of rejection cause stress and grind at our hearts.

**Spiritual Storms**

Disobeying God and choosing our own way results in spiritual turbulence as the Holy Spirit convicts us. Being outside His will changes our conduct, conversation, and character, making us at odds with what the Lord wants us to be.

**What are the Sources of our Storms?**

**1. Ourselves**

Saints, we can bring trouble upon ourselves with willful disobedience. As a result, we may become fearful or anxious, feel distant from God, blame others, become useless for God’s work, or ruin our testimony

**2. The Devil**

Satan can create a storm through temptation. David’s sin recorded in 2 Samuel 11:1-5 shows the progression of temptation.

**2 Samuel 11:1-5**

1 It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the people of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2 Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold. 3 So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"

4 Then David sent messengers, and took her; and she came to him, and he lay with her, for she was cleansed from her impurity; and she returned to her house. 5 And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, "I am with child."

**David’s Progression**

**1. David was where he shouldn’t have been**

When his army went to battle, David stayed at home instead of taking his place with his troops.

**2. David saw what he should not have seen**

As he walked on his rooftop, he saw a woman bathing. Instead of turning away, he kept looking.

**3. David’s look turned to lust, and he sent for her**

**4. David’s lust gave birth to an act of sin**

Saints, David was in the wrong place, at the wrong time, with a wrong look, wrong thoughts, and the power to act on his lust. The result was pregnancy, a continuing course of sinful actions, and painful consequences that lasted a lifetime.

**<**What are the Sources of our Storms?>

**God**

Saints, sometimes the Lord brings storms into our lives for His divine purposes. Although they are painful, God is motivated by His love for us.

**Why does God allow Storms in our lives?**

**1. To get Our Attention**

The Lord speaks to us quietly in our hearts, but if we don’t pay attention, He will raise the volume by sending a storm into our lives. Out of love, He reproves us to protect us from destroying ourselves or others with our disobedience.

**2. To bring Us to Repentance**

God used a literal storm to draw Jonah to repentance.

**Jonah 1:1-17**

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me." 3 But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

4 But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up. 5 Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep.

6 So the captain came to him, and said to him, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish." 7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.

8 Then they said to him, "Please tell us! For whose cause is this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" 9 And he said to them, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

10 Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "Why have you done this?" For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. 11 Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?"--for the sea was growing more tempestuous.

12 And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me." 13 Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them.

14 Therefore they cried out to the LORD and said, "We pray, O LORD, please do not let us perish for this man's life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O LORD, have done as it pleased You." 15 So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging.

16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows. 17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Saints, although the Lord told him to go to Nineveh to “cry against it, for their wickedness,” Jonah boarded a ship “to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord” (v. 2-3). But no one can avoid God, since He is present everywhere.

While Jonah slept in the cargo hold of the ship, the Lord “hurled a great wind on the sea” (v. 4). All the sailors called on their gods, hoping that one of them would intervene. When they decided to cast lots to see which of them was to blame for the storm, the lot fell to Jonah.

Jonah had foolishly tried to flee from God by leaving the land and going to sea, both of which were created and controlled by Him. In order to save the ship, Jonah told them to throw him overboard. When they did, the raging storm ceased.

Although Jonah tried to escape from the Lord, God never left him. Even in the sea, He rescued Jonah by sending a great fish to swallow him. Eventually he was vomited onto land and made his way to Nineveh to preach as the Lord had commanded.

Yet even then, he resented the fact that the people repented and would no longer be judged for their evil ways. In the same way, we bring trouble upon ourselves when we try to run away from God. Yet like Jonah, we’ll discover that He is always with us, even in our disobedience. His desire is that we repent and return to Him.

**3. To conform us to Christ’s Image**

God is willing to break us and cause suffering in order to glorify Himself by making us like His Son.

**4. To equip us for Service**

Having suffered through painful storms, we come out better equipped to be helpful to others.

**5. To demonstrate His Power in our Lives**

God powerfully uses the situation to make us more useful than we were before.

**6. To reveal Himself to Us**

Turbulent times give us a new perspective on the Lord and how He works. Sometimes this comes after the storm when we look back and see how He brought us through it. Then we understand better that His strength was sufficient for us and His purpose was good.

**7. To demonstrate His Love**

Once we understand that God’s thoughts and ways are so much higher than ours, we’ll realize that any storm He brings is motivated by His love.

**8. To remind us who is in Control**

Because His knowledge is complete, God never makes mistakes. Nothing happens in our lives without His permissive will. His good purpose, mighty power, and unfailing love always govern the storms that come our way

**Let’s Pray**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**