Two miracles of Jesus Christ recorded in Scripture tell of Him calming storms on the Sea of Galilee. The first miracle of this type appears in Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; and Luke 8:22-25. For Jesus, this is a day of both significant teaching, including the seven parables of Matthew 13, and considerable testing. He is sought by concerned friends, His mother, and half-brothers, and is accused of being demon-possessed by some who think that He is not in His right mind.

These things, along with performing this miracle, leave Jesus physically and mentally tired. Mark indicates that He shows signs of fatigue from incessant interruptions and distractions by the people pursuing Him. Yet, He unselfishly gives Himself to serve others. Because of the large crowds still gathering around Him, He tells His disciples to take Him in their small boat to the quieter region of Perea across the Sea of Galilee.

Once on board, Jesus falls asleep on a pillow, an item normally found among the sparse furnishings of that type of boat. A storm rises suddenly, terrifying the disciples. Mark describes the waves beating into the boat and filling it. Luke expresses the disciples' urgency by repeating the Greek word *epistates*, which means "Master, Master!" or "Rabbi, Rabbi!" However, because of His complete trust in His Almighty Father's care and protection, and His knowledge that He had God-given power over the winds and the sea, Jesus remains peacefully asleep.

1. Why is Jesus irritated with His disciples? Matthew 8:26; Mark 4:40; Luke 8:25.

   **Comment:** Jesus rebukes His disciples for fearfulness and little faith. They have not lost complete confidence in Christ, but neither have they learned nor fully developed trust in Him. They are at ease only when they hear Him speak and see Him taking care of them. They have so little faith that, when the moment of need comes, it is not enough to give them peace and calm.

   The disciples are not totally faithless in this incident, as they called for Christ to save them. They know from what they had seen of His supernatural power that He is able to calm the storm, but they fall short in failing to realize and fully believe that it makes no difference whether Christ is asleep or awake—He is still the Son of God. They should have considered that the Father would not allow His faithful Son to drown in a sinking boat. After all, He is the One who, ages before, had "shut in the sea with doors, . . . [and] said, 'This far you may come but no farther'" (Job 38:8, 11). His followers do not apply their little faith. Faith and fear cannot exist together, for fear paralyzes faith.


   **Comment:** As the Son of God and with only the power of His word, Christ speaks, and the wind ceases. After the fierce storm relents, a great calm descends. This miracle over the environment contrasts the disharmony, disorder, and confusion of nature against the power, order, and peace of the Creator (Psalm 89:9).
Christ treats this storm and the sea as if they were antagonistic and rebelling forces under a dominating, unrestrained power, but His word is sufficient to calm them, just as it commands demons to leave those who are possessed. Conflicts and rebellions have their source in Satan, the author of confusion in both the physical and spiritual worlds. Physical evils in nature and among mankind are among Satan's works that Jesus came to overcome and destroy.

When Jesus speaks to calm the storm, Mark indicates that He addresses more than a meteorological force but a being behind it. When He commands the sea, "Peace, be still!" the Greek phrase means "be muzzled or gagged," as though the storm were a maniac that had to be bound and restrained.

The waves of the world still rage against Christ's disciples, yet they will never be overwhelmed because Christ is in them (Psalm 46:1-3; 93:3-4).

3. What is the result of this miracle? Matthew 8:26-27; Mark 4:39, 41; Luke 8:25.

Comment: Jesus' awestruck disciples receive newfound understanding of the power and glory of their Lord and Master. His power definitely impresses them, but His faithfulness, peace, and the rest of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) are what truly awed them. This miracle brings them in reverence, wonder, and godly fear before Him. Christ shows that the power of the earthly elements is dwarfed by the mighty word of the Lord, and it stirs them deeply.

This reveals what the full measure of God's Spirit can accomplish through a faithful human being. Jesus explains to His disciples in Mark 11:23-24:

For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

We should understand that this promise stands firm for us too, if we ask according to the will of God (I John 5:14-15).