

The Stilling of the Storm (12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B)

Job 38:1, 8-11—God’s Power over the Sea

1. Whirlwind: “the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind” (38:1)
2. Creator of Ocean: “Who shut in the sea with its doors?” (38:8)

Psalm 107—The LORD Stills the Storm

1. Storm: “stormy wind” “lifted up the waves” (v. 25)
2. Fear: “their courage melted away” (v. 26)
3. Prayer: “they cried to the LORD in their distress” (v. 28)

Mark 4:35-41—Jesus Stills the Storm

1. Sinking: “waves beat into the boat” (4:37)
2. Sleeping: “he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion” (4:38)
3. The Miracle: Jesus’ acts like YHWH acts in Psalm 107

The LORD Stills the Storm

1. Sailors in ships
2. Stormy wind and waves
3. Courage melts away
4. Cry out to the LORD
5. The LORD stills the storm
6. Waves of the sea “quiet”
(Psalm 107)

Jesus Stills the Storm

1. Disciples in boats
2. Stormy wind and waves
3. Disciples are afraid
4. Cry out to Jesus
5. Jesus stills the storm
6. There was a “great calm”
(Matthew 8; Mark 4; Luke 8)

4. Divine Identity: “*Who* is this, that even the wind and sea obey him?” (4:41)

The Living Tradition

Athanasius: “Even while he was asleep on the pillow, the Lord was testing his disciples... For when he arose and rebuked the sea and silenced the storm, he plainly disclosed... *that the Lord who rebuked it was not a creature but rather its creator.*” (Athanasius, *Letter 29*; trans. in *NPNF2* 4:550)

Augustine: “I want to urge you not to let the faith sleep in your hearts against the storms and waves of this world. After all, it can scarcely be true that Christ the Lord had power over death, and did not have power over sleep, and that sleep possibly overtook the Almighty against his will, as he was out sailing... We are all of us temples of God, and every one of us is sailing a boat in his heart... *You have heard an insult—it’s a high wind; you’ve got angry—it’s a wave. So as the wind blows and the waves break, the boat is in peril, your heart is in peril, your heart is tossed about.* When you hear the insult, you are eager to avenge it; you do avenge it, and by giving way to someone else’s evil, you suffer

shipwreck. And what is that? *Because Christ is asleep in you.* What does it mean, that Christ is asleep in you? *That you have forgotten Christ. So wake up, remember Christ; let Christ stay awake in you, think about him.* (Augustine, *Sermon 63:1-2*; trans. E. Hill)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B)

1. Have you ever been on a boat in a storm? How did you feel? Were you afraid?

2. What are the parallels between Psalm 107 and the Stilling of the Storm? What do they reveal about the identity of Jesus?

3. What “waves” and “wind” in your life cause you to be afraid? How can you live Augustine’s advice to not let Christ fall “asleep” in your heart?

For Further Study

1. Augustine, *Sermons III (51-94) on the New Testament* (trans. Edmund Hill, O.P.; Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991), 173.
2. Thomas C. Oden and Christopher A. Hall, *Mark* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament II; Downers Grove: IVP, 1998), 63-65.