



# TRUSTING in the One who *Rebukes* the Sea



*“What sort of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him?” —Matthew 8:27b*

## Introduction: Politics & Scripture

- In light of the “politics of fear” that has characterized this election cycle, we would do well to remind ourselves of the most frequently given command throughout Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_ !

**Ps. 56:4**—*In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?*

**Isa. 41:10**—*...fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

## The Calming of the Storm: Matthew 8:23-27

### This Event & Matthew’s Gospel

- *The purpose of Matthew’s Gospel is to demonstrate that Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_ who has come in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises in order that He might bring salvation to His people.*

### The First Century Expectations of Messiah

- *Messiah would be a divinely appointed man from the line of David who would bring about corporate salvation for the people, defeating their \_\_\_\_\_ enemies, purifying the nation’s worship, and establishing the end-time Kingdom.*

### The Account:

<sup>23</sup> And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup> And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. <sup>25</sup> And they went and woke him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing!” <sup>26</sup> And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. <sup>27</sup> And the men marveled, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?”

### The Storm

Described as “a great storm” — The phrase here is *sizemos megas* which literally means **a great shaking**.

- In the OT, earthquakes were associated with the **presence** of the Lord.

**Ezek. 3:12-13**— *Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great earthquake: “Blessed be the glory of the Lord from its place!” It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, and the sound of a great earthquake.*

### The Sea

- The Jews were not a seafaring people and so throughout the Scriptures the sea is viewed in a primarily negative way. Because the sea was considered chaotic and dangerous it was often used symbolically of the various nations and peoples of the world as well as of the geopolitical sphere.

**Ps. 65:7**—*...who stills the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples...*

**Rev. 17:15**—*And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw... are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages.*

### Jesus’ Response to the Chaos

- In the midst of all of this, Jesus was **asleep**.

**Ps. 3:5-6**—*I lay down and slept; I woke again, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.*

**Ps. 4:8**—*In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.*

## The Disciples

- The disciples feared for their safety and immediately sought to wake Him.  
→ ***“Save us Lord; we are perishing!”***

## Jesus’ Response

1. He lamented their lack of faith, referring to them as *oligopistoi* (“little faith ones”)  
→ His expectation of them was that they would have trusted in the Father with the same confidence and certainty that He did Himself.
2. He rose and rebuked the wind and the sea.  
→ The word “rebuken” is fairly harsh terminology, used numerous times in the gospels for how Jesus dealt with demonic forces. The imagery is literally that Jesus refuses to allow the created order to jeopardize or threaten His mission or the mission of His people.

## The Symbolism of these Events: The Calming of the Sea and David’s words in Psalm 89

**Ps. 89:8-10**—*O Lord God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with your faithfulness all around you? You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them. You crushed Rahab like a carcass; you scattered your enemies with your mighty arm.*

- Ps. 89 is a Psalm about Davidic Kingship. It is therefore Messianic and has in mind the political circumstances within Israel as well as the surrounding nations.

**“Rahab”** — This is a mythical sea creature from the ANE. This imagery was taken by the OT authors and applied figuratively to the enemies of Yahweh and His people. In particular, God’s defeat of this beast became symbolic imagery for His defeat of Pharaoh and Egypt.

**Isa. 51:9-10**—*Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to pass over?*

1. Jesus is the promised Messiah, but He is more than a mere man, He is \_\_\_\_\_ incarnate.
2. As the Lord, Jesus rules over not only nature, but also the \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth. The seeming chaos and turmoil of their politics is no threat to Him or to His people, for He is with them.
3. As Messiah, Jesus came to defeat the true \_\_\_\_\_ of God and His people, who were not ultimately political or even physical at all.
  - Consider the events of Matt. 8:28-34 that followed in the immediate aftermath of the calming of the storm.  
⇒ *In contrast to the disciples, the demons know exactly who Jesus is (8:29)*  
⇒ *The submitted themselves to Him and His will (8:31-32)*

**Don’t miss the imagery!**— *Jesus has delivered His people from certain destruction and now destroys their enemies (characterized by the military term ‘Legion’) in the sea.*

→ He has come to bring about a Second \_\_\_\_\_!

## Some Helpful Imagery:

- When need to view political instability and turmoil as well as hostility to God’s people as a stormy \_\_\_\_\_.
- We need to view the Church’s ability to \_\_\_\_\_ in that sea as tenuous, at least in terms of appearance.
- We need to be reminded, however, who it is that is \_\_\_\_\_ in the midst of the supposed chaos around us.  
⇒ *He is resting because He is both with His people, as well as \_\_\_\_\_ over all who seemingly threaten them.*
- Jesus Christ will see to it that the Church and her mission will be \_\_\_\_\_ in spite of the political chaos of the world and the hostility of the nations.

## Revelation 5:9-14