

## When Jesus Walks Where We Cannot

*The Gospel of Mark #25*

*Mark 6:54-52*

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in a time of trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth gives way, and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. For the Lord Almighty is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress. [And the One who walks on water is our salvation and our song].*

On my cellular device, there is app I didn't know existed but has been there the whole time. It's a pedometer. Whether my feet hit the carpet or the pavement, it counts my steps. Whether my feet traverse the staircase or the hallway, this trusty ole pedometer counts my calories burned. Whether my feet go forward on the avenue or on the boardwalk, this Android Cadillac of an application tracks my walking distance. Whether my feet go on land or on sand, my pedometer counts my walking time. And whether my feet run or walk, it even counts my walking speed.

My pedometer doesn't order my steps. God does. But friend, wherever I go, my pedometer goes with me, counting each step. When I'm in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, my pedometer is there with me, counting each step. When I'm in Booger Hole, West Virginia, my pedometer is there with me, counting each step. And when I'm in Vero Beach, Florida, my pedometer is there with me, counting each step. It counts them on rolling hills. And it counts them on sandy shores. But there is one place my pedometer will never count my steps. It's not the Middle American Prairies or the Cascade Mountains. It's on top of the water. When it comes to that terrain, only Jesus' pedometer works. For He walks where we cannot.

Thus far in Mark's Gospel, we've seen the disciple's pedometers work well when they were right beside Jesus as he was performing some extraordinary miracles. They worked well when he healed 7 different people on 7 different occasions. Their pedometers worked well when he calmed the Sea of Galilee because Jesus was right there in the boat with them. Their pedometers even worked well when Jesus fed 5000 men plus women and children because they were right there beside Him when He did it. But in today's passage, we are going to see Jesus do something and be somewhere they could not: on top of the water.

Here's why that's important for you and me: Jesus calls us to walk right beside Him. He is Abba Father and a Faithful Friend. But He's also God. That means He does things we cannot. He goes to places we cannot. He walks over terrain we cannot. And when you see Him walking on top of the water coming towards your boat, there are 4 qualities of the One who walks where we cannot that we can rest in as tempests rage in our lives. And we will see them today in Mark 6:45-52. Turn there with me as we read together.

*<sup>45</sup> Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>46</sup> After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. <sup>47</sup> Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land. <sup>48</sup> He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, <sup>49</sup> but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, <sup>50</sup> because they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." <sup>51</sup> Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, <sup>52</sup> for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.*

### 4 Qualities of Jesus, Who Walks Where We Cannot, to Rest in as the Tempest Rages:

#### 1. Omniscience (47-48)

- **Eyes in the Back of the Head:** (1) Your mother might have told you she has eyes on the back of the head, but the common house fly really does. (2) It has two fixed eyes that allow them to see with 360-degree vision and three smaller eyes on top of their heads. (3) All 5 help them to spot danger, including the old fly swatter or your hand.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** From the shore, Jesus saw the disciples straining at their oars because He sees all and knows all. On our shore, Jesus sees us straining at our oars because He sees all and knows all. And He walks on the water to meet us the same way He met the disciples.
- **The First Miracle in the Passage:** (1) The first miracle in the passage isn't Jesus' walking on the water. It's the miracle of omniscience. Omniscience denotes the characteristic of God's ability to know all and see all. And it's present here. (2) The Sea of Galilee is 13 miles long and 8 miles wide. It's surrounded by mountains and rolling hills. The topography of it makes for some of the worst storms on the globe in such a short area. The mountains form an alleyway for the wind and elements and dumps them all right into the waters. When these come, the chop is high, and the visibility is awful. (3) The text makes it clear that they were in the middle of the sea, 6.5 miles out on one side and 4 miles in the other. No ordinary person could have seen them straining at the oars. But Jesus is no ordinary person, He's El Roi: the omnipotent God of the Universe who can see and knows when we are straining at the oars.

## 2. Shekinah Glory (48)

- **William Driver and Old Glory:** (1) In the 1800s a sea ship captain named William Driver received a tremendous gift designed to unfurl grandly from his ship's mast. (2) It was a homemade flag with 24 stars sown for him by his mother. (3) When Driver raised the flag up the main mast, he lifted his hat and said: "my ship, my country, my flag, my Old Glory. (4) And that is how our flag, Old Glory, got its name.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** Moses got a glimpse of the Shekinah Glory of God when it passed him by. The disciples got a glimpse of the Shekinah Glory of God because it was walking on the water. We get a glimpse of the Shekinah Glory of God because of the finished work of Calvary in our hearts.
- **The Second Miracle in the Passage:** (1) The second miracle in the passage isn't just about Jesus' walking on the water to help them through their storms of life. As a matter of fact, the passage has less to do with storms and oars and everything to do with the Glory of Jesus. (2) The Hebrew word "shekinah" means presence. The first time we see the Shekinah Glory of God in the Bible comes through the story of Moses. God reveals his glory through a burning bush. (3) The second time we see the Shekinah Glory of God is also in the story of Moses. He wants to see the Lord but can't or else he dies. As a result, the Shekinah Glory of God passes him by (just like Jesus is doing in this passage). (4) The third time we see it is in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night as the Israelites journeyed to the Promised Land. (5) But then something bad happens, Ezekiel prophesied that the Shekinah Glory of God would depart from the land because of unfaithfulness. (6) Then it shows up again in the Promised Land, on the Sea of Galilee, walking towards the disciples and passing them by.
- *God who caused the light to shine out of the darkness has caused the light to shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the shekinah glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus, our Lord (2 Cor 4:6).*

## 3. I Am (50)

- **St Catherine's Monastery:** (1) In the Negev desert at the Southern end of Canaan, there is a monastery amid the sandy terrain that stands where it does to commemorate an important event in biblical history. (2) It's called St. Catherine's Monastery. But it's there because of Moses. It's the spot where the Great I Am appeared to Moses in a burning bush. (3) The amazing thing is one day of the year, at a particular time of the day, the bushes there appear to be burning. (4) Whether He burns a bush or walks on top of the water, when the Great I Am makes His presence felt, God's people know it.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** God appeared to Moses at a burning bush as I Am Who I Am. Jesus walked on top of the water as I Am Who I Am. He hasn't changed.
- **The Third Miracle of the Passage:** (1) Has nothing to do with an action and everything to do with a statement about who it was that was walking on the water. (2) Jesus tells the disciples "It is I. Do not be afraid." We look at that and say: "praise the Lord Jesus cares and tells them as much." That is true, but not what's going on here. (3) When Moses asked the Lord His name at the burning bush, he replied with these words: "I am who I am." In the language of the New Testament, that phrase translates to "it is I." (4) John records 7 I am statements of Jesus: Bread of Life; Light of the World; the Door; the Good Shepherd; the Resurrection and the Life; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the and the True Vine. (5) Mark uses an image to do it instead: Jesus' walking on the water while the disciples were straining at the oars saying "it is I. Do not be afraid." (6) The Great I Am says the same thing to us today.

## 4. Omnipotence (51)

- **Please Daddy:** (1) There is an omnipotent – all powerful – slogan I find hard to say no to. (2) It's when my daughter wants something. She bats her eyes, tilts her head, and says "please daddy." (3) "please daddy" has a tremendous, omnipotent power over me. (4) But "peace be still" has power over all of Creation. (6) For when the Great I Am directs and speaks, all of Creation listens.
- **Main Idea of the Point:** In the Old Testament, only the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob controlled the weather. In the New Testament, and on that Sea of Galilee, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob not only controlled the weather. He controlled it by sitting right beside the disciples in the boat with them once again. He does the same with us.
- **The Fourth Miracle of the Passage:** (1) The last miracle in the passage evokes images of creation. (2) God spoke the land, sea, and sky into existence at His word, ex nihilo (out of nothing). (3) In the ancient polytheistic (many "gods") world that surrounded the Israelites, "gods were over one domain, not all of them. (4) What's interesting here is how all the domains of creation responded to Jesus. (5) In the previous storm on the Sea of Galilee Mark referenced, Jesus spoke and calmed the storm. (6) Here, all he does is climb into the boat and the winds, sea, and heavens obey. (7) They do because Jesus is omnipotent. Sometimes he used words to calm the storm. Sometimes he climbed in the boat to calm the child of God. (8) But whatever method He used, He is still Jesus: The Creator and Orchestrator of the Universe, the Controller of it all. Praise to the Lord. May we rest in Him.