

## AND HE LOOKED AT THE STORM

It happened after the multiplication of five loaves of bread and two fish to feed the crowd of 5,000 men, not including women and children (Matt 14:21), when YAHSHUA dismissed the disciples to go into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowd (vs.22). YAHSHUA, after He dismissed the multitudes, went up into the hills by Himself to pray, as He used to do. When it was evening, He was still there alone (vs.23). YAHSHUA'S day had been busy feeding the crowd, and needed to be refreshed by the Father. Not concerned with time, evening came, and He was still there alone, praying. Meanwhile, a storm caught the disciples by surprise. The boat was by that time out on the sea, many furlongs [one-eighth of a mile] distant from the land. Their boat was beaten and tossed by the waves, for the wind was against them. In the fourth watch [between 3:00-6:00 a.m.] YAHSHUA came to them walking on the sea (vs.25). The disciples were in the storm for a while before the Lord appeared to them. Not that He didn't know about it, but for some reason it happened that way. To me, was a matter of faith and trust for the disciples and through it, for them to see the glory of God. After all, the disciples witnessed miracles, and more miracles performed by Messiah YAHSHUA. He, being connected with nature, knew exactly what was going on. He was not delayed, as He is never late for anything.

In the fourth watch He decided to come to the disciples. In an amazing way, YAHSHUA showed His disciples once again Who He was. Creator of the earth, and of all that has been created, He walked over the waters as if walking on ground. The storm continued but it didn't affect Him. For there stood One Who had the power to hush it. All creations submit to His voice, their Creator. The disciples had no idea. The storm was blinding them from recognizing Who that was walking on water. Distant from land many furlongs the disciples were beaten and tossed by the waves, for the wind was against them (Matt.14:24). Without YAHSHUA with them, they feared the fury of the storm. When He appeared in the distance, in their fear, they failed to recognize Him. They feared even more when they saw Him. As a matter of fact, they were terrified and screamed with fright, thinking He to be a ghost. (Vs.26).

From a distance came the comforting words, Take courage! I AM! Stop being afraid! I AM WHO I Am and WHAT I AM, and I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE. This was the answer God gave to Moses, many years ago, when He called him to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. He asked God, what answer I would give to the Israelites when they asked, the question, What is His name? And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM AND WHAT I AM, AND I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE; and you shall say this to the Israelites, I AM has sent me to you! (Exodus 3:13-14). There, stood I AM to save them again, and this time, from the storm. The disciples should have known the tittle I AM that referred to God. There, stood the incarnate God, ready to save them as in the days of old. Peter, their spokesman, didn't hesitate to be the first to answer. Seeing the Lord walking on the water, he wanted to try for himself, voided of faith, he said, "If it is You, command me to come to You on the water. YAHSHUA said, Come! So, Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water, and he came toward YAHSHUA. But when he perceived and felt the strong wind, he was frightened and as he began to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me. Instantly YAHSHUA

REACHED OUT His hand and caught and held him, saying to him O you of little faith, why did you doubt? And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. **And those in the boat knelt and worshiped Him, saying, Truly You are the Son of God!"** (Matt. 14:26-33).

I give Peter credit for his "little faith" in spite of focusing on the storm, not on his Savior, Who was right there to help him. His excitement didn't last when doubt took over his mind. Had he kept his eyes on YAHSHUA, he would have reached YAHSHUA without a problem. There are three things in these happenings that are important to point out to you: the storm, Peter's decision to walk on the water and the prophetic meaning of that storm in Israel's future at the end times. Like Peter, we too lose sight of our Lord and doubt His Word when going through our trials and valleys. The writer to the Hebrews had good advice for us: Let us strip off and throw aside every encumbrance and that sin which so readily clings to and entangles us and let us run with patient endurance and steady and active persistence the appointed course of the race that is set before us looking away [from all that will distract] to YAHSHUA, Who is the Leader and the Souse of our faith and is also its Finisher. He, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising and ignoring the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb.12:1b). Life is filled with unexpected storms. Like the disciples, we too face storms of great proportion. We will win the challenges, if keeping our eyes on YAHSHUA, Who never leaves nor forsakes us. He is right in the middle of the storm with us. Peter's life experience is not different from ours today. He had YAHSHUA with him in person, but we have His Holy Spirit in us, working in us, guiding us and teaching us and correcting us. His work of sanctification will take us to valleys for us to be molded and sanctified. Storms are necessary in our life, so that the glory of the Lord will be reviewed to us and through us.

The storm the disciples experienced was prophetic in its meaning concerning the future of Israel. Waters are symbolic of nations. We see in this storm nations coming against Israel. There will be a time when that will happen and the nation of Israel will be saved. Zechariah 12:9-10 reads: "And it shall be in that day that I will make it My aim to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem; and I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace or unmerited favor and supplication, and they shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one who is in bitterness for his firstborn." They will then realize "with overwhelming individual sorrow over having blindly rejected their unrecognized Messiah." When the disciples recognized YASHUA for Whom He was, they knelt and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God!" (Matt. 14:33).

Focusing on our trials will make them bigger and hard to exercise our faith in the Word of God. "There is nothing too hard for Him", or hard at all. Everything is possible when our eyes are directed on Him Who can help and set us free from our troubles. The words of the following song confirm with such comfort the words of YAHSHUA: "let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).

O soul, are you weary and troubled?

No light in the darkness you see?

There's light for a look at the Savior,

And life more abundant and free.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,

Look full in His wonderful face,

And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,

In the light of His glory and grace.

(by Helen Howarth Lemmel)

Had Peter kept his eyes on YAHSHUA, the storm would have seemed small and he would have reached the Savior without fear. The psalmist directs these words to his soul saying, "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why should you moan over me and be disquieted within me? Hope in God and wait expectantly for Him, for I shall yet praise Him, Who is the help of my countenance and my God" (Ps. 42:11). The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, a prayer to the God of my life (vs.8). Be comforted, my friend, for weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning (Ps. 30:5b). Your morning will soon arrive to bring your joy back. Believe it!

**THINK ABOUT IT!**