

LESSON 126

Egermeier's Story:

Page 415 – Jesus Walks on the Water

Memory Verse: John 6:29 "...‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’" NASB

Scripture: Matthew 14:23-36; Mark 6:47-56; John 6:16-29

Teaching Resource:

New Testament Overview Section 3 Jesus and the Sea
Bible Study Guide for All Ages Lesson 253

Object Lesson:

If you want to try to illustrate the miracle of walking on the water, bring a quart of water, a rock, and a cork. Show how the rock sinks and the cork floats. A simple explanation for this is that the rock doesn't have any air inside of it, so it is heavier than the water and sinks. The cork has air inside it, so it floats. The boat that the disciples were in was floating because there was air inside the boat. If the boat had a hole in it and it filled up with water, it would sink just like the rock did. You and I don't have enough air inside of us to float on top the water like the cork does. So you and I will sink if we try to walk on water. That's why the disciples thought it might be a ghost walking toward them. People can't walk on top of water.

Doctrinal Emphasis: Omnipotence

Key Theme: *As Jesus walks on the water, He again displays His power over creation.*

The symbol often used to represent God's omnipotence is the arm and hand. Jeremiah 32:17 says, "Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched *arm*...." The same expression is found in the New Testament. I Peter 5:6 reads, "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty *hand* of God...."

One way of seeing the greatness of God's power is by conceiving of things that would ordinarily prevent accomplishment. Here are several found in Scripture.

1. God's power is not limited by human weakness. Matthew 19:25-26 makes this clear. In verse 25, recognizing the difficulty of the rich in coming to salvation, the disciples utter, "Then who can be saved?" They say this, being cognizant of human weakness. Christ's reply indicates that human weakness is no barrier to divine power. He says, "With people this is impossible (human weakness), but with God all things are possible (divine omnipotence)."
2. God's power is not limited by the laws of nature. The ordinary course of nature shows that conception is rare, if not impossible, for a woman in advanced age. Such was the case with Elizabeth, the mother of John. So unusual was her conception that the text of Luke 1:36 notes it, "And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son *in her old age*..." An explanation then follows in verse 37—"For nothing will be impossible with God." The power of God was not limited by the ordinary course of nature.
3. God's power is not limited by actions of a human government. Jeremiah 32:17, 21, and 27 make this clear. Verse 17 asserts the power of God saying, "Nothing is too difficult for You." The exhibition of this power was set against the opposition of the government of Egypt. Verse 21 relates this fact. A further message is relayed in verse 27 when God asks Jeremiah, "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?"
4. God's power is not limited by lack of resources. In Numbers 11:21-23, Moses registers the following complaint, "...The people, among whom I am, are 600,000 on foot; yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, so that they may eat for a whole month.' Should flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to be sufficient for them? Or should all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to be sufficient for them?" Note how Moses is pointing the complete lack of resources for food. God's reply is to refer Moses' thinking to His own omnipotence. God says, "...Is the Lord's power limited? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for your or not."

There are two great events in the Bible that are used to give us an idea of the greatness of God's power. In the Old Testament, the exodus of Israel from Egypt illustrates divine power. Exodus 6:6 and 9:15-16 indicate this. Frequently in Israel's later history when they faced a crisis situation, they were reminded of the great exhibition of power that brought them out of Egypt. In the New Testament, we are brought to the maximum exhibition of divine

power—the resurrection of Christ. Not only are we to marvel in its greatness, but we are informed of its availability since it is “the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe....” (See Ephesians 1:19-20)

ADDITIONAL TEACHING

In this lesson, we have the second occurrence in John’s Gospel of Jesus saying, “I am.” The sentence in English “It is I” is a translation of the Greek *εγω ειμι* (*ego eimi*). In the accounts of this miracle in Matthew and Mark, the same phrase occurs. In each case, the literal translation of the Greek would be, “I am. Stop fearing.”

Although Egermeier’s story doesn’t continue the narrative concerning the day after this miracle, John 6:22-51 does. In this narrative we find a dialogue between Jesus and the Jews who were following Him. These Jews were from among the 5,000 Jesus had fed that day with the lad’s five loaves and two fish. In John 6:27 Jesus tells them, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”

They question Jesus about this and three times in the dialogue, Jesus says, “I am the bread...”; and each time the phrase we have seen, *εγω ειμι* (*ego eimi*) is used. Those listening to Jesus just don’t get it. In this dialogue, we see an example of “ears which do not hear and eyes which do not see.”

³³“For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.” ³⁴Then they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.” ³⁵Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. ³⁶But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. ³⁷All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”

Because we have the complete teachings of the Bible, it is not fair to say these people were obtuse. To us, it seems very clear what Jesus is saying.