# Lesson 11 Matthew 8:18-25, 9:1-25, 14:22-23 Theophanies

Life in Christ: When did you feel closest to Our Lord this week?

A theophany is a manifestation of God in the Bible that is tangible to the human senses.

1. How does Jesus calm the storm? Does he pray? Does He ask God to calm it?

Matthew 8:23-25

23 He got into a boat and his disciples followed him.

24 Suddenly a violent storm came up on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by waves; but he was asleep.

25 They came and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!”

26 He said to them, “Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?” Then he got up, rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm.

27 The men were amazed and said, “What sort of man is this, whom even the winds and the sea obey?”

1. A. Another theophany occurs after the feeding of the 5000 in Mathew 14:22-33 when Jesus walks on the sea. (This account also appears in Mark 6 and John 6.) In verse 27, Matthew reports Jesus identified Himself with the words, “It is I.” In Greek these are exactly the same words God used to identify Himself to Moses from the burning bush. What extraordinary claim is Jesus making by His actions, walking on the sea, and by His self-identification?

Matthew 14:22-33

22 Then he made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.

23 After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone.

24 Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it.

25 During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea.

26 When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. “It is a ghost,” they said, and they cried out in fear.

27 At once [Jesus] spoke to them, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.”

28 Peter said to him in reply, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.”

29 He said, “Come.” Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus.

30 But when he saw how [strong] the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”

31 Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

32 After they got into the boat, the wind died down.

33 Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, “Truly, you are the Son of God.”

Exodus 3:14

14 God replied to Moses: I am who I am. Then he added: This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.

B Job identifies another attribute of God. How does this supplement and support the theophany?

Job 9:8 (NAB)

8 He alone stretches out the heavens and treads upon the crests of the sea.

C In Matthew 14:28-31, although Peter begins to walk on the water with strong faith, fear overcomes him and he falters. Have you ever had a time where you began with strong faith but, faltered?

D How might this be an example of what St. James calls being of two minds? What may make you think that this the very incident with St. Peter walking on the sea might be what St. James had in mind?

James 1:5-8

5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and he will be given it.

6 But he should ask in faith, not doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed about by the wind.

7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord,

8 since he is a man of two minds, unstable in all his ways.

E St. Peter’s prayer is the shortest prayer in the Bible. In what way(s) was it the most effective prayer? What does that tell you about your prayers?

G This event reveals to Jesus’ disciples who Jesus really is. Who do the disciples say that He is, see also Matthew 8:27 in question 1? Who do you say that He is?

1. A. the incident of the healing of the paralytic is, in fact, another theophany. What does Jesus do to make the scribes acknowledge the divine power to forgive sins before he reveals it? What was the ancient Jewish belief about the connection between sin and illness or infirmity?

Matthew 9:1-8

1 He entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town.

2 And there people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Courage, child, your sins are forgiven.”

3 At that, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.”

4 Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, “Why do you harbor evil thoughts?

5 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’?

6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic, “Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home.”

7 He rose and went home.

8 When the crowds saw this they were struck with awe and glorified God who had given such authority to human beings.

B What is it that causes the scribes silently charge Jesus with blasphemy? This is clearer in the description of this incident in Mark’s Gospel.

Mark 2:7

“Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?”

1. This raising of the dead girl, while not reaching the level of raising Lazarus who had been dead for four days, is still an astonishing display of Jesus’ divine power over life and death. Describe the depth of faith required to ask an itinerant preacher to raise back to life someone who is dead.

Matthew 9:18-19, 23-25

18 While he was saying these things to them, an official came forward, knelt down before him, and said, “My daughter has just died. But come, lay your hand on her, and she will live.”

19 Jesus rose and followed him, and so did his disciples.

23 When Jesus arrived at the official’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd who were making a commotion,

24 he said, “Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they ridiculed him.

25 When the crowd was put out, he came and took her by the hand, and the little girl arose.

1. While this raising of the dead, along with the raising of Lazarus, was a dramatic display of Jesus divine power, both have two major differences from the Resurrection of Jesus. What will happen to the raised girl and to Lazarus that will not happen to the Risen Lord or to us after the resurrection on the Last Day? Consider Romans 6:9. How was the little girl raised, vs.25, and how was the Resurrection of Jesus accomplished? See John 10:18-19

John 10:18-19

17 This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father.”

Romans 6:9

9 We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.