

Mark 4:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

Analysis

Contrast intensifies: 'he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow.' While disciples panic, Jesus sleeps peacefully. The 'hinder part' (πρύμνη) was stern, slightly elevated—common sleeping place. 'Asleep on a pillow' (καθεύδων ἐπὶ τῷ προσκεφάλαιον) shows deep sleep despite violent storm—evidence of humanity (exhaustion) and deity (peace amid chaos). Disciples wake Him: 'Master, carest thou not that we perish?' The question reveals fear and implicit rebuke—'don't you care?' Their crisis exposed insufficient faith. They knew Jesus' power (miracles) but doubted His care. The question 'carest thou not' shows they expected action.

Historical Context

The 'pillow' (προσκεφάλαιον) was likely leather cushion used by steersman or sandbag ballast—not luxurious but functional. Sleeping during storm demonstrates either complete exhaustion or supernatural peace (or both). Fishermen's panic shows genuine danger—they faced death. Ancient world understood divine sleep during crisis: Jonah slept during storm (Jonah 1:5), contrasting faithful trust with prophetic rebellion. Jesus' sleep contrasts human fear with divine peace. Early church saw this as Christological testimony: fully human (tired, sleeping) yet fully divine (peaceful, authoritative). The disciples' rebuke shows familiarity and trust, even if faith wavered.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' peace during your storms demonstrate His trustworthiness and sovereignty?
2. What does the disciples' question 'carest thou not' reveal about doubts that arise during trials?
3. How can you cultivate Jesus' peace—resting in God's sovereignty despite surrounding chaos?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἥν	αὐτῷ	ἐπὶ	τῇ	πρύμνῃ	ἐπὶ	τὸ
And	he was	him	in	G3588	the hinder part of the ship	in	G3588
G2532	G2258	G846	G1909		G4403	G1909	
προσκεφάλαιον	καθεύδων	καὶ	διεγείρουσιν	αὐτῷ	καὶ		
a pillow	asleep	And	they awake	him	And		
G4344	G2518	G2532	G1326	G846	G2532		
λέγουσιν	αὐτῷ	Διδάσκαλε	οὐ	μέλει	σοι	ὅτι	
say	him	Master	not	carest	thou	that	
G3004	G846	G1320	G3756	G3199	G4671	G3754	
ἀπολλύμεθα							
we perish							
G622							

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 5:7 (Parallel theme): Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Hebrews 4:15 (Parallel theme): For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Matthew 8:25 (Parallel theme): And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

Luke 8:24 (Parallel theme): And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

Isaiah 64:12 (Parallel theme): Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O LORD? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

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