



***Surviving  
the Storms  
of Life***

***paul golden***

# ***Surviving the Storms of Life***

ON A SUN-SPLASHED Sunday afternoon at Yankee Stadium, Sam Marsonik made his major league debut as a relief pitcher for the New York Yankees. Sam's dream became reality on July 11, 2004 when he pitched an inning and a third in scoreless relief.

Sam, an outstanding high school athlete, won the state baseball championship at the powerhouse Jesuit High School in Tampa, Florida. Following high school, Sam was a first-round draft pick in the MLB draft—a significant accomplishment in and of itself. He spent nine long seasons in the minor leagues with various teams before finally getting the dream of a lifetime: pitching for the Yankees.

“Everything was falling into place,” Sam said. “Then, all of a sudden, it was over.”

The day after Sam's appearance in the Bronx was the All-Star break, so he returned home to Florida for some time off. Sam and some friends were boating in Land O' Lakes, and in a freak accident, Sam blew out his knee.

At that moment—when he heard his knee pop—he knew his baseball career was finished.

## **The Storm before the Calm**

Life is normally a series of small, insignificant events. However, we do have significant experiences in life. That is true today as it has been for centuries. Let's look at a significant event in the lives of Jesus' disciples. It, too, occurs on a body of water and involves a boat. Matthew 8 records Jesus and His disciples on the Sea of Galilee. This large body of water—66 square miles—is located in northern Israel, north of Jerusalem.

One of my favorite locales in all of Israel is Mount Arbel, which overlooks the Sea of Galilee. It's a breathtaking vista, and you can see the high hills and narrow valleys encompassing the water. When a storm front comes through the area, it is common to have serious squalls on the Sea of Galilee. The windstorms can be deadly. In fact, as recently as March 1992, 10-foot high waves came crashing into the modern-day city of Tiberias.

Interestingly, back in 1986, there was a severe drought in Israel. On the shores of the Sea of Galilee, some archaeologists discovered a wooden structure on the shoreline—a fishing boat submerged in the mud. Through carbon 14 dating and archaeological discovery, researchers determined this was a fishing boat commonly used during the time of Jesus. The boat measured 26 feet in length, 7 feet wide, and could seat up to 15 people.

Think about the size of that common fishing vessel and how it might weather storms that would invariably crop up. Imagine if you were in that boat during a storm. Visualize what it would have been like to be one of the disciples in that boat.

“Then he [Jesus] got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came upon the lake, so that the

waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping” (Matthew 8:23–24).

Sleeping! Isn’t that a great contrast? A massive storm overtakes the boat, yet Jesus is sound asleep.

“The disciples went and woke him, saying, ‘Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!’ He replied, ‘You of little faith, why are you so afraid?’ Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, ‘What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!’” (Matthew 8:25–27).

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**A massive storm overtakes the boat, yet Jesus is sound asleep.**

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Matthew’s purpose in writing his gospel account was to demonstrate Jesus is the Messiah. He records major events in the life of Jesus to show that fact. The disciples’ encounter with the storm here in Matthew 8 is no exception.

Some of these disciples were experienced fishermen. No doubt they had been out in storms like this previously. But this violent storm was perhaps the most severe storm they had ever experienced. The water overtook the boat, scaring them to death. They literally thought they were going to die—that the boat was going to capsize, and they’d drown in the middle of the storm.

In all three accounts of the storm—Matthew 8, Mark 4, and Luke 8—Jesus rebukes His disciples for their lack of faith. All three times. Up until this point, the disciples had been following Jesus day in and day out. They have witnessed firsthand His miracles, and watched Him preach, teach, and heal. But this miracle—merely speaking words to stop a storm completely and instantly—was a jaw-dropping experience. It’s like the disciples collectively said, “We knew He was good, but we had no idea Jesus had *this* type of power.”

Unbelievable!

Simple and straightforward, this book provides some real meat in dealing with the defeats and disappointments of life. *Surviving the Storms* is very nicely done. I highly recommend Paul Golden's beneficial work.

—**Pat Williams**, *NBA Hall of Famer*

Like a lifeline thrown to a drowning man, Paul Golden offers life-giving insights into storms that come our way. You will find comfort in learning the "whys" of life storms as well as the "hows" of surviving them. In my world, I give this booklet to injured athletes and fired coaches.

—**George McGovern**, *Baseball Chapel Leader, NY Yankees*

## **Storm Warning!**

Everyone goes through the tough times of life. If you aren't in a storm now, hang on . . . one is headed your way!

Broken relationships, health problems, financial difficulties, or dreams cut short—we've all struggled with the hard questions of life. Now you can discover time-tested solutions from the world's greatest book, the Bible. Learn to thrive while *Surviving the Storms of Life*.



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