## The Miracles of Christ - Stilling the Storm

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[0:00] Well, we are continuing our investigation of the miracles of our Lord as recorded in the Gospels. And today we have an account that is familiar to just about everyone.

That is the stilling of the storm while Jesus was resting, while he was asleep. And we're going to look at the account that is given in Matthew's Gospel, although it is recorded in all of the synoptics.

And in Matthew chapter 8 and verse 18, we read that when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

And it's significant that Mark includes that also. So, in verse 35 of chapter 4, Mark says, And on that day when even was come, he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side.

And then Luke tells us in chapter 8 and verse 22, although the main text we're working from is Matthew's in chapter 8. But Luke tells us in his chapter 8, It came to pass on one of those days that he entered into a boat himself and his disciples, and he said unto them, Let us go over to the other side of the lake.

[1:30] And as they launched forth. So, all three of the synoptics make specific mention of what Jesus said were going to the other side of the lake.

Of course, this is the lake of Galilee, sometimes called Gennesaret, sometimes called the lake of Tiberias. It's all the same body of water. And it is geographically situated in a kind of depression that is surrounded by hills, etc., and not terribly far from the Mediterranean.

And one of the things that was characteristic about the lake of Galilee is that there was a virtual path that was created through elevated hills for the wind to come in off the sea, off the Mediterranean, almost like down through a trough.

And by the time it got inland to Galilee, to the Sea of Galilee, it would really stir things up. And the dangerous thing about it was, this could develop within mere minutes.

And these men were seasoned fishermen. They were accustomed to that. I cannot imagine how many similar storms these guys had written out as a result of that.

[2:56] So it was not unusual at all for very turbulent waters to turn up on the Sea of Galilee while they were out there fishing. And very often they could see it coming and have time to get to shore.

But this time we are told that they were actually caught in it. So let's look at Matthew's account in chapter 8. We are told in verse 23 that when he was entered into a boat, his disciples followed him.

And behold, there arose a great tempest of the sea. And the text that is used is it's not just a tempest.

It is a great tempest. And I think it is indicating that this tempest was greater and more profound than what they were accustomed to dealing with. It wasn't that this is something new because they were used to it.

But this one, this one was a dandy. This one was a perfect storm. So much so that these seasoned veterans who were accustomed to living on the Sea of Galilee became very distraught.

[4:02] And the thinking among them was, Hey guys, we're not going to survive this one. We're going down. And I'm sure they could turn to each other. And you probably had to scream to the person next to you to be heard over the wind.

And they were saying things like, Have you ever seen it this bad before? No. And they were talking about. And they were very fearful. And of all things, Jesus was asleep.

Now that indicates a couple of things. One, either he was totally, completely unaware of what was happening, which is hard to imagine being asleep, or he was completely relaxed because he was fully aware of the situation.

He was fully in charge even while he was napping. And therein, of course, lies the answer to this whole thing. It's one of the more astounding miracles where our Lord is going to demonstrate his power and his ability over nature itself.

And actually, all he is doing is demonstrating that he is in absolute control of all that he has created. And these disciples have no idea, no idea at all, that the one who is asleep on this boat is the very creator of the lake, of the mountains, of everything.

[5:35] Just totally devoid of any understanding like that at all. They know, they know, they've got an extraordinary individual in this boat with them.

But they have no idea as to his true identity. And that is going to surface. So let's continue on. We read in verse 23, As they sailed, he fell asleep.

And if you look at the text and if you compare all the notes and everything that are involved geographically, Jesus had had a pretty long day before that and he was physically exhausted in his humanity and he is just, just nodded off.

And the boat is out there rocking and waving and he's just, he's just catching his, catching his sleep. And we are told, behold, verse 24, there arose a great tempest.

Mark says, a great storm. And storms are one thing, great storms are something else. You've heard about the perfect storm and all of the things that come together to make it as bad as it can be and that's similar to what they were dealing with here.

[6:44] And we are told that the boat was covered with the waves, but he was asleep. And when it says the boat is covered with the waves, the boat is not only in the water, the water is in the boat.

And that's when things get really testy. When the water is in the boat, that's not the way it's supposed to be. And of course, the more the boat fills with water, the more perilous it becomes and the more iffy is going to be the outcome.

And we are told that they came to him and awoke him, saying, Save, Lord, we perish. And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?

And all that indicates is they had not, and perhaps in their humanity, they will not, come to the position of understanding who this really is until after the resurrection.

Because they are functioning and operating with the kind of human mind, the same kind that we have. Which means, we often are unable to connect the dots that are out there before us.

[8:01] We just can't put it all together so as to reach an accurate conclusion. What, Joe? I think this is applicable. Why, it looks like Jesus expected them, though, to know that he'd take care of them.

He responded to them in a way that, Why are you so afraid? In other words, don't you know who I am and what I can do? It's like he expected them to know that he would take care of the situation.

Well, that, I'm sure, is partly involved, but, maybe in an even more direct way than that, he had already, on numerous occasions, exercised incomparable authority in the healings that he had performed.

And by the way, there is no indication at all that Jesus ever involved himself with a healing that was not successful.

I admit, I do have some question regarding the man who was healed of his blindness with the second touch. I've never been able to put together the significance of that.

[9:07] I know it is significant. It's got something to do probably with Israel, but I don't know. That's the only instance out of all of the miracles that Jesus performed by way of healing, everything from leprosy to blindness, to deafness, to you name it.

There was this man whom Jesus healed, and he, the man said, as much as Jesus said, well, are you seeing now?

And the man said, I see men walking as trees, indicating that he was not seen clearly. And the text says, and we'll come to this later in our study, the text says later that Jesus touched him a second time, and the man's sight became clear.

That's something for you all to think about, and if you come up with any solutions or ideas to that, feel free when we come to it to pass them on or to give them to me in advance, and I would appreciate it. I've looked for light on that for years and haven't found anything really satisfactory, but it's a curious thing.

It's the only instance wherein that happened where Jesus touched him the second time, and I completely dismiss the idea that, well, he tried to heal him completely with the first touch, but it didn't work.

[10:24] That's nonsense. That's complete nonsense. But there is something really significant with that second touch, and I'm not sure what it is, and like I said, if you've got any help on it later when we come to it, you can give it to me.

But the thing here that Jesus is chiding them for their lack of faith, in all three of these gospel accounts, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in all three of them, Jesus said very specifically, let's get into the boat, we're going to the other side.

He did not say, get in the boat, we're going out in the lake and drowned. He said, we're going to the other side. I think that's the main thing that he was chiding them for, and they were actually rejecting the statement that he had made, almost as if, I know that's what he said, but, boys, we're going down.

This boat is filling with water, and there's nothing we can do about it, and we're not going to survive this one, and they looked for Jesus, and he was asleep, and Peter said, he's asleep, he's asleep, well, wake him up, what, what, what, and, and then he chided them with having the little faith because it's as much as he's saying, fellas, you really didn't believe me.

I said we were going to the other side, didn't I? And, well, yes, but, there are circumstances that override what you say. Well, listen, there are no circumstances that override what Jesus says, simply because of who he is, and this is one more demonstration of that.

[11:57] It is just mind-boggling. Lord, we perish. And he said unto them, why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?

Then he arose, rebuked the winds, and the sea, and there was a great calm. Now, this represents the two greatest extremes you can have.

Not only was there a great storm, calm, the text says there is a great calm from one extreme to the other, and that calm came in just like that.

Jesus said to the wind and the waves, hush, be still, and they responded, and if they could have spoken, they would have said, yes sir, and they just settled down, and the sea became placid and level and calm like a mirror, and the disciples look at the sea, they look at Jesus, they look at each other, and I wouldn't be surprised if somebody didn't pinch himself to see if this was real, if he was alive, if he was awake, because nothing like this had been seen before.

You know, this is a totally different element with the hands-on healing of individuals and diseases and things, that's one thing, and they were overwhelmed by that, and these great multitudes that came to him, and the text tells us in different places, he healed them all.

[13:44] No one came to him with a particularly difficult case that left Jesus saying, well, I really can't handle this one, that's nonsense, this is, this is the creator of the universe, there isn't anything that he can't handle, and yet, the disciples are not fully aware of this, and the text goes on in verse 27 and says, the men marveled saying, what manner of man is this?

That's a good way to put it, because Jesus of Nazareth does not belong in the category of a manner of man.

He is completely outside that, and it's true, he has borrowed humanity for a while because in his incarnation, he took unto himself human flesh with its frailties and its weaknesses, so Jesus in his humanity was able to thirst, although he made all the fountains of water, he was able to hunger, although he created all the fields that could produce everything and anything, and yet, in his humanity, he was just as human as everybody else, but there were times when he set aside his humanity and he reflected his absolute lordship, and this is one of them, and these disciples are awestruck and well, they should have been because they had never seen anything like this.

This is a completely different category. Kind of reminds me of the coin in the fish's mouth where they were asked whether they would pay the temple tax of the half shekel that was due every Jew for a year.

You paid a half shekel temple tax, and the Pharisees asked the disciples if Jesus paid that tax, and they were just looking for another occasion trying to trick him up, you know, and he told Peter, he says, go out and cast in your line and you'll catch a fish, and the fish will have a coin in its mouth, and it won't be just any coin, but it will be the exact denomination of a coin that consists of a whole shekel that will pay the temple tax for Peter and for Jesus.

[16:13] And what are you going to say about a man, I mean, how many fish are there? And how many fish have a coin in its mouth? And how many fish have the right coin of the right denomination in its mouth?

this is clearly someone who is out of our league totally, and all he is doing is giving his disciples reasons to believe him and to trust in him and have confidence in him, and they do to a point, to a point, but there are some situations where it appears that it is even beyond him, and when they woke him from sleeping, it was, we perish!

We perish! We're going down! This is desperate! They had absolutely no idea at all what Jesus was going to do when he stood in that boat and waved his hands and the wind stopped blowing and the waves stopped crashing and everything was calm.

This was just unspeakably marvelous. What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him?

He had no idea God was on board. And fellas, this incarnation, the enfleshment of deity and what it led to of the six hours on that cross and the resurrection, this is the centerpiece of the universe. [18:14] You need to understand that. this, I'm going to make a statement that some of you are going to say, Omar, you're going too far now. No, I'm not. No, I'm not. This death, burial, and resurrection, the enfleshment incarnation of the Son of God and his death, substitutionary death, and resurrection has become the centerpiece for the universe for all time and it dwarfs, hear me now, it dwarfs all the wars and all the conflicts that have ever been fought.

It dwarfs World War I and World War II and all the others as huge and significant as they were, wherein we're told, do you realize that 50 million people lost their lives in World War, 50 million people lost their lives in World War II, most of whom were civilians?

Add to that World War and all of the other conflicts that have been going on in Europe and Asia from the time of creation beginning with the death of Abel, people.

Because what we have that is going to take place on Calvary is God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

That is, as I said, the centerpiece of the universe of all times. nothing can compare with that.

[20:03] Because that one event involved the totality of humanity from the time of creation. Which is just so mind boggling that you cannot get our feeble brains around it.

But that's exactly what we're talking about. This is, who have we here on, what manner of man is it? You've got God on board, that's what you've got. And they could not realize that.

But time will come when they will. And we have the revelation of scripture now that indicates to us that this theanthropic theologians refer to it as theanthropic.

The word theo is the word from which we get the word God and theology. And anthropic is the word from which we get the word anthropology, which is the study of man.

So you've got God and man incarnated in one person, in one human body. That is the most astounding thing that anybody can contemplate.

[21:10] And he did that because God demonstrated his great love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

that's, fellas, this is, this is the ultimate, this is, there isn't anything to top this. And the most significant thing about this to us is we who have believed this and have come to grips with it and have applied the substitutionary death of Christ to our life, enjoy the forgiveness of sins and a position of righteousness that is established in heaven for us.

us. And this is the greatest good news that anybody has ever heard. Little wonder that it is called the good news, the gospel, the good news.

And how little it is understood and appreciated is amazing. The Greeks, which is in many cases another name for Gentiles, that Paul writes about in 1 Corinthians and says, the Greeks, Christ crucified, they regard as foolishness.

And the word in the Greek is moronic. And the Greeks, the intellectuals, the intellectuals of Athens, by the way, this was the hometown of the world's great thinkers.

[22:44] Athens produced Aristotle and Plato and all of those great minds, Pythagoras, and all of those great minds. And yet, they've got streets lined with the image of a false idol and God on just about every corner.

These are the most intelligent people. And how many times have we told you that one of the greatest effects of the fall that has permeated the being of every one of us is that in our fallenness we think with a skewed logic.

That's part of the fall. When Adam and Eve fell and put themselves in a different category from which God created them, they took unto themselves a capacity that God did not put in them called death and sin.

You're not to eat of this. In the day that you eat, you will surely die. They didn't even know what that meant. So maybe it didn't hold that much threat for them. But they died spiritually and being separated from God and they died physically because the disease of death and deterioration had infected their body and despite the fact that they will live for a long time, the seeds of death are now existing in them and they are beginning to die.

When you were born, you were beginning to die. You were on your way to death when you were born. It's only a question of time and the debilitation of disease catching up with you and because Christ died our death for us, we have a hope beyond the existence of this body.

[24:45] And this is all tied in with the identity. Everything, and I mean everything, hinges upon the identity of this person. Who really is Jesus of Nazareth?

And the answer to that question determines everything. Don. When I read this before, it said he was asleep in a storm like that.

I've been in the storm in the North Atlantic and you bounced around like a cork. And these are open boats. Everything in there would have been wet. Even Jesus would have been wet. He did not sleep the sleep of a normal human being at that point in time.

The way I look at it, he couldn't have. I don't know. It had to be something deeper than this. Oh, I'm sure. I'm sure. Yeah, fellas, you realize of course that what we are discussing right now to a large degree we don't know what we're talking about.

I feel that weakness. I feel that lack. Every time we get into, actually, every time I get into the word in a teaching situation, and there's never been exceptions, every time I feel like I'm in over my head, because I am.

[26:01] And woe unto whoever it is that thinks they aren't. This is just supernatural stuff. This is beyond us.

What, Joe? I think the key for us in living today, and how we do what we do, what we don't take, is the word calm.

What he did there was calm. He calmed this trial. He called this danger. He calmed this danger that they were in. And I think as we live our lives day to day, hour to hour, we have that assurance that he's going to help us be calm in all these situations that we face, sickness and health and everything that happens.

If we just let him, he'll calm us. Just have faith that it'll work out, that it's right for us. Peace, peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives it, give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. And the calm, thank you Joe, the calm represents the normal.

[27:14] The calm represents the peaceable. The turmoil, the conflict, that's all stuff from the fall. That's all abnormality.

when Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God, they created a climate and the reason they created it was because they were put in the position of dominion.

God gave them dominion. That means the ability to dominate, to control, to order, all of creation. and when they fell, when they disobeyed God, they lost their dominion.

And guess who picked it up? He is referred to as the God of this world. Jesus called him in John's Gospel 12 and 14 and 16, Jesus called him the ruler of this world.

That's this fallen world. And what they did is they removed all of their dominion from a state of normal and placid and calm to a state of eruption and conflict and violence and this is what we continue to deal with today.

[28:46] So we live in a fallen world. And it was the human intellect, the ability to assess information and reach a logical conclusion. That fell too. Our thinking process is out of whack.

This is one of the biggest reasons we have the scriptures. Because the Bible gives us God's viewpoint, God's truth, God's reality, designed to offset ours, which is wrong.

Ours is incorrect. fact. And we need to align ourselves with God's viewpoint, and what we do, we're on his team, as opposed to being on the team of the world.

So the difference is night and day. And you've got to remember that what Jesus did, wherever he went in the healings, whether it was over nature, whether it was over human illness or whatever, he was bringing what had originated as normal, that had slipped into abnormality, and Jesus was bringing it back to normal again.

That's what he did. Everywhere he went, he normalized everything. Whether it was a raging sea, or disease, or whatever it was, he always took it from where it was in his fallenness, and he made it what it is supposed to be.

[30:07] And the only way he could do that was by being who he was. And that's what he did, and that's who he was. And these disciples are just beside themselves trying to figure out, and Peter is going to say things like, Lord, depart from me, please, I am a sinful man.

And Peter was saying, I am very uncomfortable just being in your presence. And well, he should have been. When when you're in the presence of the Lord, and one day we will be, and the only proper position is on your face and on your knees before him, this is the Lord of glory.

Boy, I'm telling you, this is, the men marveled, saying, what manner of man is this? even the winds and the sea obey him.

I'm a little reluctant to take this next miracle, which has to do with the garrisoned demoniac, but we will if we've, we will if we've got time, and we probably, I don't know.

So, have you any questions or comments before, yeah, Dan? Mark, when he departed, Jesus knew this was going to take place. I'm sorry, I didn't hear you. When they departed in the boat, Jesus obviously knew this was going to take place.

[31:37] He created. Again, an example to the disciples. And we often talk, you know, sometimes, earlier in our study here, he was healed, but then he would say, don't tell anybody.

And here's a case where he demonstrated that his disciples, his supreme being. Absolutely, yes. Yes, Joe? Between the time that he said we're going to go across the lake, and then being on the lake, something happened before they got on the boat there.

There's scripture there from 18 through 22 that you just kind of jump over in this miracle because where he starts saying we're going to go on the, you know, across the other side.

That's up in 17, 18. We're going to go to the other side of the lake. Oh, no, I'm sorry, 18 is where he gave the orders to go across the lake, but then he's interrupted by these teachers or these people that had been listening to him and seeing all these people.

Okay? And then Jesus makes a lesson there for us. He teaches something to us right there basically to follow him because this one guy wanted to go bury his dad before he stayed with Jesus.

[32:55] He wanted to go bury his dad and he says let the dead bury their own dead, you know. Follow me and let them. Now, how is that applicable to us today?

Is it applicable to us today? Well, you've got to keep in mind that they were dealing with a time factor that we're not. Jesus' commission was to get out this message, this gospel of the kingdom, and he was recruiting those to help him and that was the basis for the 12 coming on and later for the 70 coming on and they would have preached this message of the kingdom and when this young man came to him and said, allow me first to bury my father, you've got to understand the culture that's involved here.

His father wasn't in the local funeral home waiting to be buried and he just wanted to go and bury his father. No, this guy's father wasn't even dead yet. and what he is asking for is a kind of reprieve and we are culturally removed from this situation when back in these days under this culture when a man says I need to bury my father, what he meant was he needed to put everything that he was going to do on hold because he had a priority of burying his father.

His father, in most cases, his father wasn't even sick, much less dead, but it meant that he was bargaining for time and he was saying I'll do what you want but I can't do it right now because I've got other obligations to take care of.

And what Jesus is saying is no you don't. You have no other obligations that are more critical than this. So let the dead bury the dead.

[34:41] And most commentators, and I don't have a better answer, they are of the opinion that they are saying let those who are spiritually dead and out of it as it were, bury their own physical dead.

Let those kind take care of their kind. You've got a higher, more important calling to serve. So let's get on with it. And this young man wasn't saying that he wouldn't follow Jesus, he's just saying I want to do it in my own timetable.

It's like somebody being available to enlist in the army when his country is in danger and the need is right now, but he doesn't want to enlist until he gets the fall crop in.

So wait until after that. And what Jesus is telling that young man is this is job one. This is the most critical thing. Let the dead bury their own dead.

And he's not, you know, of course it sounds absurd to say let the dead bury, if you're dead you're not going to do anything. But he's talking about two different kinds of dead people I think. He's talking about let those who are spiritually dead and uninvolved and unaware and unattached, let them take care of their own.

[36:01] They are all of the same caliber. And he had a higher calling to give them. Other comments or questions? Yes, Larry. What a great faith builder this had to be for the men.

Well, yeah, absolutely. And all of these things, you know, fellas, it's, it's, it needs to be really understood that so many of these things, just like Larry has said, was a great faith builder, a great confidence builder in Jesus and who he was.

But you also need to understand this, that in our humanness, we need continual prompting up of our faith because we are so prone to, yes, but what have you done for me lately?

And you know, the greatest example of that, I think, is the children of Israel who were delivered from Egypt with those ten plagues and they were provided for by God with that opening of the Red Sea, allowing them to pass through and the engulfing of the ensuing Egyptian army.

One miracle after another and the miracle of water out of the rock and the miracle of the manna from heaven and the miracle of the fowl that flew low so that they could kill the fowl and have food to eat.

[37:43] One miracle after another. How could these people, how could these people actually doubt and turn their back on a God who demonstrated his ability to care for them and protect them time after time after time?

What's wrong with this picture? And when they get to Ision-Gever and going into the promised land is just a walk in the park, all they have to do is go in and take the land.

Oh, well, we're not sure we can do it. So let's send out some spies. And they send out twelve spies. And ten of them come back and say, nope, we can't do it. We can't take these guys.

I'm telling you, we scouted out the land and these guys are huge. They are giants. And their cities are walled fortresses.

Reach clear up to the sky. We can't take these guys. And Joshua and Caleb, out of the twelve spies, were the only two that came back and said, yeah, yeah, these guys are big.

[38:51] And the walls are high. But we've got our God and they don't. Let's go in. We can take them. And they got voted down. And the Lord said, all right, that's enough.

I've had it with you guys. You are going to wander in the wilderness for 38 years until every last one of this generation dies off.

I'm not going to bring you into the land. I'm going to bring your children in. Next generation, but I'm not bringing you in. And you're going to die here. And Aaron died there.

And Moses died there. He couldn't even go into the land. The Lord says, I'm going to let you go up in the mountain, look over in the promised land, but you're not going to enter. And Moses died on Mount Nebo, and he's the only person in all of the Bible that says God buried him on Mount Nebo.

So you've got one miracle after another. And this is why Paul said in 1 Corinthians, the Jews require a sign. That means a miracle. Simeon, a miracle.

[40:02] The Jews require that. They look for that. They anticipate that. Why? Because they cut their teeth on miracles. They were a nation that was born out of miracles. They were accustomed to God doing the supernatural thing on their behalf.

And they expected it. So the Jews require a sign. And then he says, but we, as opposed to the Jew, in the Mosaic dispensation, we walk by faith, not by sight.

We don't have to see in order to believe. We believe because God says so. And that's good enough for us.

And that's what Jesus, I think, was talking about with doubting Thomas. He said, Thomas, you're a good Jew. And because you have seen me, you have believed.

Blessed are they who having not seen, yet believe. And that's us. And that's everyone that has lived since then that has come to faith in Jesus.

[41:08] But this message, this God in Christ reconciling the world to himself, the Greeks, the Gentiles, looked upon that in Paul's days as moronic, stupid.

You mean to tell me that somebody who wasn't clever enough to keep himself from being crucified is the Savior of the whole world?

That is sheer nonsense. That's moronic to believe that. And he says, and to the Jews, the crucifixion of the Messiah is unthinkable.

It's, well, what Paul calls it is a stumbling block to the Jew. That means it, well, the idea is it is an embarrassment to the Jew to say that their supposed heaven sent Messiah who comes to deliver Israel dies on a Roman cross?

How humiliating. And that's supposed to be our king? It was an embarrassment to Israel to even give that any consideration.

[42:28] And of course they dismissed it out of hand. It's unthinkable. Completely unthinkable. And yet, that was the reality of it. And so Paul's saying this gospel, locked into this gospel, is the power of God released.

I'm not ashamed. I'm not embarrassed, said Paul, to proclaim this gospel because it is the power of God.

And that power is dunamis. We're familiar with the word dynamite. That's where it comes from. Paul says, the gospel of Jesus Christ is God's dynamite.

And sometimes that's what it takes to blast open a human heart filled with unbelief and sin. But once that dynamite is detonated, a miracle takes place.

And it's called the new birth. And it's glorious beyond description. Other thoughts or comment? Dennis? Well, thinking about when his rise came out of Egypt, they kept saying they wanted to go back.

[43:50] Yeah. That's a slap in the face. Well, yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Insulting. Yeah. Insulting. Absolutely. Well, you know, and Moses is in the mount.

And Aaron, are you kidding me? His brother, Aaron, fashions this stupid golden calf?

And Moses comes down and says, well, what is this? What is this? And Aaron said, well, we just took all this gold and threw it in the fire and this is what came out.

Isn't it wonderful? And you know what? You know what? You know what Moses did? He had that golden calf ground up into powder and made the people drink it.

Wow. Look, I tell you that. I need not remind you we are talking about something, someone extraordinary.

[44:47] So,