

## One Storm, Three Narratives: A Literary Analysis of Rhetorical Devices in Mk 4:35–41; Mt 8:23–27; Lk 8:22–25

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One of the best-known sea narratives in the NT recounts how the disciples, while in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, wake Jesus and ask him to calm the storm (Mk 4:35–41; Mt 8:23–27; Lk 8:22–25). This study presents a literary analysis of the account as found in the Synoptic Gospels to highlight the literary similarities and differences among them. It thus enables an examination of the use of rhetorical devices in the individual pericopes, with particular attention to their convergences and divergences.

To the best of my knowledge, a comprehensive comparative study of the rhetorical devices employed by the Synoptic authors in their accounts of the calming of the storm has not yet been undertaken. While individual articles and commentaries discuss selected literary features, this paper aims to provide a more systematic and holistic analysis of the issue. Such an approach may shed light on the compositional process and the gradual incorporation of rhetorical devices into this narrative tradition.

However, it is necessary first to clearly define the boundaries of the pericopes. In Mk, the passage is delimited to Mk 4:35–41, since the preceding section (up to v. 34) focuses on parables, while Mk 5:1 introduces a new geographical setting.

In Mt, the delimitation of the text is influenced by the use of the *genitivus absolutus* (ἐλθόντος) in Mt 8:28, which syntactically links the verse to what follows. Therefore, the pericope is generally understood

to encompass Mt 8:23–27, with v. 27 serving as its conclusion, as the entire episode takes place within the boat.

In Lk, the pericope is delimited to Lk 8:22–25. The opening formula ἐγένετο in v. 22 marks the beginning of a new narrative unit. Furthermore, the preceding pericope features different characters, namely, Jesus' mother and his relatives. The precise ending of the passage (between vv. 25 and 26) has been a matter of scholarly debate. However, the *inclusio* formed by v. 22 (εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς) and v. 25 (εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς) supports the conclusion that Lk 8:26 belongs to the next pericope.

## 1. Synopsis

The first step in the literary analysis is a synoptic comparison of the accounts of the storm's calming. This comparison aligns corresponding passages to facilitate the identification of literary similarities and differences.

The elements marked in **this way** are common to the three synoptics; those marked in **this way** are common to the three synoptics but shifted by Mt; those marked in **this way** correspond to Mk + Mt; in **this way** correspond to Mk + Lk; and in **this way** correspond to Mt + Lk.

Mk 4:35–41	Mt 8:23–27	Lk 8:22–25
[35] Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ὄψιας γενομένης διέλωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν. [36] καὶ ἀφέντες τὸν ὄχλον παραλαμβάνουσιν αὐτὸν ὡς ἦν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ, καὶ ἄλλα πλοῖα ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ.	[23] Καὶ ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.	[22] Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐνέβη εἰς πλοῖον καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοῦς διέλωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν τῆς λίμνης, καὶ ἀνήχθησαν.
[37] καὶ γίνεται λαίλαψ μεγάλη ἀνέμου καὶ τὰ κύματα ἐπέβαλλον εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, ὥστε ἤδη γειγέσθαι τὸ πλοῖον. [38] καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν ἐν τῇ πρύμνῃ ἐπὶ τὸ προσκεφάλαιον καθεύδων. καὶ ἐγείρουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ: διδάσκαλε, σὺ μέλει σοι ὅτι ἀπολλύμεθα;	[24] καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμός μέγας ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ, ὥστε τὸ πλοῖον καλύπτεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκάθευδεν. [25] καὶ προσελθόντες ἤγειραν αὐτὸν λέγοντες κύριε, σῶσον, ἀπολλύμεθα.	[23] πλεόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἀφύπνωσεν. καὶ κατέβη λαίλαψ ἀνέμου εἰς τὴν λίμνην καὶ συνεπληροῦντο καὶ ἐκινδύνεον. [24] προσελθόντες δὲ διήγειραν αὐτὸν λέγοντες ἐπιστάτα, ἀπολλύμεθα.

Mk 4:35–41	Mt 8:23–27	Lk 8:22–25
<p>[39] καὶ δι-<b>εγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν</b> τῷ ἀνέμῳ καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θαλάσῃ· <u>σιῶπα, πεφίμωσο</u>, καὶ ἐκόπασεν ὁ <u>ἄνεμος</u> καὶ <b>ἐγένετο</b> γαλήνη μεγάλη.</p>		<p>ὁ δὲ δι-<b>εγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν</b> τῷ ἀνέμῳ καὶ τῷ κλύδωνι τοῦ ὕδατος· καὶ ἐπαύσαντο καὶ <b>ἐγένετο γαλήνη</b>.</p>
<p>[40] καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί <u>δεδυοί ἐστε</u>; <u>οὐπῶ ἐγετε πίστευ</u>;</p>	<p>[26] καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· τί <u>δεδυοί ἐστε</u>, ὀλιγόπιστοι; τότε <b>ἐγερθεὶς ἐπετίμησεν</b> τοῖς ἀνέμοις καὶ τῇ θαλάσῃ, καὶ <b>ἐγένετο</b> γαλήνη μεγάλη.</p>	<p>[25] εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς· ποῦ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν;</p>
<p>[41] καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν καὶ ἔλεγον πρὸς ἀλλήλους· τίς ἄρα <u>οὗτός ἐστιν</u> <u>δοτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα</u> ὑπακούει αὐτῷ;</p>	<p>[27] οἱ δὲ ἄνθρωποι <b>ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες</b> ποταπός ἐστιν <u>οὗτος δοτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα</u> αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν;</p>	<p>φοβηθέντες <b>δὲ ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες</b> πρὸς ἀλλήλους· τίς ἄρα <u>οὗτός ἐστιν δοτι καὶ τοῖς ἀνέμοις</u> ἐπιτάσσει καὶ τῷ ὕδατι, καὶ <b>ὑπακούουσιν</b> αὐτῷ;</p>

The synoptic comparison of the pericopes (Mk 4:35–41; Mt 8:23–27; Lk 8:22–25) reveals a shared narrative core: the crossing by boat, the sudden storm, the disciples’ plea, Jesus’ intervention, the calming of the elements, and the concluding reaction of the disciples. At the same time, each evangelist introduces distinctive modifications in wording, structure, and sequence – most notably Matthew’s rearrangement of certain elements and the differing formulations of the disciples’ address and Jesus’ response.

This alignment of parallel passages enables identification of both common traditions and redactional tendencies, thereby providing a foundation for further analysis of the similarities and differences in the use of rhetorical devices across the three accounts.

## 2. Concordances

Literary criticism seeks to identify the literary characteristics of a text, as well as the relationships and origins of individual writings. It involves source criticism aimed at establishing the dependencies between texts and determining the sources that authors used in composing and redacting their works.

A primary focus of this approach is the Synoptic Problem. Within this framework, priority is typically given to Mk, regarded as the source of both Mt and Lk. A second source is commonly identified as

the hypothetical “Q” document, from which Mt and Lk are also thought to have drawn. At the same time, attention must be paid to material derived from sources unique to each evangelist.

Furthermore, the so-called minor agreements between Mt and Lk – though striking – appear to challenge the Two-Source Theory (Mk and Q) and therefore cannot be ignored. Arguments for the minor agreements as evidence of Lukan dependence on Mt concern typical Matthean vocabulary, word order, clusters of non-Lukan words, and the coincidence of the *hapax* (Goodacre, 1996, pp. 89–130). For this reason, the concept of Deutero-Mark has been proposed (Neiryneck, 1991, pp. 361, 366), which may have served as a source for Matthew and Luke. This issue, however, goes beyond the scope of the present study.

Accordingly, it is necessary to examine the concordances in the account of the calming of the storm among the Synoptic Gospels. First, the agreements common to all three evangelists will be presented. This will be followed by an analysis of the agreements between Mk and Mt, as well as between Mk and Lk, to identify which elements Mt and Lk may have adopted from Mk. Conversely, the shared features of Mt and Lk will be examined as potential evidence supporting the theory of minor agreements.

## 2.1. Concordances among Mt, Mk, and Lk

The following examples illustrate lexical and structural agreements shared by all three Synoptic Gospels within the pericope of the calming of the storm. These common elements point to a stable narrative core and provide a basis for identifying the shared tradition underlying the accounts.

Mk 4:38 // Mt 8:25 // Lk 8:24 – ἀπολλύμεθα (“we are perishing”)

Mk 4:39 [δι]εγερθεῖς // Mt 8:26 ἐγερθεῖς // Lk 8:24 [δι]εγερθεῖς

Each of the Synoptics introduces the adverbial participle (δι)εγερθεῖς before the climax of the stilling of the storm.

Mk 4:39 // Mt 8:26 // Lk 8:24 – ἐπετίμησεν (“he rebuked”)

Mk 4:39 // Mt 8:26 // Lk 8:24 – καὶ ἐγένετο γαλήνη (“and the sea became calm”)

Mk 4:41 // Mt 8:27 // Lk 8:25 – οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι (“...this, that even the wind”)

The consistency of these expressions across Mk, Mt, and Lk suggests a high degree of literary dependence or reliance on a common source. At the same time, their uniform placement at key narrative moments underscores their rhetorical role in shaping the episode’s dramatic climax.

## 2.2. Concordances between Mk and Mt

The agreements between Mark and Matthew reveal a closer lexical and stylistic affinity between these two Gospels within the pericope of the calming of the storm. These shared features suggest either direct literary dependence or a particularly strong reliance on a common tradition distinct from Luke’s.

Mk 4:37 // Mt 8:24 – μέγας (“great”)

The magnitude of the storm is emphasized in both Mk and Mt (Mk 4:37 – λαῖλαψ μεγάλη; Mt 8:24 – σεισμὸς μέγας), whereas this emphasis is absent in Luke.

Mk 4:39.41 // Mt 8:24.26.27 – ἡ θάλασσα (“sea”; the same term for the body of water)

Both employ a Semitism, as ἡ can denote both “lake” and “sea”.

Mk 4:39 // Mt 8:26 – γαλήνη μεγάλη (“dead calm”), whereas Lk 8:24 has only γαλήνη

Mk 4:40 // Mt 8:26 – τί δειλοί ἐστε; (“Why are you afraid?”)

It is worth noting the importance of Jesus’ *oratio recta* [R] (direct speech) in contrast to *oratio obliqua* [O] (indirect speech) in the other

Synoptic Gospels. In the case of the initial invitation to set sail, Mk and Lk appear to emphasize the Lord's words. Both use identical wording. In the account of the calming of the lake, only Mark quotes Jesus' words. However, all the Synoptics preserve Jesus' question concerning the disciples' faith. In Jesus' final statement in the pericope, in which he rebukes the disciples for cowardice, the same words *τί δειλοί ἐστε;* appear in Mk 4:40 and Mt 8:26.

The table below shows that Mk frequently employs direct speech, whereas Mt, owing to the conciseness of his account (Doriani, 2021, p. 140), tends to use brief indirect speech.

	Mk	Mt	Lk
the initial invitation	<b>R</b>	O	<b>R</b>
the stilling of the storm	R	O	O
question about disciples' faith	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i>	R

The convergence of Mk and Mt in vocabulary and imagery highlights their shared redactional tendencies, particularly their emphasis on the narrative's dramatic intensity. At the same time, Matthew's tendency toward brevity and his selective use of indirect speech reflect a nuanced adaptation of Markan material rather than a straightforward reproduction.

### 2.3. Concordances between Mk and Lk

The agreements between Mk and Lk highlight a series of shared expressions pointing to a close literary relationship within this pericope. These parallels are particularly evident at key narrative moments, including Jesus' command, the description of the storm, and the disciples' reaction.

Mk 4:35 // Lk 8:22 – *διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν* (“Let us go across to the other side”)

Mk 4:37 // Lk 8:23 – *λαίλαψ ἀνέμου* (“windstorm”)

Mk 4:39 // Lk 8:24 – ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ (“he rebuked the wind”)

Mk 4:41 // Lk 8:25 – πρὸς ἀλλήλους (“to one another”) [πρὸς ἀλλήλους· τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ τοῖς ἀνέμοις]

Mk and Lk express the idea of reciprocity among Jesus’ companions as they utter words of amazement. This is not the case in Matthew, as the individuals in his account are not necessarily the boat’s passengers.

The convergence between Mk and Lk in both vocabulary and narrative perspective suggests a shared emphasis on the event’s immediacy and communal dimension. In particular, the reciprocal expression πρὸς ἀλλήλους underscores the collective response of the disciples, a feature absent in Matthew, where the narrative perspective is less explicitly linked to the boat’s occupants.

#### 2.4. Concordances between Mt and Lk (Minor Agreements)

The agreements between Mt and Lk, commonly referred to as “minor agreements”, are particularly significant in discussions of Synoptic relationships. These shared features, which occur independently of Mk, may point either to direct literary dependence or to the use of a common secondary source.

Mt 8:23 (ἐμβάντι) // Lk 8:22 (ἐνέβη) – “[when] he got into”

Mt 8:23 // Lk 8:22 – εἰς [τὸ] πλοῖον (“into the boat”)

Mt reads εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, whereas Lk reads εἰς πλοῖον.

Mt 8:23 // Lk 8:22 – οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ (“his disciples”)

Although the phrase carries the same meaning at the textual level, it has a completely different significance at the narrative level. In Lk, the Twelve have already been chosen in Lk 6:12–16, so it may be presumed that they are the disciples in Lk 8:22. The women mentioned in

Lk 8:1–3 may also belong to the group of disciples in Lk 8:22. According to the storyline in Mt, these disciplines are not yet the Twelve because Matthew will be called in Mt 9:9. The Twelve will be called in Mt 10:2.

Mt 8:25 // Lk 8:24 – προσελθόντες ... [δι]ήγειραν αὐτόν λέγοντες (“they went and woke him up, saying”)

Mt 8:27 // Lk 8:25 – ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες (“they were amazed, saying”)

Matthew and Luke use the same verb ἐθαύμασαν, which draws greater attention to the magnitude of the deed than to the fear that overtook the disciples (Fuchs, 1993, p. 81).

The convergence between Mt and Lk in vocabulary and narrative detail, such as shared verbs and participial constructions, suggests a degree of coordination that is difficult to account for solely within the framework of Markan priority. In particular, the use of ἐθαύμασαν shifts the emphasis from fear to amazement, thereby highlighting a shared interpretive tendency and strengthening the case for considering these parallels as minor agreements.

The analysis of these concordances demonstrates that, despite a shared narrative framework, each Synoptic evangelist shapes the account of the calming of the storm in a distinctive manner through specific lexical choices, structural configurations, and rhetorical strategies. While the agreements among all three Gospels point to a common tradition, the pairwise concordances (Mk–Mt, Mk–Lk, and Mt–Lk) reveal distinct layers of literary dependence and redactional activity. In particular, the presence of minor agreements between Matthew and Luke raises important questions for the Two-Source Theory. It suggests that the compositional process was more complex than a simple linear dependence on Mark and Q.

### 3. Differences

It is now necessary to turn to the differences among the Synoptic accounts, which illuminate the individual redactional tendencies of each

evangelist. The differences will be discussed in the following order: first, Mark's version in comparison with the other Synoptics; then the distinctive features of Matthew; and finally those of Luke.

### 3.1. Differences in Mk

The Markan narrative serves as the primary point of reference against which the redactional modifications of Mt and Lk can be identified at the lexical, syntactic, and narrative levels.

The expression *καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς* (Mk 4:35) is characteristic of Markan style. This observation is supported by the statistical analysis of van Iersel and Linmans (1978, p. 18).

Mk 4:35 (ὄψιας) has no parallel in Mt and Lk. The presence of the term “evening” (ὄψιας) may be explained by its juxtaposition with the expression *διέλθωμεν* (“Let us go across”) in Mk 4:35. While no such connection exists in Greek, a wordplay may be present in the presumed Aramaic version. In this reconstruction, “evening” (ערב) corresponds to “Let us go across” (נען or נערב) (Aus, 2000, p. 72).

In Mk 4:36 and Mt 8:18, the disciples leave the crowd; in Lk, there is no mention of people around the boat.

In Mt 8:23 (ἐμβάντι) and Lk 8:22 (ἐνέβη), Jesus enters the boat, whereas in Mk 4:36 he is already in the boat (ἦν ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ), since he has been teaching in parables there from Mk 4:1 onward. Both forms in Mt 8:23 (ἐμβάντι) and Lk 8:22 (ἐνέβη) represent the ingressive aorist (Fuchs, 1993, pp. 68–69). Fuchs (1993, p. 72) argues that they may have been influenced by Jonah 1:3 LXX (ἐνέβη), although this remains uncertain, since a similar aorist form appears in Mk 4:1 (ἐμβάντα) (Schenk, 1993, pp. 95–96).

Lk 8:22 (αὐτὸς ἐνέβη... καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ) presents a syntactic difficulty which is avoided in Mt 8:23 (ἐμβάντι αὐτῷ εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ). Luke may seek to create a contrast between Jesus, who “goes up” (ἐνέβη), and the storm, which “comes down” (κατέβη; Lk 8:23).

The mention of other boats in Mk 4:36 (καὶ ἄλλα πλοῖα ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ) has no parallel in Mt or Lk. In Mt 8:23, Matthew, referring to Jesus'

disciples following him (ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ), appears to rephrase Mark's enigmatic statement in 4:36 about other boats following Jesus (Davies & Allison, 1991, p. 71).

However, the use of the verb ἠκολούθησαν in Mt 8:23 alludes to an earlier theme preceding this pericope, namely the account of two men, the first of whom expresses a desire to follow Jesus (ἀκολουθήσω – Mt 8:19), while Jesus explicitly calls the second to follow him (ἀκολουθεῖ μοι – Mt 8:22) (Feiler, 1983, pp. 400, 402–403).

The other boats accompanying Jesus in Mk 4:36 (καὶ ἄλλα πλοῖα ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ) play no further role in the narrative. Some scholars have attempted to connect them with the people (οἱ ἄνθρωποι) who appear suddenly in Mt 8:27 and are amazed by Jesus' miracle (Fuchs, 1993, p. 70). It is also possible that this detail is meant to show that the crowd remains attached to Jesus and wants to accompany Him at all costs (Focant, 2015, p. 212). On the other hand, the introduction of a new subject that disrupts narrative coherence, as with the other boats in Mark, may point to the use of an additional source<sup>1</sup>.

While Mk and Lk refer to the storm as λαῖλαψ (“storm”), Mt uses the term σεισμός (“earthquake”). However, Greek literature attests that earthquakes were at times associated with winds and heavy seas (Hagner, 1993, p. 221).

Mk 4:37 – καὶ γίνεται λαῖλαψ μεγάλη ἀνέμου

Mt 8:24 – καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμός μέγας ἐγένετο

Lk 8:23 – καὶ κατέβη λαῖλαψ ἀνέμου

It should be noted that each author introduces the sudden onset of the storm differently: Mark (γίνεται) employs the historical present

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1 Cf. Czernski, 1997, p. 71. The mention of other boats accompanying Jesus (Mk 4:36) may echo *Odyssey* 10:1–69, in which Odysseus departs from the island of Aeolus with twelve ships (MacDonald, 2000, pp. 58–61). MacDonald argues that the Gospel of Mark may be understood as a Jewish reworking of the *Odyssey*, in which Jesus assumes the role of the protagonist in place of Odysseus.

(*praesens historicum*), whereas Matthew and Luke use the aorist (Mt: ἰδοὺ... ἐγένετο; Lk: κατέβη).

An intriguing triad appears in **Mk 4:37, 39, and 41**, centered on the adjective μέγας. Schenk (1993, p. 109) identifies only two elements of this triad: the great storm gives way to a great calm. However, the triad comprises three elements: the great storm gives way to a great calm and gives rise to great fear.

Mk 4:37 – λατλαψ μεγάλη

Mk 4:39 – γαλήνη μεγάλη

Mk 4:41 – φόβον μέγαν

Matthew presents only a diptych: a great earthquake and a great calm.

Mt 8:24 – σεισμός μέγας

Mt 8:26 – γαλήνη μεγάλη

However, it remains striking that Luke does not use the adjective μέγας even once.

The mention of the cushion in **Mk 4:38** may indicate an eyewitness account (Tuckett, 2001, pp. 896–897). The description of Jesus' place of sleep in Mk (ἐν τῇ πρύμνῃ ἐπὶ τὸ προσκεφάλαιον) has no parallel in Mt and Lk. This feature can be readily explained at the literary level. Matthew cannot include a cushion, since, immediately before the departure, Jesus states that the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head (Gundry, 1994, p. 155): ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίνει (Mt 8:20).

Luke also takes up this feature, although in his Gospel these words appear only later (Lk 9:58). This observation may reflect a pattern of literary dependence: Mk → Mt → Lk.

**Mk 4:38** describes Jesus' sleep using a verbal periphrasis (ἦν... καθεύδων), whereas Mt 8:24 (ἐκάθευδεν) and Lk 8:23 (ἀφύπνωσεν) use finite verbs.

In **Mk 4:38.39**, differences emerge in comparison with Mt 8:25–26 and Lk 8:24 in the construction of phrases involving the verb ἐγείρω:

Mk 4:38 ἐγείρουσιν – Mk 4:39 διεγερθεῖς

Mt 8:25 ἤγειραν – Mt 8:26 ἐγερθεῖς

Lk 8:24 διήγειραν – Lk 8:24 διεγερθεῖς

In Mk 4:38, the sequence ἐγείρουσιν... καὶ λέγουσιν corresponds in Mt and Lk to the construction [δι]ήγειραν... λέγοντες (Mt 8:25; Lk 8:24). The use of the adverbial participle can readily explain this difference and does not carry particular interpretative significance.

In **Mk 4:38** (ἐγείρουσιν αὐτόν), further differences in phrase construction appear in comparison with Mt 8:25 (προσελθόντες ἤγειραν αὐτόν) and Lk 8:24 (προσελθόντες... διήγειραν αὐτόν). Mk 4:38 uses the present tense (ἐγείρουσιν), whereas Mt and Lk employ the aorist (Mt 8:25: ἤγειραν; Lk 8:24: διήγειραν). This continues the stylistic pattern already observed with the verb ἐμβαίνω (cf. above Mk 4:36).

In Mt and Lk, the awakening of Jesus is preceded by the disciples' approach (προσελθόντες), since ἐγείρουσιν in Mk may be understood impersonally. The plural may function as an impersonal passive form ("he was awakened"). Accordingly, προσελθόντες serves to indicate that it was his companions who awakened him (Fuchs, 1993, p. 75). The participle προσελθόντες may also be understood as a Semitism.

Such differences in phrase construction may find parallels elsewhere in the biblical tradition, e.g., in the OT. The addition of the participle from the verb προσέρχομαι may be influenced by Jonah 1:6 LXX: καὶ προσῆλθεν πρὸς αὐτόν ὁ πρῶρεὺς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ (Fuchs, 1993, p. 76).

There is also the view that the mention of approaching (προσελθόντες) is influenced by liturgical and cultic language (Fuchs 1993, p. 77).

A further difference concerns the title used by the disciples to address Jesus: **Mk 4:38**: διδάσκαλε; Mt 8:25: κύριε; Lk 8:24: ἐπιστάτα ἐπιστάτα (Luke employs repetition; cf. section 4.9). These forms may reflect the Aramaic term ܩܒܪ, which may denote "teacher" (διδάσκαλος), "master"

(ἐπιστάτης), or “Lord” (κύριος). The term ἐπιστάτης occurs in the NT only in the Gospel of Luke (5:5; 8:24<sup>(2x)</sup>.45; 9:33.49; 17:13). Ultimately, none of these titles, including ἐπιστάτης, can be adequately interpreted apart from the narrative development of the entire work centered on Jesus as its main character (cf. section 4.3).

The reproachful words “Do you not care that...” (Mk 4:38) do not appear in Mt and Lk (Franklin 2001, p. 938). Vinson (2008, p. 258) even sees them as sarcastic. Luke omits them, while Matthew replaces them with the exclamation “Save us!”<sup>2</sup>

Mk 4:38 – οὐ μέλει σοι ὅτι (“Do you not care that...”) ἀπολλύμεθα

Mt 8:25 – σῶσον (“Save us!”), ἀπολλύμεθα

Lk 8:24 – ἀπολλύμεθα

In Mk 4:39, Mt 8:26, and Lk 8:24, the same verb ἐπετίμησεν (“he rebuked”) occurs, but the direct object in Mt is plural (τοῖς ἀνέμοις), whereas in Mk and Lk it is singular (τῷ ἀνέμῳ). The conjunction καὶ functions differently in these passages: in Mark, it links two clauses, while in Matthew and Luke it connects two objects.

Mk 4:39 – ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θαλάσῃ

Mt 8:26 – ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς ἀνέμοις καὶ τῇ θαλάσῃ

Lk 8:24 – ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ καὶ τῷ κλύδωνι τοῦ ὕδατος

In referring to the lake as ἡ θάλασσα, Mk 4:39.41 and Mt 8:24.26.27 employ a Semitism, since ἡ denotes both “lake” and “sea”. Luke, by contrast, uses a different term for the lake: ἡ λίμνη. He thus employs a more precise designation for this type of body of water (cfr Lk 8:22.23).

2 It is noteworthy that the same words found in Mt 8:25 (κύριε, σῶσον) are also used by Peter as he is sinking in the sea in Mt 14:30: κύριε, σῶσόν με.

Luke also employs the term “water” (ὕδωρ) in this pericope and is the only evangelist to do so.

Only **Mk 4:39** preserves Jesus’ words addressed to the storm: σιώπα, περιίμωσο. Matthew and Luke omit these exorcistic words from Mark’s narrative, which suggest that the stilling of the storm may be understood as the subduing of a demonic force (Achtmeier, 1975, p. 558).

The same verb φιμώω is employed by Jesus both in an exorcistic context (Mk 1:25) and in the stilling of the storm (Mk 4:39) (cf. φιμώθητι, aorist passive imperative of φιμώω in Mk 1:25, and περιίμωσο, perfect passive imperative of the same verb in Mk 4:39). However, περιίμωσο in Mk 4:39 is a perfect passive imperative, a rarer form, and conveys a more emphatic force than the aorist used in Mk 1:25. Thus, in Mk 4:39 it may be understood as “be silent and remain so” (Cranfield, 1959, p. 174), since the perfect imperative expresses the persistence of a completed action – namely, the silencing itself.

Assuming an Aramaic prototype, Σιώπα in Mk 4:39 may derive from the root קטש, and the noun גאלהנה from קריתש or תיקריתש, as attested in Midrash Jonah. This may suggest a form of wordplay (Aus, 2000, p. 73) and may indicate that the original narrative was composed in a Semitic language.

Each of the Synoptics treats the theme of the disciples’ faith in a distinct manner. **Mk 4:40** and **Mt 8:26** contain the same question τί δειλοί ἐστε;, but in Mt it is placed before Jesus stills the storm. It should be noted that Luke omits the question τί δειλοί ἐστε, as might be expected. Mark includes a second question (οὐπω ἔχετε πίστιν;), Matthew employs his characteristic term ὀλιγόπιστοι (“you of little faith”; in the NT only in Mt 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8 and Lk 12:28 // Mt 6:30), while Luke includes only ποῦ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν;.

Mk 4:40 – τί δειλοί ἐστε; οὐπω ἔχετε πίστιν;

Mt 8:26 – τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι;

Lk 8:25 – ποῦ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν;

It should be noted that Mark highlights only fear (Mk 4:41 – καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν), while Matthew emphasizes the amazement of the people in Mt 8:27 (ἐθαύμασαν). Luke, by contrast, combines fear and amazement in Lk 8:25. This is the only instance in which Luke brings these two reactions together in response to Jesus’ miracle.

Mk 4:41: καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν καὶ ἔλεγον πρὸς ἀλλήλους

Mt 8:27: ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες

Lk 8:25: φοβηθέντες δὲ ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους

A Semitism appears in **Mk 4:41**: ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον (*figura etymologica*), also known as the cognate or internal accusative (*accusativo semplice del contenuto*; cf. section 4.5). This construction is absent from Mt and Lk. Mark here employs a Septuagintal construction attested in Jonah 1:10 and 1 Macc 10:8 (Fitzmyer, 1981, p. 730).

The same opening of the final question posed by the passengers occurs in **Mk 4:41** and Lk 8:25 (τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ), which has sometimes been interpreted as a *Chorfrage* (Fuchs, 1993, p. 83). In the phrase ὅτι καὶ, the first καὶ does not mean “and” but rather “even,” functioning as an additive particle.

Luke introduces an additional element referring to commanding (ἐπιτάσσει), which is linked, through paronomasia, to the title ἐπιστάτα, which the same speakers had used earlier in addressing Jesus (Lk 8:24; cf. section 4.10). Due to the use of the verb ἐπιτάσσει, the winds and the water appear in the dative case in Lk, rather than in the nominative as in Mt and Mk.

Another difference concerns the number and terminology used: Mark has “wind” and “sea” in the singular; Matthew uses “winds” in the plural and “sea” in the singular; Luke presents “winds” in the plural and “water” in the singular. The plural “winds” conveys the greater intensity of the storm (Fuchs, 1993, p. 83).

Mk 4:41 – τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ;

Mt 8:27 – ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν;

Lk 8:25 – τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ τοῖς ἀνέμοις ἐπιτάσσει καὶ τῷ ὕδατι, καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ;

**Mk 4:41** has ὁ ἄνεμος, whereas Mt and Lk use the plural (Mt 8:27: οἱ ἄνεμοι; Lk 8:25: τοῖς ἀνέμοις). This does not necessarily constitute a minor agreement, nor does it necessarily result from the use of a different source (e.g., Q or Deutero-Mark). As Neiryneck observes, it may simply reflect Luke’s more refined use of Greek, which tends to smooth out linguistic irregularities. However, it is noteworthy that ἄνεμοι in the plural occurs only here in Luke’s Gospel (Neiryneck, 1997, pp. 87–88).

Mt 8:27:	καὶ	<b>οἱ ἄνεμοι</b>	καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ	ὑπακού <b>ουσιν</b>
Mk 4:41:	καὶ	ὁ ἄνεμος	καὶ ἡ θάλασσα	ὑπακούει αὐτῷ
Lk 8:25:	καὶ	<b>τοῖς ἀνέμοις</b> ἐπιτάσσει	καὶ τῷ ὕδατι, καὶ	ὑπακού <b>ουσιν</b> αὐτῷ

In this context, it is particularly noteworthy that the singular τῷ ἀνέμῳ in Lk 8:24 (= Mk 4:39) is changed to the plural in Lk 8:25, whereas in Mt 8:26 the plural οἱ ἄνεμοι is used consistently (cf. Mt 8:26.27). Luke thus appears to draw on patterns found in both Mark and Matthew.

Neiryneck identifies a similar pattern in Luke’s rewriting of Mark (e.g., Mk 1:23–27; 4:35–41), where a noun appears first in the singular and subsequently in the plural (Neiryneck, 1997, p. 88). While this observation holds for Mk 1:23–27, it does not fully correspond to this pattern in Mk 4:35–41.

<b>Mk 1</b>	<b>Mk 4</b>	<b>Lk 8</b>
25: ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ	39: ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ	24: ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ
27: ... καὶ τοῖς πνεύμασιν...	καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα	25: ... καὶ τοῖς ἀνέμοις...
ἐπιτάσσει		ἐπιτάσσει
καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ	ὑπακούει αὐτῷ	καὶ ὑπακούουσιν αὐτῷ

The analysis demonstrates that both Matthew and Luke recast the Markan account by simplifying, omitting, and reshaping particular

elements, including vivid details, Semitisms, and emphatic expressions. These differences reflect not only their dependence on Mark but also their distinct rhetorical strategies, through which the received tradition is adapted to serve specific literary and theological purposes.

### 3.2. Differences in Mt

Most of the differences in Mt have already been discussed above. However, one feature deserves particular attention. It is not entirely clear who the witnesses to the event (οἱ ἄνθρωποι) in Mt 8:27 are. Matthew alone uses οἱ ἄνθρωποι (“the men”) as the subject of the verb. In Mk and Lk, it may be assumed that this refers to the passengers in the boat, but Matthew does not appear to follow this line of interpretation. The reference may be to the crowd mentioned earlier in Mt 8:18, observing the scene from the shore (Schenk, 1993, p. 109). A possible reference to the other boats mentioned in Mk 4:36 may also be considered, though this explanation remains doubtful.

### 3.3. Differences in Lk

The Lukan account of the calming of the storm exhibits a distinctive linguistic and stylistic profile, particularly in its use of technical nautical vocabulary and refined syntactic constructions. These features distinguish Luke from Mark and Matthew and suggest a deliberate effort to shape the narrative with greater precision and literary polish.

Immediately following the phrase διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πέραν in Lk 8:22, Luke uses one of his preferred technical nautical terms, ἀνάγω (cf. At 13:13; 16:11; 18:21; 20:3.13; 21:1.2; 27:2.4.12.21; 28:10.11), which he also employs in other semantic contexts (cf. Lk 2:22; 4:5; At 7:41; Fitzmyer, 1981, p. 729). Literally, ἀνήχθησαν means “they were carried up,” “they set off,” or “they set sail”.

The verb πλέω means “to sail”, referring to movement by a sailing vessel, as opposed to propulsion by rowing (ἐλαύνω). In Lk 8:23, Luke achieves a smooth narrative flow by employing an initial *genitivus absolutus* construction (“while they were sailing”, πλεόντων). The genitive

participle may carry a temporal sense, as reflected in the NRSV, though a causal nuance may also be considered.

Lk 8:23 mentions that Jesus is asleep (ἀφύπνωσεν). This term is a *hapax legomenon* in the NT. The verb ἀφύπνωσεν does not occur in the LXX either. Although in earlier Greek the term more commonly conveyed the meaning of being awake, it is attested with the meaning of falling asleep, as, for example, in Pindar (518–438 BC; P. 1, 10b, I. 4; cf. BDAG, s.v. “ἀφύπνωσεν”).

Lk 8:23 also contains the verb συνεπληροῦντο (“they were being filled up”), which properly refers not to the disciples themselves but to the boat being filled with water. This shift in reference from the vessel to its occupants appears only in the Third Gospel and produces a subtle rhetorical effect, linking the physical danger to the growing inner distress of the disciples (cf. sections 4.6–7).

The use of specialized terminology – such as ἀνάγω, the *genitivus absolutus* of πλεόντων, the rare verb ἀφύπνωσεν, and συνεπληροῦντο – illustrates Luke’s tendency toward stylistic refinement and lexical specificity. In contrast to the more vivid and Semitic character of Mark’s narrative, Luke’s account offers a smoother and more Hellenized version, thus revealing his redactional aim of adapting the tradition for a more cultivated Greek audience.

In sum, these differences not only reflect the evangelists’ redactional freedom but also point to their distinct rhetorical intentions. Accordingly, it is necessary to examine more closely the specific rhetorical devices through which these literary and theological aims are articulated.

#### 4. Rhetorical Devices in the Synoptic Accounts

Rhetorical devices, such as imagery, symbolism, paradox, metaphor, chiasmus, *inclusio*, and rhetorical questions, enrich the literary texture of a text and enhance its communicative and persuasive force (Resseguie, 2005, p. 20). In the Synoptic accounts of the calming of the storm, these devices function in close connection with the literary relationships

and redactional tendencies identified in the preceding analysis. The shared elements (concordances) indicate a common narrative and rhetorical core, whereas the differences show how each evangelist adapts and intensifies specific devices in accordance with their own compositional strategy.

#### 4.1. Paradox [Mk+Mt+Lk]

Paradox is a figure of thought (trope) that appears contradictory or even absurd, yet reveals a deeper truth upon closer reflection. The tension inherent in paradox is often resolved at the end of a narrative (Resseguie, 2005, p. 61).

In the pericope concerning the stilling of the storm, the central paradox lies in the portrayal of Jesus asleep while a violent storm rages. This tension, already present in the shared tradition, is preserved by all three evangelists, thus indicating its significance within the inherited narrative. Only at the conclusion, when Jesus exercises authority over the elements, is this paradox resolved, revealing that apparent passivity conceals divine authority.

#### 4.2. Personification [Mk+Mt+Lk]

Personification involves attributing human characteristics to non-human entities. By describing Jesus rebuking the wind and the sea (Mk 4:39), the winds and the sea (Mt 8:26), or the wind and the wave (Lk 8:24), the narrator attributes personal qualities to these elements. The consistent use of the verb ἐπετίμησεν across all three Synoptics reflects a shared tradition in which the wind and sea are treated as personal agents. Strictly speaking, only a person (or, by extension, an animate being) can be rebuked.

As noted in the concordances (cf. section 2.3) and in the differences (cf. section 3.1), minor variations (e.g., singular vs. plural objects, the addition of “wave” in Luke) illustrate how each evangelist reshapes this device while preserving its core rhetorical function, and may evoke the subjugation of chaotic or demonic forces.

#### 4.3. Rhetorical Question(s) [Mk+Mt+Lk]

A rhetorical question is a statement formulated in the form of a question that does not require an answer from the interlocutor. However, it often proves more persuasive than a direct statement. In fact, two rhetorical questions can be identified in the text: Jesus' initial question to his disciples and, subsequently, the disciples' question addressed to one another.

Jesus employs rhetorical questions to expose his disciples' misunderstanding or lack of faith (Resseguie, 2005, p. 60). Jesus' question – formulated differently in each Gospel – illustrates how it is adapted to emphasize distinct theological concerns (fear in Mk, “little faith” in Mt, and the location of faith in Lk).

At the conclusion of the account, a question of central importance emerges: “Who then is this?” As noted in earlier sections, all three evangelists preserve this element, though with minor lexical and syntactic variations. No explicit answer is provided, and it may therefore be understood as a rhetorical question (Basta, 2020, p. 43). Jesus is not merely a teacher, a healer, a prophet, or an exorcist, but someone greater. The rhetorical question concludes the scene and serves as an effective rhetorical device, compelling the reader to respond personally and guiding the reader toward a Christological interpretation.

#### 4.4. Wordplay [Mk 4:39 // Mt 8:26]

The expression γαλήνη μεγάλη (“great calm”), attested in both Mk and Mt, reflects a shared stylistic feature highlighted in the Mk – Mt concordances (cf. section 2.2). The specification of the “greatness” of the calm on the lake is striking, since calm is typically conceived in binary terms – as either present or absent. The phonetic similarity between γαλήνη and μεγάλη creates a subtle rhetorical effect, reinforcing the dramatic contrast between storm and calm. Both words share similar syllabic and phonetic patterns; the primary differences lie in the consonantal (μ–ν) and vocalic (η–ε) elements. This results in a distinctive expression exhibiting a chiasmic pattern (A–B–B'–A): γαλή-νη

μεγάλη. Luke’s omission of μεγάλη, as noted earlier (cf. section 3.1), illustrates his tendency to attenuate such emphatic or Semitic-style expressions.

One may also recall the previously noted possible wordplay in a hypothetical Aramaic prototype of the Gospel of Mark. Such a phenomenon may be observed in Mk 4:35, between the terms “evening” (ὀψίας ~ ערב) and “Let us go across” (διέλθωμεν ~ נענע). A second, analogous instance may be observed in Mk 4:39, where the words Σιώπα (root קתש) and γαλήνη (קיקתש) are placed in proximity (cf. section 3.1).

#### 4.5. Polypoton [Mk 4:41]

Polypoton is the repetition of the same word in different inflected forms, for example, a verb accompanied by a cognate noun (Bullinger, 1898, p. 278). It is also referred to as the cognate accusative, internal accusative, or *figura etymologica*.

Polypoton, as seen in Mk 4:41 (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον), illustrates Mark’s vivid and Semitic-influenced style, as discussed in section 3.1. Its absence in Mt and Lk reflects their tendency to smooth and simplify Markan expressions, thereby diminishing the rhetorical intensity of the Markan formulation.

#### 4.6. Metaphor [Lk 8:23]

Luke’s use of the metaphorical expression συνεπληροῦντο (“they were being filled”) in Lk 8:23 illustrates a distinctive feature of his narrative technique. The text suggests that the disciples were being overwhelmed, though this in fact refers to the boat filling with water. The narrator speaks of the boat’s occupants rather than the vessel itself to emphasize the condition of Jesus’ disciples. The rising water level mirrors their growing fear, which progressively overwhelms them. Thus, the expression functions as a metaphor.

As observed in the analysis of differences (cf. section 3.3), Luke frequently refines Mark’s more concrete descriptions into more fluid and

interpretive language. In this case, the metaphor not only describes the physical danger but also conveys the disciples' psychological state.

#### 4.7. Metonymy [Lk 8:23]

The identification of the disciples with the boat in Lk 8:23 constitutes a metonymic shift characteristic of Luke's style. Metonymy involves the substitution of the name of one object or phenomenon for another with which it has a concrete relationship. This relationship is typically real and material.

This device, which is absent in Mk and less developed in Mt, reflects Luke's tendency toward more conceptual and symbolic expression, as suggested by his broader lexical and stylistic preferences (e.g., technical nautical terminology).

At the same time, this metonymy opens up a broader interpretive horizon: it not only fuses the disciples with the boat at the narrative level, but also invites the reader to perceive the boat carrying Christ and the apostles as an image of the Church. In this way, a concrete narrative detail becomes a vehicle for ecclesiological meaning, whereby the community of Jesus' followers may be understood as a vessel sustained by Christ amid the instability of the surrounding forces.

#### 4.8. Synecdoche [Lk 8:24]

Synecdoche (*pars pro toto*) is a metaphor in which the part signifies the whole. Sometimes, although very rarely, the whole can also signify the part in the synecdoche (Resseguie, 2005, p. 62). Jesus rebuked the wind and the raging wave (τῷ κλύδωνι). A singular turbulent wave actually signifies many waves here.

Luke's use of τῷ κλύδωνι ("the wave") as a representative element of the storm demonstrates his preference for concise yet evocative expression. This aligns with his general redactional approach, which often involves selective adaptation rather than direct reproduction of Markan detail.

#### 4.9. Epanadiplosis [Lk 8:24]

Epanadiplosis is a rhetorical figure involving repetition that Luke uses to emphasize the urgency of the disciples' request: ἐπιστάτα ἐπιστάτα (Bovon, 1989, p. 422). This repetition highlights Luke's sensitivity to rhetorical emphasis. As noted earlier, Luke frequently employs distinctive vocabulary (e.g., ἐπιστάτης) and stylistic devices to shape his narrative in a more polished and rhetorically effective manner.

#### 4.10. Paronomasia [Lk 8:24–25]

In Lk 8:25, Luke introduces an additional element referring to commanding (ἐπιτάσσει), which is absent from Mk and Mt and is linked, through paronomasia, to the title ἐπιστάτα, which the same speakers had used earlier in addressing Jesus (Lk 8:24; cfr section 3.1).

The phonetic interplay between ἐπιστάτα and ἐπιτάσσει illustrates Luke's refined use of sound patterns to reinforce semantic and thematic meaning. This device further reinforces the thematic emphasis on Jesus' authority, already present in the shared tradition but developed more subtly in Luke's version.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that while all three Synoptic evangelists employ fundamental rhetorical devices such as paradox, personification, and rhetorical questioning, they do so with varying degrees of intensity and sophistication. Mark tends toward a vivid, Semitic-influenced style (e.g., polyptoton, wordplay), Luke exhibits a higher degree of rhetorical refinement and stylistic diversity (e.g., metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, epanadiplosis, paronomasia). In contrast, Matthew adopts a more concise and restrained approach.

When viewed in light of the preceding analysis of concordances and differences, the use of rhetorical devices in the Synoptic accounts reveals both continuity and innovation. Some devices are shared as part of the common narrative tradition, while their varied expression reflects the distinct redactional profiles of each evangelist.

Mark preserves a vivid, Semitic, and rhetorically intense form of the tradition (including, possibly, wordplay in a hypothetical Aramaic

version of Mark); Matthew selectively abbreviates and reorganizes this material; and Luke refines it through linguistic precision, stylistic elegance, and the introduction of additional rhetorical devices. Consequently, rhetorical strategies function not merely as decorative elements but as key indicators of literary dependence, redactional activity, and theological interpretation within the Synoptic Gospels.

Taken together, these observations show that rhetorical devices function as integral components of each evangelist's redactional strategy, shaping both narrative form and theological meaning.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of the Synoptic accounts of the calming of the storm demonstrates that a dynamic interplay between the inherited tradition and individual redactional creativity shapes the narrative. Synoptic comparison and the study of concordances have revealed a stable narrative core, preserved across Mk, Mt, and Lk, thus ensuring both the coherence and recognizability of the episode within the Gospel tradition. At the same time, the examination of differences has shown that each evangelist reworks this shared material in accordance with distinct literary, rhetorical, and theological aims.

The analysis of rhetorical devices further confirms that these variations are neither incidental nor purely stylistic. Rather, they function as deliberate compositional strategies through which the evangelists guide the reader's interpretation of the event. Mark emphasizes vividness and dramatic intensity through Semitic expressions and strong rhetorical forms; Matthew reshapes the tradition with greater conciseness and theological clarity; and Luke refines it through linguistic precision, stylistic sophistication, and an expanded repertoire of rhetorical devices. In particular, Luke's tendency toward conceptualization, visible, for instance, in the use of metaphor and metonymy, opens the narrative to broader symbolic and ecclesiological interpretations.

Consequently, the rhetorical dimension of the text is shown to be inseparable from questions of literary dependence and redactional

development. The calming of the storm is not only a miracle story but also a carefully constructed narrative in which form and content mutually illuminate one another. The rhetorical strategies employed by the evangelists shape the portrayal of Jesus' authority, the disciples' response, and the theological message conveyed to the reader. Although a certain dependence in the use of specific literary devices can be observed among the three Synoptics (sections 4.1–3), and Matthew appears to draw inspiration from Mark (section 4.4), there is no clear evidence of minor agreements between Matthew and Luke at the level of rhetorical style. In this respect, Luke proves to be highly original (sections 4.6–10).

Ultimately, this study has shown that a systematic analysis of rhetorical devices, when integrated with synoptic and redaction-critical approaches, provides a deeper understanding of both the compositional process and the interpretative potential of the Gospel texts. It reveals how a shared tradition can be configured in various ways to address different audiences and theological perspectives, while preserving its fundamental narrative and Christological significance.

## Abstract

### **One Storm, Three Narratives: A Literary Analysis of Rhetorical Devices in Mk 4:35–41; Mt 8:23–27; Lk 8:22–25**

This study offers a comparative literary and rhetorical analysis of the Synoptic accounts of the calming of the storm (Mk 4:35–41; Mt 8:23–27; Lk 8:22–25), identifying both a shared narrative core and distinct redactional tendencies. Building on this synoptic comparison, the analysis of rhetorical devices demonstrates that these elements function as deliberate compositional strategies rather than mere stylistic features. It further shows that Mark preserves a vivid, Semitic-influenced style, Matthew presents a more concise theological account, and Luke develops a refined and rhetorically sophisticated narrative. In this way, each evangelist reshapes the inherited tradition to direct the reader's understanding of Jesus' identity and authority in accordance with particular theological aims and pastoral concerns.

**Keywords:** Synoptic Gospels; calming of the storm; literary analysis; rhetorical devices

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