

v. *The Rock.*

(Mt. 8:23-16:19; Mk.4:39-8:29; Lk.8:22-9:20.)

With a startled frown,
your companions shake you from sleep
as Genazareth turns pitiless
Rebuke their fear and calm the deep.
Let the wind and sky grow still – the waves, lie down.

On firm dry land,
the victory parade is soiled – the nakedness
of demons calling out your name.
Do what they ask. Let them command
two thousand swine, with strangled cries,
to leap into a watery grave.

She has touched you with her twelve year shame
of blood, yet you speak her praise,
as your companions, with disdainful eyes,
recoil from her polluted ways.

They call on you to save
a twelve year old with healing power
and you arrive at death's appointed hour;
they scorn your talk of reawakening
until the child, with life restored,
fulfils your word.

In rival pairs they bring
good news and proudly speak your name
and the blind and the lepers and the lame
spread the word and sing their gratitude.

Lead them, laughing with bewilderment,
to a quiet place of rest, but solitude
is soon undone, as ragged bands
of pilgrims queue for nourishment.

Bless and break the bread
as ancient love spills
from your weary hands
and the hungry crowd is fed.

Where eagles fly
among the stony hills
of Caesarea Philippi,
your perplexing ways have caught the breath
of a swaggering and loud
and restless fisherman.

He has seen you block
the power of storms of demons and of death.
He has seen you tremble like a flame
before the unrelenting crowd.
He longs to be your champion.
He speaks your name.
Call him 'Cephas,' 'Peter,' 'Rock.'