

**“Lessons from the Miracles of Christ”:
Stilling the Tempest**

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Sources for Stilling the Tempest, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Wm. Arnold Stevens and Ernest DeWitt Burton, *A Harmony of the Gospels for Historical Study: An Analytical Synopsis of the Four Gospels in the Version of 1881* (Boston: Silver, Burdett and Company, 1893)
- (2) Richard Chenevix Trench, D.D., *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord, Revised, with Additions* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1883)
- (3) William M. Taylor, D.D., LL.D., *The Miracles of Our Saviour, Expounded and Illustrated* (New York: A.C. Armstrong & Son, 1891)
- (4) Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Why Is Faith So Feeble?” (1887)

Note: Spurgeon delivered this sermon in London on May 22, 1887 and it was published in Vol. 33 of *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (1888). I have been unable to access this volume, so have used *The Treasury of Spurgeon on the Life and Work of Our Lord, Vol. IV, The Miracles of Our Lord, 2*, published by Baker Book House in 1979. This source is coded **Spurgeon1**.

- (5) Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “Christ Asleep in the Vessel” (1873)

Note: Spurgeon delivered this sermon in London on Jul. 13, 1873 and it was published in Vol. 19 of *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (1874). This source is coded **Spurgeon2**.

- (6) Mrs. E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Assn., 1898)

- (7) Charles Haddon Spurgeon, “With the Disciples on the Lake of Galilee” (1881)

Note: Spurgeon delivered this sermon in London on Oct. 6, 1881 and it was published in Vol. 28 of *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (1882). This source is coded **Spurgeon3**.

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the Sadlers pointedly differ from one another.
- (e) **Light blue** indicates a passage which anticipates something in the Urantia Book.
- (f) **Red** indicates an obvious mistake.
- (g) **Gold** points out words and themes that will be treated in a later discussion.

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STILLING THE TEMPEST

INTRODUCTORY

0.1 *Preceding Events*.—This miracle was immediately preceded by the following events:—

XVI: A DAY OF TEACHING BY THE SEA OF GALILEE. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 77)

§55. WARNINGS TO THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES: “AN ETERNAL SIN.” Matt. 12:22-45. Mark 3:19b-30.

§56. THE TRUE KINDRED OF CHRIST. Matt. 12:46-50. Mark 3:31-35. Luke 8:19-21.

§57. THE PARABLES BY THE SEA. Matt. 13:1-53. Mark 4:1-34. Luke 8:4-18.

[*Note*: Sadler drew from Matthew and Luke as much as from Mark.]

0.2 1. The warning of the scribes and Pharisees. Mark 3:19-30.

0.3 2. Christ’s discourse on his true kindred. Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35.

0.4 3. Parables by the sea. Matt. 13:1-51.

0.5 *Main Reference*.—Mark 4:35-41.

0.6 *Other References*.—Matt. 8:23-27; Luke 8:22-25.

0.7 *Bible Story of the Miracle*.—

XVII: A DAY OF MIRACLES BY THE SEA OF GALILEE. (*A Harmony of the Gospels* 88)

§58. THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST. Matt. 8:[18] 23-27. Mark 4:35-41. Luke 8:22.25.

Luke 8:[22] Now it came to pass on one of those days,

Matt. 8[18] Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him,

Mark 4:35 And on that day, when even was come,

“Now it came to pass on one of those days

when Jesus saw great multitudes about him,

and even was come,

SOURCE	“ LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”
he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side.	he saith unto them, Let us go over unto the other side
Luke 8:[22] of the lake:	of the lake.
Mark 4:[36] And leaving the multitude,	And leaving the multitude,
Luke 8:[22] he entered into a boat, himself and his disciples;	he entered into a boat himself and his disciples,
[22] and they launched forth.	and they launched forth:
Mark 4:[36] And other boats were with him.	and other boats were with him.
Luke 8:[23] But as they sailed, he fell asleep:	But as they sailed, he fell asleep
Mark 4:[38] And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion:	on the cushion, in the stern;
Matt. 8:[24] And behold, there arose a great	and behold there arose a great
Luke 8:[23] storm of wind on the lake;	storm of wind on the lake,
Mark 4:[37] and the waves beat into the boat,	and the waves beat into the boat,
Matt. 8:[24] insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves;	insomuch that the boat was covered with the waves,
Mark 4:[37] was now filling.	and was now filling,
Luke 8:[23] and were in jeopardy.	and they were in jeopardy.
Matt. 8:[25] And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Save, Lord; we perish.	And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Save, Lord! we perish,
Mark 4:[38] Master, carest thou not that we perish?	Master! Carest thou not that we perish?
Luke 8:[24] Master, master, we perish.	Master! Master! we perish.
Mark 4:[39] And he awoke,	And he awoke,

SOURCE

“LESSONS FROM THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST”

Matt. 8:[26] And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?

and he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?¹

Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea;

Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea,

Luke 8:[24] the raging of the water:

and the raging of the waters,

Mark 4:[39] and said unto the sea, Peace, be still.

and said unto the sea, Peace, be still.

Luke 8:[24] and they ceased,

And they ceased,

Mark 4:[39] and there was a great calm.

and there was a great calm.

Mark 4:[40] And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? have ye not faith?

And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful? Have ye not yet faith?

Luke 8:[25] Where is your faith?

Where is your faith?

Matt. 8:[27] And the men

And the men

Mark 4:[41] feared exceedingly,

feared exceedingly,

Matt. 8:[37] And the men marvelled, saying,

and marveled, saying

Mark 4:[41] one to another,

one to another,

Matt. 8:[27] What manner of man is this,

What manner of man is this,

Luke 8:[25] that he commandeth

that he commandeth

Matt. 8:[27] even the winds and the sea

the winds and the sea,

Luke 8:[25] and they obey him.

and they obey him?”

(The foregoing quotation is an interwoven story, in the exact language of the Bible, gathered from Matt. 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; and Luke 8:22-25.)

^{0.8} *Place*.—Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum.

0.9 *Circumstances*.—At the close of the day on which the parable of the sower and others had been spoken by the seaside, somewhere near Capernaum, the Saviour with his disciples was passing over to the eastern shore of the sea of Galilee, followed by a number of people in other boats.

IV: THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST.
(Trench 151)

A sudden and violent squall, such as these small inland seas ... are notoriously exposed to, descended on the bosom of the lake: ... (Tr 151-52).

The storm doubtless was

one of the sudden squalls so common on this sea.

XIV: THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST. (Taylor 202)

“We must remember that it lies low—six hundred and eighty feet below the sea;

Owing to its remarkably low level, being hundreds of feet below the sea,

that the mountainous plateau of the Jaulân rises to a considerable height, ... that the water-courses have worn or washed out profound ravines and wild gorges, and these act like great funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains” (T 204).

the great gorges in the mountains round about served as funnels to bring down the cold wind from the mountains.

0.10 *Great Lesson*.—

But we may learn, as a subordinate lesson from this narrative, that

From this miracle we learn that

the disciples of Christ are not exempt from trial (T 208).

even Christ and his disciples were in no wise exempt from troubles, trials, and apparent accidents.

These things all have a great purpose to accomplish in the experience of the children of God if, in every time of danger, they will call to the Master, who, although it may appear that he is unmindful of their peril, is in reality the One who never slumbers nor sleeps. At all times he knows the danger his children are in.

STUDY OF THE MIRACLE

1.1 *He Saith unto Them, Let Us Pass Over.*—

When we move without the word of the Master, we must expect to encounter storms and difficulties; but on this occasion the disciples had embarked at the Master's command. They started in good weather² and good faith, a host of little boats accompanying them. This was a time when not only the safety of the disciples' boat was in question, but also the safety of the accompanying fleet. Why should the divine mind permit this storm to break upon them at just this time?

“WHY IS FAITH SO FEEBLE?”
(Spurgeon¹ 145)

The disciples may have feared that such ill weather would drive away from Christ those hearers who might otherwise have become converts.

If they met with a storm so soon after rowing close to Jesus, they might judge him to be another Jonah,

and resolve to give this Galilean preacher a wide berth next time (S1 146).

No doubt Peter reasoned that many a convert would be lost;

that the frightened souls in the little boats would look upon Christ as a troublesome Jonah rather than a divine Deliverer.

“CHRIST ASLEEP IN THE VESSEL”
(Spurgeon² 133)

But Christ was not taken unaware by this tempest.

When the Master put his foot on board that vessel he knew there would be a storm.

Before leaving the shore, he had foreseen all this difficulty as well as its outcome;

The tossing did not take him by surprise,

and it was this perfect understanding, this perfect harmony with his Father’s purposes, that

and yet he went to sleep because he knew that all was right (S2 141).

enabled Jesus to sleep peacefully when the storm was raging.

It often appears in our experience that the winds of temptation and the waves of opposition break upon us at just the wrong time. We feel it unfortunate that we should be placed in such extremity that we are forced, in spite of our pride and doubt, to hasten to the Master, and before friends, associates, and visitors, cry out, in anguish of soul, “Master! Master! save us; we perish.” Yet how often this very confession of our nothingness, our utter weakness, together with the display of divine power and love that follows, proves to be the very thing that melts the hearts of sinners.

1.2 *He Was in the Ship.*—Christ is with the church, but to-day he is oftentimes in the background, and his presence and mighty workings are not visible to the human eye.

Jesus was asleep in the rear of the ship at the very time when it would seem he was most needed on deck. And so when, in our Christian experience, there come times of moral storm and spiritual hurricane, let us remember that the helm of the ship is also in the rear; and that although the Master may appear to sleep while we are troubled with fears and tempted with doubts, he will finally speak the word that will bring peace.

W. S. SADLER.
(*To be continued*)

STILLING THE TEMPEST (*Continued*)

2.1 *The Waves Beat into the Ship.*—

IV: THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST.
(Trench 151)

[T]he Church of Christ has evermore resembled this tempest-tossed bark,

the waves of the word raging horribly around it, yet never prevailing to overwhelm it,—and this because Christ is in it (Ps. xlv. 1-3; xciii. 3, 4) ... (Tr 158).

The disciples' bark, tempest-tossed on the sea of Galilee, is a beautiful illustration of the church of Christ, storm-tossed and wave-beaten,

oftentimes to human eyes in great danger.

Sometimes, it would seem, it is doomed to go down; but the Master is with and in the church to-day, as he was with the disciples that night on the sea of Galilee.

Though persecuted from without, and torn by dissensions within, the church will sail on to victory. There is no more danger of her light going out in darkness than there was that the bark wherein Jesus slept would sink beneath the waters.

2.2 Asleep on a Pillow.—

XIV: THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST. (Taylor 202)

Christ had worked very hard throughout the day, and this undoubtedly accounts for the soundness with which he slept during all this excitement.

[L]et us take note that we have here an incidental confirmation of the great truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is both really human and truly divine.

What an instance of our Lord’s humanity and divinity—

in the stern of the ship,

He was asleep—there is his humanity;

asleep on a pillow,

so worn in body that he failed to wake, notwithstanding the excitement of those on board, and the noise of the storm whose waves swept over the boat.

He became weary, like other human beings; but see him a moment after he has arisen, and rebuked the unbelief of his disciples!

for of God it is said, “Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” He commanded the winds into silence, and the waves into peace—

Hear him speak the words that quiet the angry waves!

there is Deity;

Here we see his divinity,—

for to God alone can it be said, “Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them” (T 206).

his perfect control of all things in nature.

He who keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

IV: THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST. (Trench 151)

We behold in Him here exactly the reverse of **Jonah** (Jon. i. 5, 6);

What a contrast to **Jonah**,

the fugitive prophet was asleep in the midst of a like danger out of a **dead conscience**,

who slept in a boat in a time of great danger, because his **conscience was dead** and unresponsive.

the Saviour out of a **pure conscience**—

Jesus sleeps in calm repose because of a **conscience pure**, and a mind in perfect touch with his Father’s will.

Jonah by his presence making the danger, Jesus yielding the pledge and the assurance of deliverance from the danger (Tr 152).

The Saviour was asleep on a pillow. While he made no special provisions for his physical comfort and need, at the same time he did not ignore these things when they were at hand.

2.3 And They Awake Him.—

“CHRIST ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL” (Spurgeon² 133)

We shall take the text as the key-note of our subject; and first we shall think upon the **apparent indifference** of the Lord to his people; but we shall note, secondly, that *it is only apparent* ... (S2 134).

What can be the meaning of this indifference, or rather **apparent indifference**, on the part of the Master?—

for truly the Lord is never really indifferent to the needs of his children in their peril.

Was not this apparent indifference calculated to strengthen the faith of the disciples? Had they trusted him fully, they would not have addressed him in such words of doubt as, “Master, carest thou not that we perish?” The apparent forgetfulness on the part of God in our times of trial, temptation, or affliction, is designed to strengthen our faith and ripen our confidence,—to show us our weakness, and bring us to a realizing sense of our extremity. Then by the word of his power, he will dismiss our present fears, calm our disturbed spirits, and erect in our minds a landmark, as it were, of loving watchfulness over us when tempest-tossed on the sea of life.

2.4 Master, Carest Thou Not That We Perish?—

Oh, if they had only realized the meaning of the word “Master,” they would have no thought of perishing.

IV: THE STILLING OF THE TEMPEST. (Trench 151)

Cæsar’s confidence that the bark which contained him and his fortunes could not sink,

forms the earthly counterpart to the heavenly calmness and confidence of the Lord (Tr 154).

If the boastful Caesar could say that no vessel that bore him and his treasure could sink,

how much more the Master of earth, sea, and sky, when the vessel had him on board in times of danger.

“CHRIST ASLEEP IN THE VESSEL”
(Spurgeon² 133)

Remember, again, that although Christ was asleep, he was tossed about as much as the disciples were, and in the same peril.

They might as well say, “Carest thou not that *we* perish?” putting him with themselves, for they would have gone down together, both he and they (S2 141).

[repeated from 1.1] When the Master put his foot on board that vessel **he knew there would be a storm** (S2 141).

Christ himself was tossed by the same tempest that tossed the troubled disciples.

They asked of him, “Carest thou not that we perish?”

But they could not perish; for Christ was with them. He in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily was asleep in the stern of the ship. How beautiful to think that the storms which assail us, assail Christ. The winds and the waves that blow and beat upon us, blow and beat upon Christ. In all our afflictions he is afflicted. He is with us in times of sunshine and peace; and he is with us, even though he appears to be asleep, in times of danger and peril.

When Jesus embarked with his disciples, **he knew there would be a storm,**

and yet his knowledge of the difficulties that lay in the way did not prevent his accompanying them.

Through sunshine and shower the blessed Redeemer accompanies the chosen sheep of the heavenly flock. “Lo, I am with you alway,” he says. “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

W. S. SADLER.
(Concluded next week.)

STILLING THE TEMPEST (Concluded)

3.1 *We Perish.*—The disciples thought their greatest need was to be saved from perishing, but in reality their greatest need was faith. However, the merciful Saviour attended to the lesser need first, and then asked them where their faith was. The disciples were far more afraid of the waters of Galilee than of the enemy’s flood of unbelief and doubt. The Saviour did not save them from the latter without first quieting their fears of the former. As **Christian workers** we should not forget nor ignore the physical and temporal needs of those for whom we are laboring, although they may be considered minor as compared with the greater needs of the soul. Let us first minister to the outward need, although it may be less important, and thus prepare the way to supply the greater needs of the moral nature.

3.2 *He Arose, and Rebuked the Wind.*—

XXXV: “PEACE, BE STILL” (White 333)

Every man’s experience testifies to the truth of the words of Scripture, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. . . .

There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” Isa. 57:20, 21 (W 336).

The masterful passions of the heart no human power can control (W 336).

“The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it can not rest,

whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” Isa. 57: 20, 21.

Human power can not control the raging passions of the unsaved soul.

The unconverted man is storm-tossed and wave-beaten; and it is only the word from nature’s Master that can still the tempest that rages within the fallen nature of man.

However fierce the tempest,

However fierce may be the struggle of the tempest-tossed soul,

those who turn to Jesus with the cry, “Love, save us,” will find deliverance (W 336).

if he will but turn to Jesus, and cry, “Lord, save!” he will not be disappointed.

Jesus arose, and after alluding to their unbelief, he rebuked—his disciples?—No; he rebuked the winds. Another **lesson** of God’s long-suffering and loving-kindness, even with the unbelief of his doubting children. He had compassion on them. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.” James 1:5.

3.3 *Peace, Be Still.*—The soul that has perfect faith is absolutely free from worry. “Perfect love casteth out fear.” Christ’s mind was in **perfect harmony** with that of his Father. His faith was complete; and so the humble, praying soul who exercises “**the faith of Jesus**” is one who can, like him, sleep peacefully when the angry billows dash high, and the winds blow fiercely.

3.4 *There Was a Great Calm.*—In our personal experience, when everything is raging, and all is like a tempest within, what a help it would be if we could only remember that we may come to the Master just then, and say, “Lord, save, or I perish.” All our doubts, troubles, and perplexities should be brought to him. If he appears to be asleep, let us wake him. His ear is not deaf, that he can not hear, nor his hand shortened, that he can not save. It is our faith which sleeps, not the world’s Redeemer.

“WITH THE DISCIPLES ON THE LAKE OF GALILEE” (Spurgeon³ 121)

Besides this, the idea of a storm which should immediately be followed by a great calm

was strikingly *new to experience*. These fishermen of the Galilean lake had never seen it after this fashion before (S3 126).

3.5 To behold the waters become so quiet immediately following the Master’s words,

was certainly a *new experience* to his fishermen-disciples,

as well as to those who accompanied them on the voyage.

Usually it required some time for the sea to calm down after being in such a rage.

To-day the Master is able to speak the word that will soothe the raging tempest within the soul, and make the ruffled temper as smooth as the sea of glass.

3.6 *Why Are Ye So Fearful?*—

“CHRIST ASLEEP IN THE VESSEL” (Spurgeon² 133)

My dear brother, do you know that sometimes God works a greater wonder when he sustains his people in trouble

than he would do if he brought them out of it (S3 137).

Oftentimes God does a greater thing for us in sustaining and upholding us in the time of our trial and affliction

than if he immediately delivered us by his mighty hand from the difficulties and sorrows that constitute our trial.

The disciples, in fear for their safety, and in questioning the Master as to whether he cared if they perished, evidenced the shallowness of their faith in the divinity of Christ. Could he who was God, the Creator, forget his children?—Never!

How kind and considerate was the Master, that he did not sternly rebuke the disciples for their words of doubt and unbelief in asking, “Carest thou not that we perish?” His rebuke of their unbelief was conveyed in the simple question: “Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?” Then, without further upbraiding, he rebuked the winds and waves, and ushered in the miraculous calm.

W. S. SADLER.

1. Like Trench (p. 153), Sadler posits that Jesus asked the disciples twice—both before and after he stilled the tempest—about their lack of faith.

2. Spurgeon writes:

When our Lord took ship the weather appears to have been very fair ...” (S2 133).