

# EXPOSITORY THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPELS.

FOR FAMILY AND PRIVATE USE.

WITH THE TEXT COMPLETE,

*And Many Explanatory Notes.*

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LUKE VIII. 22-25.

22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.	saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.
23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled <i>with water</i> , and were in jeopardy.	25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.
24 And they came to him, and awoke him,	

THE event in our Lord's life described in these verses is related three times in the Gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke were all inspired to record it. This circumstance should teach us the importance of the event, and should make us "give the more heed" to the lessons it contains.

We see, firstly, in these verses, that *our Lord Jesus Christ was really man as well as God*. We read that as he sailed over the Lake of Gennesaret in a ship with his disciples, "he fell asleep." Sleep, we must be all aware, is one of the conditions of our natural constitution as human beings. Angels and spirits require neither food nor refreshment. But flesh and blood, to keep up a healthy existence, must eat, and drink, and sleep. If the Lord Jesus could be weary, and need rest, He must have had two natures in one person—a human nature as well as a divine.

The truth now before us is full of deep consolation and encouragement for all true Christians. The one Mediator, in whom we are bid to trust, has been Himself "partaker of flesh and blood." The mighty High Priest, who is living for us at God's right hand, has had personal experience of all the sinless infirmities of the body. He has himself hungered, and thirsted, and suffered pain. He has himself endured weariness, and sought rest in sleep.—Let us pour out our hearts before him with freedom, and tell him our least troubles without reserve. He who made atonement for us on the cross is one who "can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." (Heb. iv. 15.) To be weary of working for God is sinful, but to be wearied and worn in doing God's work is no sin at all. Jesus Himself was weary, and Jesus slept.

We see, secondly, in these verses, *what fears and anxieties may assault the hearts of true disciples of Christ*. We read that "when a storm of wind came down on the lake," and the boat in which our Lord was sailing was filled with water, and in jeopardy, His companions were greatly alarmed. "They came to Him and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we perish." They forgot, for a moment, their Master's never-failing care for them in time past. They forgot that with Him they must be safe, whatever happened. They forgot everything but the sight and sense of present danger, and, under the impression of it, could not even wait till Christ awoke. It is only too true

that sight, and sense, and feeling, make men very poor theologians.

Facts like these are sadly humbling to the pride of human nature. It ought to lower our self-conceit and high thoughts to see what a poor creature is man, even at his best estate.—But facts like these are deeply instructive. They teach us what to watch and pray against in our own hearts. They teach us what we must make up our minds to find in other Christians. We must be moderate in our expectations. We must not suppose that men cannot be believers if they sometimes exhibit great weakness, or that men have no grace because they are sometimes overwhelmed with fears. Even Peter, James, and John, could cry, “Master, Master, we perish.”

We see, thirdly, in these verses, *how great is the power of our Lord Jesus Christ*. We read that when His disciples awoke Him in the storm, “He arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the waters, and they ceased, and there was a calm.” This was, no doubt, a mighty miracle. It needed the power of Him who brought the flood on the earth in the days of Noah, and in due season took it away,—who divided the Red Sea and the river Jordan into two parts, and made a path for His people through the waters,—who brought the locusts on Egypt by an east wind, and by a west wind swept them away. (Exod. x. 13, 19.) No power short of this could in a moment turn a storm into a calm. “To speak to the winds and waves” is a common proverb for attempting that which is impossible. But here we see Jesus speaking, and at once the winds and waves obey! As man He had slept. As God He stilled the storm.

It is a blessed and comfortable thought, that all this almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ is engaged on behalf of His believing people. He has undertaken to save every one of them to the uttermost, and He is “mighty to save.” The trials of His people are often many and great. The devil never ceases to make war against them. The rulers of this world frequently persecute them. The very heads of the church, who ought to be tender shepherds, are often bitterly opposed to the truth as it is in Jesus. Yet, notwithstanding all this, Christ’s people shall never be entirely forsaken. Though sorely harassed, they shall not be destroyed. Though cast down, they shall not be cast away. At the darkest time let true Christians rest in the thought, that “greater is He who is for them than all they that be against them.” The winds and waves of political and ecclesiastical trouble may beat fiercely over them, and all hope may seem taken away. But still let them not despair. There is One living for them in heaven who can make these winds and waves to cease in a moment. The true Church, of which Christ is the Head, shall never perish. Its glorious Head is almighty, and lives for evermore, and His believing members shall all live, also, and reach home safe at last. (John xiv. 19.)

We see, lastly, in these verses, *how needful it is for Christians to keep*

*their faith ready for use.* We read that our Lord said to His disciples, when the storm had ceased, and their fears had subsided, “Where is your faith?” Well might He ask that question! Where was the profit of believing, if they could not believe in the time of need? Where was the real value of faith, unless they kept it in active exercise? Where was the benefit of trusting, if they were to trust their Master in sunshine only, but not in storms?

The lesson now before us is one of deep practical importance. To have true saving faith is one thing. To have that faith always ready for use is quite another. Many receive Christ as their Saviour, and deliberately commit their souls to him for time and eternity, who yet often find their faith sadly failing when something unexpected happens, and they are suddenly tried. These things ought not so to be. We ought to pray that we may have a stock of faith ready for use at a moment’s notice, and may never be found unprepared. The highest style of Christian is the man who lives like Moses, “seeing Him who is invisible.” (Heb. ii. 27.) That man will never be greatly shaken by any storm. He will see Jesus near him in the darkest hour, and blue sky behind the blackest cloud.

NOTES. LUKE VIII. 22–25.

- 22.—[*He went into a ship, &c.*] The events here recorded took place on the lake of Gennesaret, or sea of Galilee. At the time of our Lord’s earthly ministry, the country round this lake was thickly inhabited, and there seem to have been many boats on it. At present, according to the latest travellers, there are very few boats on it, and the population round it is very thin.
- 23.—[*There came down a storm of wind.*] All travellers agree in saying, that the lake of Gennesaret is very liable to be visited by such storms. It lies very low, and is surrounded, on almost all sides, by high hills. Sudden gusts, or squalls of wind are consequently very common.
- 24.—[*They ceased, and there was a calm.*] The well-known story of King Canute, in vain attempting to stop the rising tide by his command, will naturally occur to any reader of English history. There is a striking contrast between the utter failure of Canute’s attempt and the almighty power of Christ’s words here recorded.
- 25.—[*Where is your faith.*] Leigh remarks that this would be more accurately rendered “Where is that your faith?” That is, Where is that measure, or degree of faith, which you have showed?