

Rarely was he found *sleeping*, when any were seeking his aid. Ever about his Father's business, with a zeal that knew no intermission, no abatement,—he might be found early in the Temple, teaching and healing the multitude, and late at night, either instructing some timid inquirer, or alone on the mountain all night in prayer. He lived for others, and pleased not himself. But here for once we find him sleeping! Nor need we wonder that Jesus slept. He was a frail man, compassed with bodily infirmity, knowing full well, by experience, how the willing spirit is restrained by the weakness of the flesh. He, in common with all our feeble race, *needed sleep*. And in such a human life, sleep is sanctified! If in the service of God we may occasionally and for a season, do violence to the flesh, yet, in the main, God's claims can all be met, without violating any principle of our physical or mental constitution. The same authority that demands the presentation of our bodies as a living sacrifice, enjoins—"Do thyself no harm." Having done an earnest day's work, the disciple like his master, may do the will of his Father, by seeking rest in sleep.

But how can Jesus sleep, at such an hour of wild commotion and distress! The vessel plunges, and staggers;—the winds and waves beat upon her so furiously that now she lies over on her beam-ends; and anon she ships a sea that well nigh swamps her at once. Still with all this tossing, there the Master lies in undisturbed slumbers! To the disciples this appeared strange; yet they delayed, and still delayed disturbing him, restrained probably by his majestic peacefulness.

At length, impelled by wild terror, in desperation they awaken him exclaiming, "Master!—Master!—carest thou not that we perish!" He awoke: but not as one startled. He arose; but not in confusion. It is weakness, or guilt, that make haste. God does nothing in a hurry. First gently rebuking their fear, by the query—"Where is your faith?"—turning to the boisterous elements, He speaks a gentle word, scarcely audible in the tempest's roar—"Peace; be still!" The winds and waves yielded instant obedience, and "there was a *great calm*." The idea conveyed is, that not only the winds ceased, but the waves subsided immediately.

No wonder the disciples were awe-stricken before such a *man*, whom even the winds and the sea obeyed—a *man* who a few moments before, overcome by weariness, lay apparently unconscious and defenceless, rocked about by the storm; but now confronting the hurricane and the bursting flood, by a *word*!

This scene was surely designed to suggest some precious spiritual truths, for the instruction and consolation of Christ's disciples in every age.

For instance, it suggests that the path of Christian duty is often beset with peril. The ship chartered by the Lord of Heaven and Earth, manned by His chosen apostles is suffered to be violently assailed by the storm,—filled with water,—and ready to sink! Even when sailing under Christ's personal escort and by His special direction, this imminent peril menaces the vessel! A good aim is no guarantee for a calm and pleasant voyage: nor is a divine commission a passport, exempting from difficulties, delays and opposition. Prosperous gales will not always fill our sails, even when we spread them at Christ's bidding; nay, when we have the Master himself on board.

The inexperienced disciple sets sail under Christ's flag, confidently reckoning on peaceful progress, so long as he faithfully follows the prescribed course. Unquestionably most of the disaster and loss sustained by the Christian may