

Christ the Savior From the Tempest.

by John Gill

Christ demonstrates his power and divinity by calming a storm at sea, showing that he is more than a man and worthy of worship.

Scripture: Psalm 107:23-30, Isaiah 32:2, Jeremiah 10:12-13, Matthew 8:25, Mark 4:39, Luke 8:25, John 3:8, Romans 3:19, Ephesians 2:3, Hebrews 10:27

Topics: "Faith in Christ", "Deliverance from Distress"

Description

John Gill preaches on the account of the disciples' desperate plea to Jesus during a violent storm at sea, emphasizing their sense of imminent danger and their faith in Christ's ability to save them. He draws parallels between the physical tempest faced by the disciples and the spiritual storms that believers encounter, highlighting that Christ is the ultimate Savior who calms both nature and the turmoil within our hearts. Gill encourages the congregation to recognize their own need for salvation and to call upon Jesus in their distress, affirming that He is both willing and able to deliver us from our perils.

Transcript

CHRIST THE SAVIOR

FROM THE TEMPEST.

A Sermon,

In commemoration of the Great Storm, in the Year MDCCIII:

Preached in Little Wild-street, near Lincoln's-Inn Fields, Nov. 27, 1736.

MATTHEW 8:25

Lord save us; We perish.

These words are a very importunate petition of the disciples of Christ unto him, when in great danger by a storm at sea. The case of such persons, their great distress, and earnest cries for deliverance, and the manner of it, are very elegantly and beautifully described by the Psalmist; when he says, They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; for he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof:

They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble: they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end: Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses: He Maketh the storm to calm; so that the waves thereof are still: Then they are glad, because they be quite; so he bringeth them to their desired haven. (Psal. 107:23--30) A late valuable writer[1] is of opinion, that this passage of the Psalmist is not to be considered as an account of what had happened, and so might happen again to navigators in common, but as a prediction or prophecy of what should befall the disciples of Christ, when on shipboard with him; and had its exact accomplishment in the case before us.

He supposes, that the disciples of Christ are the persons here described, that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; their occupation and employment, which they used both before and after they were called by Christ to be his apostles, being that of fishermen. These being in a ship with Christ, the Lord commanded and raised the stormy wind; a great tempest arose in the sea, which lifted up the waves thereof, so that they seemed to mount up to the heaven; and beating into the ship, covered and filled it, insomuch, that they were just ready to go down to the depths; then their soul was melted because of trouble: And being at their wits end, not knowing what to do, apply to their Lord and Master; and as they go to him at the stern of the ship, through the shaking of the vessel, reeled to and fro, and staggered like drunken men; and cry unto him in their trouble, saying, Master, Carest thou not that we perish?

Then he brought them out of their distresses, by making the storm a calm; so that the waves thereof were still, when he rebuked the wind, and the raging of the sea. And now did they see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; and said one to another, What manner of person is this whom the winds and sea obey? Then were they glad, because the wind and sea were quiet; so he brought them to their desired haven, when they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

I cannot say I am entirely of this writer's mind; but rather think, that this account refers to a case which had been, and might be again, and may be accommodated to any case of the like kind, and particularly to this of the disciples; for certain it is, that they were in such distress and danger, did cry unto the Lord for help, and had a wonderful deliverance wrought for them In the words new read may be observed, I. The danger and distress the disciples were in, and their sense of the same: We perish.

II. The application they made to Christ, in which they were certainly right; Lord save us. I. The disciples were at this time in great danger and distress; which appear not only from this expression of theirs, We perish, but also from the narrative of their case in the context: For, 1. It is said, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea (Matt. 8:24); a great tempest, μεγαςσεισμ, a great concussion, or shaking. The same word is frequently used both in scripture (Matt. 24:7 and 28:2), and in other writers,[2] for the Terræ motus, or earthquake.

Here it is ascribed to the sea; such a shaking we read of in the prophecy of Haggai (Hagg. 2:6), which had now, at least in part, its literal accomplishment; and when the Messiah, the desire of all nations, should come, Jehovah would shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. The stormy wind agitated and moved the sea, and the waves thereof; and both wind and sea shook the ship, and the men that were in it: which threw them into great surprise and fear.

One of the other evangelists (Luke 8:23) calls this tempest, a storm of wind; and another (Mark 4:37), a great storm of wind; and both of them use the word λαιλαψ, lælaps, which is a particular kind of wind, or is rather a conflict of many winds.[3] The Philosopher says, that

lælaps, as also strobilus, is a wind that is suddenly whirled, and rolled about, downwards and upwards. It is defined by a learned Grecian, to be "a storm, or tempest of wind, with rain."

It seems to be a whirlwind, and hurricane, in which the disciples were. All the views of it, shew them to be in imminent danger. It is also said, that this tempest arose. Could we give into a vulgar notion, that winds may be, and sometimes are raised by Satan, we should be tempted to think, that this storm was raised by him, with a malicious intent to destroy Christ and his disciples at once; since he was always seeking an opportunity to take away the life of Christ, and put different persons upon different methods of doing it, and at last accomplished his end.

But we shall have occasion to observe hereafter, in this discourse, that Satan has no power to raise, continue, restrain, or lay a wind. Nor did this tempest arise by chance; it was no fortuitous event, but was ordered to be, at this very juncture, by the all-wise, and all-governing providence of that God, who commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, for the trial of the faith of the disciples of Christ; and that he might have an opportunity of giving proof of his Deity on the sea, as he had lately done in several instances on the dry land.

The evangelist Luke says (Luke 8:23), that this storm of wind came down: He seems to refer to the course and motion of the winds, which are exhalations from the earth, raised up into the middle region of the air; from whence they are repelled, by a superior force, to the lower region; and from thence move, in an oblique, slanting manner, downwards. So we read of a dry wind of the high places, even a full wind from those places not to fan, nor to cleanse (Jer. 4:11, 12). This violent wind came down with great force into the sea, and lifted up its waves, which beat into the ship, and pressed it much, so that it was in great danger of being sunk by them.

The place where this tempest arose, or into which this storm of wind came down, is here said to be the sea. The evangelist Luke (Luke 8:23), calls it a lake; and is the same with the lake of Genesareth, he elsewhere makes mention of (Luke 5:1). But both the evangelists, Matthew and Mark, call it the sea; and is what is sometimes in scripture call the sea of Tiberius (John 6:1, 21:1), and the sea of Galilee; agreeable to the language of the Jewish writers, when they have occasion to speak of it; and was, as Pliny says, about sixteen miles long, and six broad.

Now, to be in a storm on land is terrible, but to be in one out at sea is much more so. To all this, the word behold is prefixed; which is sometimes used, when something extraordinary and preternatural is spoke of (See Isai. 7:14). This storm seems to have been more than an ordinary one, at least, it was sudden, and unexpected. When the disciples entered the ship, the air was serene, the sea still and quiet, there was no appearance or likelihood of a tempest; but quickly after they had set sail, at once, on a sudden, at unawares, this storm came down upon them; which must needs throw them into great consternation and distress. 2.

The ship was covered with the waves, which so beat into it, as another Evangelist expresses it (Mark 4:37), that it was now full of water; yea, it is said (Luke 8:23), that they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy, or in great danger; which, perhaps, respects the other little ships (Mark 4:36), that were in company with this, and were so ordered by divine providence, to be witnesses of this wondrous event. In one of the copies, of one of the evangelists, the word βυθιζεθαι is used; which signifies, that not only the ship was covered and filled with water, but that it was immersed, or just sinking into the deep; so that the

disciples were brought to the utmost extremity. 3.

What greatly added to, and increased their distress, it is observed, that Christ was asleep; all the evangelists agree in this, though they do not use the same word. The evangelist Mark mentions the place where he was asleep, in the hinder part of the ship, επι τη πουμν, in the stern, where he, as Lord and Master, should be; but, to the great concern of the disciples, he was there asleep, and that in a dead, deep, sound sleep, as the word, which the evangelist Luke makes use of, signifies; and is confirmed by the loud cries, and repeated calls of the disciples to him, saying, Master, Master, We perish.

This sleep, doubtless, arose from natural causes, and was more easily brought upon him, through his very great fatigue in preaching his sermon upon the mount, from whence he was just come down; and through the great resort of people to him, to heal the sick, and cast out devils. He seems to signify, that he was in great uneasiness, and weariness of body, to a certain man, just before he entered into the ship, who said to him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest; who is thus answered by him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head (Matt. 8:19, 20); intimating, as though he wanted an opportunity to lie down, and take some rest: And accordingly, when he was come into the ship, placing himself at the stern, finds a pillow, lays down his head upon it, and falls fast asleep.

But, though this sleep of his was natural, yet it was so ordered by the providence of God, that it should in this manner come upon him, at this time, for the further trial of the faith of his disciples. 4. The great distress they were in expressed in these words, We perish, απολλυμεθα (So the word is rendered, in Luke 19:10, 2 Cor. 4:3), we are lost; a way of speaking still in use among seafaring men, and indeed, in common use with others.

Nothing is more frequent than for us to say, such a vessel, or such a ship's crew, or such a person were lost, at such a time, and in such a place. It is also to be observed, that they do not say, we are in danger of being lost, or we are ready to be lost, or we shall be lost, but we are lost; which shews what apprehensions they had of their condition, and that their case was like that of the apostle Paul, and the mariners with him, when all hope, that they should be saved, was taken away (Acts 27:2).

So the disciples saw no probability of escaping by any natural, rational methods; they looked upon themselves as lost. Christ was their last shift, and he was asleep; however, they resolve to betake themselves to him: Which brings me, II. To the application they make to him, Lord save us: which shews, 1. That they believed he was able to save them: And they had a great deal of reason to believe it, since such considerable miracles were so lately wrought in their presence; an account of which is given in this chapter.

A leper comes to him, declaring his faith in him, that is he was willing, he was sure he was able to cleanse him of his leprosy; upon which, Christ put forth his hand, and with a single touch, saying to him I will, Be thou clean, immediately removed it. A centurion addresses him on the account of his servant, who lay sick of a palsy, signifying, that he verily believed, that if he would speak the word only, his servant would be instantly healed; his reply is, So be it done unto thee; and his servant was healed the very same hour.

Next he enters Peter's house, where his wife's mother lay sick of a fever; he does but touch her hand, and the fever leaves her. These instances, together with the multitude of the sick he healed, and of them that

were possessed with devils he cast out with his word, were sufficient to persuade the disciples, that he was able to deliver them in their great extremity. Our Lord, indeed, blames them for their incredulity, and want of faith. The question he put to them, as related by one of the evangelists, is, Where is your faith? (Luke 8:25) You professed to have, and you had, some faith in me a little while ago; but what is become of it now?

Yea, as it stands in another evangelist, it is put thus, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? (Mark 4:40) that is in exercise: Some faith they had, though it was but small; for the question, as it appears in our evangelist, is put thus, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? (Matt. 8:26) They had no faith in him, as sleeping, but had some little faith in him, that he was able to help them, provided he was awakened out of sleep; for this, Christ blames them.

For though, as the Son of man, he was asleep; yet he, as the Son of God, and Israel's keeper, and theirs, neither slumbers, nor sleeps; and was equally able to save them sleeping, as waking. 2. It is not only certain, that he was able to save them; but it is a matter of fact, that he did save them. Being awakened by his disciples, he raises his head from his pillow, stands up, and with a majestic voice, in an authoritative manner, shewing some kind of resentment at the wind and seas, as if they had exceeded their commission, and the one had blown, and the other raged, too much and too long, he rebukes them in such language as this, Peace, be still, (Mark 4:39) "be silent, hold thy peace, stop thy mouth, put a bridle upon it, as the last word signifies; and go on no longer, to threaten with shipwreck, and loss of lives," Upon this, the wind ceased, the sea became calm, and the ship moved quietly on, and they all arrived safe at the country of the Gadarenes. 3.

This had a very considerable effect, both upon the mariners and the disciples, who rightly concluded from hence, that their Deliverer was more than a man. There was such a shine of majesty, such a lustre of divine power, appeared in this affair, as filled them with astonishment and fear; they marvelled greatly, and feared exceedingly. It had this effect, both upon the men, and the disciples; for though our evangelist seems to relate this, as though the mariners were the persons only who were thus affected with the providence, and the manner of deliverance; who said one to another, What manner of person is this? "of what qualities, powers and perfections, is this person possessed?"

But the other evangelists represent it (Mark 4:41, Luke 8:25), as the question of the disciples to one another; saying, "Who is this person?" Surely, he must be more than a mere man; he can be no other than the mighty God, whom the winds and sea obey. It is to be observed, that the word man, which is put into our translation, is not in the question as expressed in any of the evangelists.

The disciples were abundantly convinced by this instance, which so nearly concerned themselves, that Christ must be God over all blessed for ever. What I shall do further, will be to improve this wonderful instance of the power of Christ, in favour of his divinity; and to shew, that the disciples were right, in their application to him, in this their distress; as are also all poor perishing sinners, sensible of their lost condition, when they have recourse to him alone for eternal life and salvation.

In order to this, First, I shall endeavour to prove, that the power and government of the wind and sea, are only with God, and not with any mere creature. Men have no power, either to raise, or lay the wind: There is no such thing, as a conjuring wind: There is no such set of men, who by magic art, or by all the assistance the devil can give them, are able to perform anything of this nature. We are told, that some have been so ignorant, or wicked, as to pretend to sell winds; and others, no less stupid and impious, who have bought them; but this is all a dream and delusion.

These are deceivers and deceived; for who, what man, has gathered the wind in his fist, and can hold it there, and let it loose at his pleasure? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell? (Prov. 30:4) Name the man, or his son? say when he was born, in what age he lived, of what country was he; who was his immediate son, or what of his posterity now remain: not any of these circumstances, or any thing like them, wilt thou ever be able to produce. As the Lord said to Job, (Job 38:34, 35) Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are? So it may be said to any of the sons of man, Canst thou lift up thy voice to the winds, and send them forth when and where thou pleasest, command and control them, at thy pleasure? say to one, Go thither and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh? No, this is not within the compass of the power of a creature. The devil himself has no such power; He may as soon create a world as create the wind, raise a storm, or lay a tempest.

The treasures of the wind are under lock and key: Satan has not the keeping of them; they are locked up from him, they are out of his reach, he cannot bring them forth when he pleases: He is indeed called (Ephes. 2:2), The prince of the power of the air; not because he has a power to disturb, or still it, to cover it with clouds and blackness, or raise storms and tempest in it; but, because he has the government of those principalities and powers, that posse of apostate spirits; who, being banished from the realms above, have their abode in the air; where, as vagabonds, they rove about, and wonder up and down in it.

Now Satan the angel of the bottomless pit, is prince, or king, over them, whose name in the Hebrew tongue, is Abbaddon, and in the Greek tongue, Apollyon, which both signify a destroyer (Rev. 9:11). The only scriptural instance of the power of Satan over the wind, that is produced, is the wind that blew down the house where Job's children were, and destroyed them: but this wind is not said to come from Satan, but from the wilderness; (Job 1:19) from a certain point in the heavens under the government and direction of Jehovah.

All the hand the devil can be supposed to have in it, under divine permission, was to take the advantage of the sweep of it, just as it came by the house, to add force unto it; and, by his posse of devils with him, to whirl it about the house, and push it upon it with the greater violence: Nor is the wind in the power, and under the government of the good angels. Jehovah has, indeed, made his angels spirits, and winds, (Psalm 104:4) as some translate the word: But then they are so called, not because they are winds, or have the management and direction of them, but because they are like unto them; swift to do the will and work of God, who walketh, and flies upon the wings of the wind (Psalm 104:3, and 18:10).

In the book of the Revelation, (Rev. 7:6) four angels are represented, as standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree: this is not to be understood of the angels in a literal, but in a mystical sense, as holding, or restraining the evil angels, or false teachers, from hurting the saints, or the ministers of the gospel, from

their ministrations of it, as a judgment upon those that despise it: God has sole power and government of the winds in his own hands.

The Heathens themselves were convinced of this; and therefore set up an idol God, whom they called Æolus, to preside over the winds; and who, they supposed had a power of loosing and restraining them at his pleasure: Yea, they thought the wind to be a deity itself, and sometimes built temples, erected altars, and paid homage to it. So Augustus made and performed a vow to Circius, a wind which greatly infested France, and sometimes came with such force, as to un-tile their houses; and so did the Calabrians to Japyx; the Apulians to the wind Arabulus; the Athenians to Sciron; and the Pamphilians to Gagneus: which are the names of the several winds peculiar to these people; to whom they paid their devoirs, that they might not either infect them with diseases, or destroy their fields: Particularly, the Thurians having received a considerable favour from Boreas, the North wind, fulfilled their vows to it, as to a god; because by a vehement gust, it utterly destroyed the navy, which Dionysius had prepared for their destruction: So when Xerxes brought his numerous forces into Greece, the Grecians applied to the Delphick oracle: from whence they received this answer, "That they must pray the assistance of the winds:" upon which, they built an altar, and found them favorable to them, for their enemies whole navy was destroyed and sunk.

These were the sentiments and practices of men, who were without the knowledge of the true God. The wind is no Deity, but a creature, made by the power of God, and governed by him; and is not under the precedence, influence, and direction, of Æolus, Pallas, Anemotis, or any other of the rabble deities of the Heathens; but is wholly, and only, in the hands, and under the command of him, who is the Lord, the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King: At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.--He hath made the earth by his power; he hath established the world by his wisdom; and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion: When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. (Jer. 10:10, 12, 13) The account of the scripture gives of the divine power, and influence over the wind, is very express and particular.

God is represented as the creator of it: whatever are the second causes of it, or the matter of which it consists, or that which gives it its form, force and motion; the Lord is certainly the first, and efficient cause of it: Hence he stands described, as he who formeth the mountains, and createth the wind. (Amos 4:13) As he has his treasures of the snow, and of the hail, so likewise of the wind, which he brings forth when he pleases; he has them ready and prepared, or can, and does quickly prepare them, when he has occasion for them.

It is said (Jonah 4:8), that God prepared a vehement east wind, "a plowing one;" which plowed up the sand, and blew it in the face of Jonah, so that he was almost suffocated with it; which, with the sun beating upon him, must be very afflictive to him. The Lord is also said, to send out a great wind into the sea, (Jonah 1:4) to fetch back Jonah; who, being sent on an errand, was disobedient and fled from the presence of God: The wind, as boisterous and blustering as it sometimes is, was more obedient to the command of God than the prophet.

He says to one wind, Go, and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh. He makes use of them to various ends and purposes: Sometimes in a way of mercy: as when he made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters of the flood were assuaged; (Gen. 8:1) when there went forth a wind from the Lord,

and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp (Num. 9:31) of the Israelites for their food and refreshment; when the wind brought up a great rain, after the land of Israel had been without one for three years and a half; (1 Kings 18:45) when the Lord caused the sea to go back, by a strong east wind all night and made the sea a dry land, and the waters were divided, (Exod. 19:21) so that the Israelites could pass through as on dry land.

And sometimes he uses them in a way of judgment ; as when he (lid blow with his wind, the sea covered them, the Egyptians ; they sunk as lead in the mighty waters : (Exod. 15:10) So he broke the ships of Tarshish with an east wind : (Psal. 48:7) But, whether it. he in one way or another he makes use of them, stormy wind is fulfilling his word, (Psal. 148:8) either of promise or command ; for it is always at his beck. he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind ; (Psal. 107:25) which is a considerable display of his almighty power: he caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; and, by his power, he brought in the south wind. (Psal. 78:26) He is also said, to make the weight for the winds; (Job 28:25) when he poizes them, fitly disposes them, and inclines them to this, or the other point ; to this, or the other coast; or, when he increases their force, makes them more ponderous; and when in the air, which is light of itself, he raises storms and tempests: And, perhaps, the rain may, in some sense, be a weight. for the winds; which, when it fills heavy, lessens the force, depresses the power and stops the progress of them ; wets their wings, bears them down, and causes them to subside However, certain it is, God has the sole power of raising and laying the wind.

The sea also, and the roaring waves thereof, are at his command: As he has made the sea, and all that are in it, so he governs it, lifts up its waves, and restrains them by the word of his power. This is very fully and beautifully expressed by himself, in the following manner ; Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb ? When I made the clouds the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it; and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors; and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? (Job 38:8-11) I go on, Secondly, To observe, That Jesus Christ has such a power over the wind and seas.

Hence it must unavoidably follow, that he is truly and properly God. This is sufficiently evident from the instance before us. It is said, that he rebuked the wind and the sea; a phrase that is used only of the divine Being, and cannot be said of any other than the most high God, who rebuked the red sea, and it was dried up; (Psalm 106:9) and who stands distinguished from all created beings by this, that he stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people. (Psalm 65:7) The Messiah makes use of this as an argument to prove, that he is able to redeem, because he can rebuke the sea, and dry it up, and cover the heavens with clouds and tempests.

Is my hand shortened at all, says he, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? Will any one say this of me? Behold, at my rebuke, I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness;--I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering. (Isaiah 50:2, 3) That this is the Messiah, who here speaks, the following words abundantly declare 'The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, &c. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, (Isaiah 50: 4-6) &c.

Now, upon our Lord's rebuking the wind and sea, the one ceased, and the other became a calm: This was done by speaking a word only, just in the same manner as he had, a little before, healed the centurion's servant: And it was done in an authoritative manner; he commanded the winds and water, as the Lord and Master of them, and they obeyed him Never was any such thing heard of, as performed by a mere

creature. It is reported of one of our kings of the Danish race, Canute, that "one day, as he was walking by the sea side, his attendants extolled him to the skies, and even proceeded to compare him to God himself.

Offended at these extravagant praises, and willing to convince them of their folly and impiety, he ordered a chair to be brought; and seating himself in a place, where the tide was about to flow, turned to the sea, and said: O sea, thou art under my dominion, and the land I sit on is mine I charge thee not to presume to approach any further, nor to dare to wet the feet of thy sovereign. Having said this, he sat still for some time, as expecting the sea should obey his command; but, the tide advancing as usual, he took occasion from thence, to let base flatterers know, that the titles of Lord and Master, belong only to Him, whom the land (the wind) and the sea, obey."

There is one thing more observable in this instance of our Lord's power over the wind and sea, that when he rebuked them, not only the wind ceased, but the sea immediately became a calm; which was very unusual, uncommon, and extraordinary: For, after the wind has ceased, and the storm is over, the waters of the sea, being agitated thereby, keep raging, and, in a violent motion, for a considerable time. Whereas here, soon as ever the word was spoke, that very moment, immediately, at once, the wind ceased, and the sea was calmed.

That man must be an infidel to Revelation, that can read this account, and deny the Deity of Christ; he must be drove to one or other of these two, either to deny the truth of the fact, and the circumstances of it, or believe that Jesus Christ is truly and properly God. Hence, Thirdly, The disciples were certainly right, in their application to him for deliverance, when they were in so great danger and distress: Since he appears to be no other than the mighty God, who made the heavens, the earth and sea, and all that are in them; who upholds all things by the word of his power, by whom all things were created, and in whom all things consist; and therefore has a power of ruling, ordering, and disposing all things, according to his will and pleasure: And even as mediator, he has all power in heaven, and in earth, given unto him; which he makes use of in the behalf of his own people, both for their temporal and spiritual good.

The disciples, applying to him, found him to be, even in a literal sense, an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. (Isaiah 32:2) And, Fourthly, Such equally are in the right, who being sensible of their lost perishing condition, have recourse to him alone, for eternal life and salvation. All men are in such a condition, as the descendants of Adam, and as considered in him, in whom all died. The sentence of death passed upon all men in him ; for that , "in whom" all have sinned. (1 Cor. 15:22, Rom. 5:12) All men are transgressors of the law of God, stand charged with the breaches of it; every mouth is stopped by it, and all the world become guilty before God. (Rom. 3:19) Every man and woman are liable to the curses of it, and to the wrath of God, for the violation of it.

God's elect themselves are, by nature, the children of wrath, even as others; (Ephes. 2:3) equally deserving of it, as being in their nature-head, and in their nature-state. But all men are not sensible of this, some are whole, strong, healthful, and robust, in their own apprehensions, and need not a physician; (Matt. 9:12) they are rich in their own account, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; (Rev. 3:17) they are dead in sins, and have no spiritual sense and feeling of their wretched condition.

They are like a man, that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or upon the top of a mast ; who says, they have stricken me, and I was not sick: they have beaten me and I felt it not: (Prov. 23:34, 35) and so remain indolent, and unconcerned about a future state, or the danger of a present one: No man repents him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done; every one turns to his course, as the horse rusheth into battle.

(Jer. 8:6) And this is, and will be the case, until the Spirit of God convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment, And then they see themselves ready to perish, cry out in the bitterness of their souls, What must we do to be saved?

Look upon themselves as lost and undone, and can find no soundness in their flesh, because of the anger of the Lord; nor any rest in their bones, because of their sin. They feel a tempest rising in their own breasts the law works wrath in them, and there is nothing else, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. (Heb. 10:27) When they look upwards, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, and ungodliness of men; in their apprehensions, the storm of wrath is gathering thick and black, hangs over their heads, just ready to break and fall upon them.

They are like the people of Israel, at the foot of mount Sinai, (Heb. 7:18-21) who were come to blackness, darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which they that heard, intreated, that the word should not be spoken to them any more ; for they could not endure that which was commanded: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. And what adds to their distress is, that they find they are not able to help themselves, and know not which way to escape.

They wish for wings like a dove, to fly away, and be at rest, to wander far off, and remain in the wilderness, and so hasten their escape from the windy storm and tempest; (Psalm 55:6-8) but alas! they know not where to go from the Spirit, or flee from the presence of God. They are sensible, that rocks and mountains cannot hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lord God almighty. Their own righteousness appears no other than rags, which cannot cover and screen them from the avenging justice of God ; for they are as much convinced of the insufficiency of their righteousness to justify them before God, as of the exceeding sinfulness of sin; and therefore tremble at the thoughts of an awful future judgement.

Now, where should such poor, perishing creatures apply but to Christ, as the disciples, in their distress; and say to him, as they did, Lord, save us; we perish? Should they not go in an humble manner, as Benhadad's servants did to the king of Israel, and prostrate themselves at his feet; and say, as the Publican did, God be merciful to us sinners? Should they not go to him with the resolution of Esther saying, If we perish, we will perish at the feet of Jesus? Such souls have a great deal of reason to believe they shall find this man, this god--man, and mediator the Lord Jesus Christ, an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.

Whither should they go, whither can they go, but unto him, who has the words of eternal life? God has appointed him to be his salvation unto the ends of the earth ; he sent him, and he came to be the Saviour of the world. It is a faithful saying, deserves credit, and is worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners: he is become the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him his name is called Jesus, because he saves his people from all their sins, and from all the dreadful effects of them; Lie saves them from the law, from curse, and condemnation by it ; from Satan and the world, from hell, the second death and wrath to come : He is mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him And he is as willing as he is able; for he has said, (Isaiah 45:22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, ; for I am God, and there is none else.

And, besides all this, there is salvation in no other person, nor by any other name; in vain it is hoped for from any other quarter, or by any other hand; and there is a full, complete and suitable salvation in him His atoning sacrifice fully expiates sin; his righteousness justifies from all things; his blood, sprinkled upon the

conscience, lays the tempest there, saying, Peace, he still; and being carried within the veil, and sprinkled upon the mercy seat, before the throne, secures from the storm of divine wrath to come; and his name is a strong tower, whither the righteous run, and are safe.

But to hasten to a conclusion: The occasion of this discourse is the great storm, commonly called the high wind; which arose the twenty-sixth, and continued to the twenty-seventh of November, one thousand seven hundred and three, thirty three years ago: On the account of which, a day of humiliation was appointed by public authority, January the nineteenth following. It is not easy to say, what disasters and calamities it brought here, and in other parts of Europe; how many edifices, of a larger and lesser size, were thrown down, in cities, towns and villages; what devastations were made, in parks, gardens and inclosures; how much shipping, of greater and smaller bulk, were destroyed; and, what is of all most awful, what multitudes of souls, at once, launched into an endless eternity.

To give a detail of the several particulars of these things would be long and tedious, and in a great measure needless, after so many narratives have been printed, and so many discourses published ; among the most valuable of which number, must be allowed to stand a discourse, preached in this place, and on this occasion, since made public by my predecessor, Mr. Benjamin Stinton.[4] It is remarkable, that on this very day, seven years ago, a considerable storm of wind arose ; which blew much about the same time this did, in its greatest fury, we now commemorate.

I have reason to believe, that there is one[5] here present, who was cast away in it, and remarkably delivered, after having been exposed to the most imminent danger. I doubt not, but such an one retains a sense of the mercy, and thankfully acknowledges the goodness of God, and the kind interposure of divine providence, in his favour. I shall close all with a word of exhortation. Let us adore the perfections, and observe the operations of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the government and management of the winds and seas.

The concern, that the Father of Christ has herein, is not contested ; nor need there be any hesitation about the Son, when the instance, now attended to, is carefully considered; nor should there be any about the holy Ghost, when it is observed, that the heavens were, at first, garnished by him, and he moved upon the face of the waters, and brought the present earth into the form and order, in which it has since appeared Besides, his extraordinary gifts bestowed upon the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, came down upon them with a rushing, mighty wind: (Acts 2:1) And the common, or ordinary operations of his grace, in the souls of men, are compared to the wind: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (John 3:8) Let us also take notice of the providences of God, and not let them be neglected by us, or buried in oblivion; we should make every proper use of them ourselves, and transmit them to posterity: Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. (Psalm 107:43) Doubtless, with such a view, Mr.

Taylor, who, whilst he lived, was a member of the church which meets in this place, laid a foundation for the annual observation of this day. Again in the view of the awful dispensations of providence, let us humble ourselves before God, since these shew the mighty hand of the Lord; let us stand in awe of his righteous judgments. How soon, and how easy, can he make this large and populous city, and the whole kingdom, an heap of rubbish? Sanctify the Lord of hosts, make him your fear, and your dread.

To conclude, in a view of all our sins and transgressions, and of all that wrath and ruin they expose us to, let us take sanctuary in Christ; who is a strength to the poor; a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast from the terrible ones, sin, law, and justice, is as a storm against the wall. (Isaiah 25:4) ENDNOTES

[1] Mr. Joseph Hussey, in his Warning from the Winds, p. 21, &c.

[2] Aristooel, Meterolog, l. ii. c. 7 and 8, vol. l. p. 348, 349. Ed. Lagdun Herodot. l. 4. c. 28. p. 231. Ed. Gronov. Pausan. l. 7. p. 446. Edit. Hanov.

[3] Vid. Leigh's Critiea Sacra in vocc. λαιλαψ.

[4] Preached November 27, 1713.

[5] Mr. Robert Inger, a member of the church of Christ, at Horslydown, under my care, who was cast away on the Goodwin Sands, November 27, 1729, in the Endeavour, homeward bound from Virginia; who, with the whole ship's crew, in all seventeen, together with one passenger, and a pilot, were saved in a small pinnace, after they had been some hours exposed to the wind and sea, being taken up by a Deal vessel.

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