

31 STILL WATERS

Psalms 23:2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Mark 4:39 ... "Peace, be still!"

Sometimes God needs to make us lie down because we are too busy to do so ourselves. He desires to bring us to this place of rest. The scene before us in the well-loved *Psalms 23* is typical of peace and tranquillity, with lush green pastures beside still waters. There is something in nature as God's creation that is always refreshing and recreating to the soul. If physical peace can do so much to pacify our souls, how much more will spiritual stillness bring serenity and strength? One is reminded of the pristine beauty of fjords and lakes where the reflection is hardly distinguishable from the real objects in the symmetry along the shoreline. These are still waters which also run deep. True spiritual rest is experienced in the deeps, not in the shallows of superficial spirituality. Notice the scene in the psalm does not focus on drinking or feeding. It is just being there and finding rest. In all our seeking, we need to learn to simply come into the presence of God in quietness, and not be anxious about getting filled or fired up.

In the incident recorded in *Mark 4:36-41* about Jesus and His disciples crossing the lake in a boat, the scene is not one of still waters but stormy waters which are stilled. When the winds and waves start to rise and beat on the boat, it is the time we need to still the waters. God means us to do the stilling through Him, sometimes by withdrawing to Him, and other times by being there to change the situation. *"And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling"* (*Mark 4:37*). Let the winds rage and the waves roar, but do not let your boat be water-logged with cares and troubles from the storms of life. *"But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow"* (*Mark 4:38*). The mark of childlike trust is the ability to sleep blissfully in the midst of a storm. The stern of a boat is the place for steering, not sleeping. But until and unless we can sleep in a storm, we will not have the faith to still it. As the Lord slept in the stern, and as John leaned on Jesus' breast (*John 13:25, 21:20*), we need to learn to lean on Him and take our rest. Only then will we find the assurance and answer to perplexing circumstances.

Go to the stern of the ship, away from the billows at the bow, and *"come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while"* (*Mark 6:31*). From this place of rest in Him, we shall then be able to rise up to do something that makes a difference to the situation. *"Then He arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm"* (v39). We are powerless to do anything except with the authority that comes from being with Jesus. A storm is either an uncontrollable happening in life, or one that is stilled and controlled by the power of Christ.

"But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?'" (v40) Fear rules when faith is absent. But when faith is present, fear is dispelled, and peace rules where there was a storm.