

a great storm and it looked as if it was going to be wrecked, and all the men of the ship were excited and disturbed, Jonah was down in the hold fast asleep. What a good conscience, you might say, that he can sleep so well! What an untroubled heart! God wants us to have quiet consciences and untroubled hearts. But He does not want us to have them when we should be excited and disturbed because we are doing what is contrary to His will.

We read that the ship-master awakened Jonah and brought him up to the deck. Then the men cast lots to see who was responsible for their difficulty, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

God used the superstition of these men to work out his purposes. Not every storm is due to the sin of some individual who is involved in it. There are many reasons why God permits things to happen. He often sends difficult experiences into our lives because of lessons he desires to teach us. He has ways of fitting and molding us, so that we may serve Him more effectively. Trouble is not always the result of a specific sin. Nor do we believe that in our day God often guides by the casting of lots. The attitude of the sailors was an attitude of superstition. Nevertheless in this case God had sent the tempest in order to bring Jonah back to his duty, and he caused that the lots should fall in such a way as to show who really was responsible for the storm.

When the lot fell on Jonah, the men asked him who he was and where he came from. Now, surprisingly, Jonah's courage comes to the fore. We see his actual nobility of character, and find proof that he was not an inherently wicked man, but rather an erring saint. He replies: "I am an Hebrew; and I