

Mount Sinai

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the Law and God's holiness, and how it drives us to seek help in Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Exodus 20:1, Isaiah 6:3, Romans 3:20, Romans 7:7, Romans 8:3, Romans 10:4, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:24, Hebrews 12:18

Topics: "Gods Law", "Salvation Grace"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the significance of God's Law revealed at Mount Sinai, emphasizing the majesty and holiness of Jehovah as portrayed through the commandments. The Law serves as a mirror to reflect the sinfulness and need for cleansing in every individual, ultimately pointing to the necessity of a Savior, Jesus Christ, to fulfill its demands and provide salvation. Through the terrors of Sinai, Law highlights the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the insufficiency of human efforts to attain righteousness, leading souls to seek refuge in the grace and mercy of Christ.

Transcript

"God spoke all these words." Exodus 20:1

Mount Sinai is not rightly seen until the Gospel-sun shines brightly on it. The total aspect then is changed. Its terrors disappear. The darkness melts into the light of life. The angry roar is hushed in notes of peace. Reader! approach this scene with humble prayer. If the Spirit guide your steps, it will open, as a gate, to Zion's blissful slopes.

Who brings the sons of Israel to Sinai's base? It is the God of everlasting grace. His mercy looked on their enslaved estate. He burst their bonds and crushed their cruel foes. He was feeding them morn after morn with food from heaven. He was sending streams to supply their thirst. And now, by beckoning cloud, He leads them to this spot. They may advance, then, without fear. His counsels will bud forth in blessings. This mount will be a platform to show Christ to souls. Grace must continue to be grace.

When the host reached these heights, they are addressed from heaven. Who is the speaker? The voice is that of JESUS. The Spirit clears this fact. He tells us, that the Angel, the messenger of the eternal Covenant, communed with Moses on the Mount. If Jesus speaks, the accents will be tender love. It is so here. His prelude thus brings peace into their hearts, 'You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.' This preface does not look like a door to

woe. It seems the first drops of a fresh shower of goodness. An especial mandate is next heard. The Lord announces that new revelations are at hand. Especial preparation, then, must now be made. The people are sin-soiled. Their bodies know pollution's touch. Purifying rites, therefore, must prepare them for God's approach.

Reader! you cannot learn too deeply, that we are all infected and impure with sin, and all our righteous acts are but filthy rags! Do you see self as one mire-heap of filth? Do you loathe human merit as a plague-spot? Have you received the warning word, 'If I wash you not, you have no part with Me?' Pause before Sinai, and weigh well your need of cleansing before you can meet God.

The third day comes. The mount is fenced. Then clouds of terror thicken. Dismay stalks forth in most appalling form. Each sight amazes, and each sound affrights. Is thunder terrible?--peal upon peal cracks in increasing roar. Are lightnings plumed with wings of swiftly-flying awe?--a forked blaze pours its incessant darts. Is it a cheerless time when light is absent?--night with its blackest pall mantles the heights. Do stoutest hearts wax cold when clanging trumpets yell?--echo now maddens with their din. Was Sodom's smoking plain a frightful destruction?--the range of hills flares, as a murky furnace. Is it terrific to see cloud-capped summits tottering to the fall?--the rocky mass now shivers as a wind-tossed reed.

But why do all terrors settle on the mount? The answer is a page of solemn truth. The Spirit's mouth shall give it. 'The Lord came from Sinai. From his right hand went a fiery law for them.' The Lord wills now to manifest His Law. The hand which holds it shakes terror over a transgressing world. We thus are led to ask the purpose of the Law. Until the soul discerns the nature of this code, God is not truly known. His Gospel is a sealed book. His holiness is an unsubstantial name.

The Law reveals Jehovah's majesty. It sets Him on the throne of spotless purity. It unveils the stature of His boundless righteousness. It crowns Him with the diadem, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts.' It cries with trumpet-tongue that holiness is the pavement of His heavens, the atmosphere of His kingdom, the portals of His palace, the delight of His heart. It shows what God is, and what they must become who would appear before Him. Where is the sinner who will now draw near without some better righteousness than self can weave? Well might Mount Sinai quake, when on its pedestal a Law like this is given.

But was the Law now first shown? Far otherwise. On creation's morn it was inwrought in Adam's heart. The parent of our race set his first steps on earth in the very likeness of the great Creator. The Maker's hand could only plant a perfect plant. Man's new-born eye thus looked unmoved on God. He trod this soil in happy innocence. His soul was purity. His voice was perfect praise. Evil was a weed unplucked. Transgression was a path untrod. Guilt was a torture yet unborn. The law of love was in each fiber of his heart. Adam thus stood. The Law was in him. He knew that to obey was life, to disobey was death.

But sinlessness soon withered in his hands. The tempter came. The tempted yielded. The beautiful fabric of the Law was shivered. Its promised life expired. Its dreadful curse became our heritage.

This Law, implanted in the heart of our first parents, must now be heard again on Sinai. It is God's will to show it as a written statute. Its voice, however, is the same. There is no change in its exact requirements. Its measure seems to be more vividly displayed. Its breadth and length are more distinctly marked. But its essence is all one. Two tables now contain it. Ten separate edicts open out its claims. But these brief words admit a summary more brief. The one sum of the demand is simply this--pure love. Without it none can see God's face. But why is it thus renewed? Is it God's will to cancel now the many promises which cheered the elders of the house of faith? Shall the fair page of hope, based on the blood of cleansing, be

scattered to the winds? Shall Adam's race again be sent to work for life? Must their own hands erect a tower of safety from rubbish of earth's quarry? Away with such a fearful thought! It would lead headlong to despair's foul depths. Can the poor cripple run? Can the broken wing expand? Can the withered tree bear fruit? Can the sentenced culprit burst his chains? Can the dead arise and walk? Enfeebled nature might more easily do this, than man's lost strength fulfill one mandate of the righteous Law. To send him to pluck innocence in guilt's wild wilderness; to patch a righteousness with shreds and rags of sin; to mount to heaven by a broken ladder's crumbling rounds; would be to mock his ruin and deride his woe. The Law is not republished with designs so vain.

Look steadfastly at Sinai. Amid all the terrors, angels' forms are seen. A mediator's hands receive the tables. These signs establish that grace is there. Such is the truth. God states His claims, that we, with open eye, may see our need. Our sense of ruin makes the Gospel prized. To those who have no help in self, God's love appears more lovely, His mercy more merciful, His pity more pitiful, His tenderness more tender, His forbearance more forbearing, God more Godlike, Christ more precious, His blood more cleansing, His righteousness more beautiful, His cross more glorious, His pardons dearer, His salvation surer, His Gospel the one home, His wounds the only refuge. Is it not grace to urge us onward towards the cross? This work is never truly done, until the Law displays God's holiness, sin's sinfulness, and hell gaping at our feet.

Satan is ever ready to persuade that a heavenly Father is too gentle to cause woe. Sinai dashes this error to the ground. It shows that God's whole nature abhors evil, and is pledged to execute just wrath. The conscious sinner looks, then, for help. There is such help in Christ, and Christ alone. Thus Sinai drives him to a Savior's arms. This work is grace. Sinai shows sin to be exceeding sinful and exceeding strong.

In the world's school, and by deceiving lips, disguise is spread around the monster's forms. It is but faintly blamed as nature's blemish without power to hurt. But as light manifests a chamber's filth; as heat revives the frozen viper; as the sun's rays draw out the offensive vapor; as barriers cause the rushing stream to overflow; so the Law's restraints make sin to show its hideousness and giant-size! A sinner thus convinced of sin looks with horror on himself. Where shall he flee? Jesus draws near. His blood obliterates. His grace makes free. Thus Sinai magnifies a Savior's saving worth. This work is grace.

It is at Sinai that the Law makes bare its vengeful arm. It must have sinless purity. But if offence occurs, there is no pity, there is no escape. The curse points sternly towards perdition's lake. When this is known, how precious are the sheltering arms of Jesus! Thus Sinai's truth endears the Gospel-hope. This work is grace.

Reader! has Sinai proved this Gospel-blessing unto you? If not, come now and have close dealings with it. It states its claim. You show your moral principles, your upright life, your inoffensive walk. But this is not one course of love. You startle. You are undone. The thunder roars; the lightnings flash; the mountain quakes; hell is before you. But stop. This is a warning to seek help in Jesus. You cry for mercy with imploring tears. On bended knee, with broken heart, you plead for pardon. How vain! The Law cannot relent. No agony of grief can move its iron breast. The thunder roars; the lightnings flash; the mountain quakes; hell is before you. But stop. This is a warning to seek help in Jesus.

You urge that your transgressions were but rare, your penitence most deep, your reformation most sincere. If this were true, (but true it is not), yet it cannot undo what has already been done; or cancel what is past; or build again your fallen innocence. Oh, no! The curse must have its course. The thunder roars;

the lightnings flash; the mountain quakes; hell is before you. But stop. This is a warning to seek help in Jesus.

You perhaps think religion's holy rites most punctually discharged. That hope, you think, will surely stand, which rests on the baptismal font, the hallowed feast, the constant service, and a strict train of unremitted forms. How good, how precious are all these, as signs of inward life, and proofs of a devoted heart! But what is their power to give unblemished righteousness? Is this your best defense? The thunder roars; the lightnings flash; the mountain quakes; hell is before you. But stop. This is a warning to seek help in Jesus.

We here discern why multitudes seek peace in Rome, and Rome's poor flimsy fabric of deceits: they never saw with open eye Mount Sinai's terror. Its thunder never rolled through their awakened conscience. They know nothing of the Law's pure code. Its curse has never struck them to the ground. Their wound seems slight. A slight remedy will therefore cure. Their need seems little. Human absolution, and human sprinklings, and human prayers, will therefore make them safe. Oh! it will be dreadful to awake from such a dream, when the great white throne is set, and God requires a righteousness as vast as God.

Reader! if you have fled from Sinai to the cross, this righteousness you have. Christ has fulfilled for you its utmost demand. Christ has endured for you the total of its direst curse. The Law, completely satisfied, claims heaven for you. Mount Sinai's steps exalt you to the heights of glory. Its voice of thunder hymns you to salvation's rest.

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