

The Ark

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking salvation through faith in Christ, warning against the dangers of delay and unbelief.

Scripture: Genesis 7:1, Psalm 32:6, Matthew 11:28, John 14:6, Acts 4:12

Topics: "Salvation Through Faith", "Gods Righteous Judgment"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the story of Noah's Ark, emphasizing the importance of seeking refuge in Christ as the ultimate deliverance from peril. He highlights the wickedness of man and God's righteous judgment, urging listeners to heed the warnings of impending judgment and turn to the loving Savior for salvation. Law stresses the necessity of faith in God's provision for protection and the futility of seeking safety in worldly knowledge, youth, religious practices, or self-made solutions. He calls for a deep, personal commitment to Christ as the only true security and refuge from the impending wrath.

Transcript

The Lord then said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and your whole family." Genesis 7:1

The story of the ark has been familiar to us from memory's birth. It gave interest to our earliest lessons. Its very name revives the instructions by a tender mother's side, or from some anxious teacher's lips. It brings us back to the first pages of our first Bible, and to our seats as children in our childhood's class. In a land of Christian teaching, most in their youth thus pondered the record of a wretched world's most wretched end. In thought they trace and retrace each particular, until the whole is vivid, as a witnessed scene. But they who go no deeper, only trifle as with a nursery-toy. Their feet reach the threshold of truth's palace, but they enter not into the wide chamber, in which God dispenses light. They do not break the box of precious ointment. They are like Hagar--a well of water is near--she thirsts, but sees it not.

Reader! do not be deceived. The Bible is a mirror in your hands for this grand end--that you may see therein a loving Savior's loving heart, and a mighty Savior's mighty deeds. Jesus is the treasure of the field of Scripture. If you win Him, you are rich and wise forever. If you win Him not, all other wealth is poverty--all other knowledge is a brilliant folly. Act on this soul-saving principle; and never close the sacred pages until you are cheered by the smile of Him, who is the smile of heaven.

Come, then, and with holy longing after the light of life, let us contemplate the Ark. Jesus is there in all the glories of redeeming love. "Make an ark of gopher wood." Here is no human forethought. It is a voice from

heaven. But for what purpose? The reply pencils the dark background, on which the bright features of God's grace appear most prominent in beauty. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," or every day. Sin enormous--sin all-prevailing--sin without ceasing, was the vapor which went up from earth. But can sin thus rear its head, and wrath lie still? Impossible! Sin is the abominable thing, which God hates. It cannot move onward without dragging vengeance in the rear. Behold the proof. God the holy and the just proclaims, "The end of all flesh is come before Me." But would any plead that the threat was vague, and gave no definite alarm? Judgment draws not the glittering sword, until the clearest trumpets sound the clearest sound.

Mark the next thrilling note, "Behold I, even I, will bring a flood of waters upon the earth." Thus all might know what terrors were gathering around. Thus all heard the tolling of execution's bell. God is righteous. He strikes not without cause. He strikes not without warning. The notice, though thus distinct, seems to have been uttered only by one preacher's voice. But who can count the messages upon messages, throughout all ages, which have clustered around our earth, each testifying that the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men draws near? Reader! you have been often told that everlasting burnings are the bed of sin.

The threatened vengeance moved with reluctant step. Patience suffered long. Years dawned and closed, and still the sun was bright, the skies were clear. Surely if space for repentance brought the grace of repentance, the world would have been clad in sackcloth of penitence and shame. But something far mightier than external opportunity must work before a soul can feel, and confess, and forsake its sins. Man, not arrested from on high, is man going downward in guilt. A lengthened respite is often nothing but a lengthened iniquity. I beg you, apply this. It is not mine to know your years, your warnings, or your calls. But years you have; and warnings you have had; and every moment is a call. Say, then, has the goodness of God led you to repentance? Let conscience answer. Believe me, reprieves are not pardons. Execution delayed is not execution escaped. Agag is spared today, to die more signally tomorrow. If you are still a wanderer from God, let this hour see your tears, and hear your prayers; or soon you may never cease to weep, where prayer is never made.

Amid this spreading flood of evil the ark continues to rise. Noah had heard the word, "Make an Ark." The command was startling. He was to provide against a judgment, new and unknown. Reason would question, how can it be? Experience--which knew not the like--would darken doubts. Prejudice, with many ready cavils, would hint that it was improbable, if not impossible. But God has spoken--The man of God was persuaded. He acted, and prepared, and was saved. It could scarcely be, but that ridicule and sneer would embitter his days of trustful toil. Many who saw him work, would mock his unabating labor. He would stand a very by-word for brain-sick delusion.

This is faith's constant trial. The natural man understands not its motives, its hopes, its expectations, its doings. But it is quick of ear to hear, and quick of eye to see a guiding God. It well knows whom it believes. It has an assurance far more assured than all conclusions of reason or testimonies of sense. Thus nothing moves it. It tramples down hindrances. It embraces the cross, and wins the crown. The last hour strikes at last. The cup of iniquity overflows. Who now can stay the right hand of the Lord? The clouds gather--the ceaseless torrents fall. Where now is the jest--the taunt--the bravery of unbelief? The truth of God is a truth discovered too late. Destruction is found to be a reality, when the victim feels the grasp. Refuge has ceased. The loftiest buildings, the tops of the highest rocks, are only a watery grave. Earth is a whirlpool of despair, and then the silence of departed life.

Such is the solemn fact. Wrath denounced, and wrath not feared, is wrath without escape! But hearken! for every drop of this huge deluge has a voice, which sighs; as surely as the ungodly of the old world once lived, so surely did they sink in anguish. The word of God responds with as many tongues; as surely as men tread the same earth, so surely will the final flames burst forth. What! though the hour is not expected. Unheeded slumber is one sign that it is near. Decreasing moments will soon decrease no more. A worn out thread scarcely restrains the sluices of a fiery flood. The end rolls forward. Soon, and it will be here. Soon, and it will be past. Soon, and we shall have had our part in it.

Reader! will it find you in the Ark of salvation, or writhing in the billows of the lost? Pause, and reflect. The world decrepit and blind in sin, is tottering to the gulf of ruin. Are you, then, secure in an all-sufficient haven; or are you unsheltered, as a tiny bark in the midst of a wild ocean's roar? Why do I thus ask? Because I would have you safe, and happy, and peaceful, and blessed forever. But safety there is none--happiness there is none--peace there is none--and blessedness there is none, except in the Gospel-ark, who is Christ Jesus. Behold Him! Behold Him!

What is the Ark of old to us, but an emblem of His full redemption? He is the one deliverance from all peril. He is the heaven-high refuge. He is the all-protecting safety. He is the building of enduring life; the foundation of which was laid in the counsels of eternity; which was reared in the fullness of time on the plains of earth; and the head of which towers above the skies. He is that lofty fabric of shelter, which God decreed, appointed, provided, and sets before the sons of men. He is that sure covert, which is so fortified, that all the thunderbolts of the almightiness of divine judgment play harmless around it; and all the raging storms of vengeance, and all the fury of the waves of wrath, only consolidate its strength. It must be so. For our hiding place is the mighty God. Our salvation is Jehovah's fellow. Our glorious sanctuary is the glorious Jesus.

This Ark is brought very near--even to your feet. Its portals are widely open. All things call you, no, command you to come in. God's finger writes above the door, "whoever enters is forever safe." No powers of earth or hell can injure or affright the rescued inmates. Do you pause? Alas! too many a brow proclaims in letters of worldly-mindedness, frivolity, indifference, profaneness, and sin--"as our fathers were, so are we." But will you be self-slain? Would that I could pierce the windings of your heart, and detect the fatal hesitation, which administers its opiate there! I would drag the monster into light. I would give you no rest, until you had trampled it to death.

Think, do any of the following marks betray the foes which lodge as murderers within you? Convictions are sometimes hushed by the silly smile--"we are only as the mass around us. If we are in peril, who is not? Can these crowds all perish? Surely there is mercy in God, which will hold back such an ocean of unfathomable woe." This thought is an old deceiver. Numbers change not the truth of God, or the character of sin; neither can they frame a bark to float on waves of fire.

Youth, if it thinks at all, may think that coming years will bring some refuge. This is an idle dream. When did hardened hardness melt into softness? Will unbelief, by growing old, ripen into faith? The morning of life was no barrier against the flood. Who can count the cradles which it devoured? If you are young, be wise, and laugh not through a speck of time, and then wail through an immeasurable eternity.

Others are at ease, because they have been taught the truths of Jesus. The Ark was well studied of old. Day after day it was the gaze and discourse of thousands. But this did not save them. They who trust to the mere head knowledge, will find their memory a keen edge to the gnawings of the undying worm. It may

be that in forms, and ordinances, and services, you draw very near, and seem to place your hands on saving grace. Thus many touched the Ark, and did no more. As the water rose, they would cling to it with agonized grasp--in vain! They are outside. And all outside is death.

Others hope, sometime before they die, to cry and pray. How many sank in fruitless shriekings for some help! Perchance you are high in gifts, in talents, in position, in influence, in diligence, in self-esteem, in man's applause. But as the peaks, which soared above the clouds, dwindled before the flood; so the loftiest pretensions are very dust before the great white throne. Is it so, that you have a shadowy hope, that at last something self-framed, will be a plank of escape? Many devices were devised, when the deluge began its unsparing work. But all were as a mocking straw.

Reader! do not be cheated of your soul's life-blood by impostors in such thin disguise. Turn to the truth of God. Seek the one real, solid, substantial provision, to which our Bibles point with extended arm. There is but one name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. There is but one security. We are only safe when enclosed and wrapped up in Christ. We are above peril only, when dwelling within Him, the Ark. We are covered only, when we nestle in His wounded side. We are hid only, when gathered under His widely-spread wings. Never rest until you have passed the threshold of this heaven-wrought Ark. Then you may rejoice with the people of God. "Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to You while You may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him." Psalm 32:6

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