

The Burning Bush

by Henry Law

The burning bush is a symbol of God's presence and power, and a type of Christ's unharmed nature, teaching us about the importance of faith and trust in God.

Scripture: Exodus 3:3, Isaiah 43:2, Matthew 16:18, Romans 8:31, 2 Corinthians 4:8, Colossians 1:27, 1 Peter 1:7

Topics: "Christ's Riches", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the profound significance of the burning bush in Exodus 3:3, emphasizing how it symbolizes the unsearchable riches of Jesus and the need to see Christ by faith to know peace and hope. The sermon delves into the life of Moses, highlighting his choice to embrace scorn, affliction, and poverty for the sake of God's people, showcasing the importance of seeing a fairer world above earthly pleasures. It also explores the sufferings and all-resisting might of Jesus, drawing parallels to the Church's resilience in the face of trials and persecutions, as well as the believer's growth amidst spiritual battles.

Transcript

"He looked, and, behold, the Bush burned with fire, and the Bush was not consumed." Exodus 3:3

Wondrous is the sight which here meets our view. It is a Bush in flames, but not consumed. Destroying fire fails to destroy. Perishable wood refuses to be fuel. Reader! this surely is no new object to you. But know that it abounds in lessons which your search cannot exhaust. It must be so. The unsearchable riches of Jesus are in this mine! He, who is the Wonder of Wonders, is the true Wonder of the Bush.

Reader! you must see Christ by faith, if ever you would see God and enter heaven. You must know Christ in heart, if ever you would know peace in conscience and hope in death. Ask then the Holy Spirit that He would make the blazing Bush to be a blaze of saving light within your soul. The way to the burning Bush lies through an avenue of instructive thoughts.

Moses is mercifully rescued from an early grave of waters. Pharaoh's decree dooms to death. But Pharaoh's daughter is the means of life. When God has purposes to work, He can make foes his tools! The oppressor's court becomes the refuge of the oppressed. The Hebrew child is caressed as an Egyptian prince. But the perils of the Nile are scarcely greater to the body; than the perils of the palace to the soul. Worldly pomp is very dazzling. Worldly luxury is very entrancing. Worldly pleasures are very ensnaring. But there is an ark of safety in the flood of vanities, as in the flood of waters. Moses is neither dazzled, nor entranced, nor ensnared. He looks above, and sees a splendor far more bright. He deliberately chooses

scorn and affliction and loss and poverty, with the people of God. And he finds such scorn to be the truest honor--such affliction to be the purest joy--such loss to be the richest gain--such poverty to be the most enduring wealth.

Reader! it is an important principle, that none can tread the world beneath their feet until they see a fairer world above their heads. When the Lord is set before you, your eyes are dim to lower objects. The beauty of the all-beauteous One makes other loveliness unlovely. Moses proves the mighty energy of soul-elevating, soul-purifying faith. This stirring principle turns his whole course from ease and affluence and self, into one stream of daring activities for God. He beholds with aching heart Israel's crushed tribes. He boldly presents himself to avenge their wrongs, and to erect the standard of their freedom. But what is the welcome which awaits him? Alas! he is thrust away with a rejecting taunt, 'Who made you a prince and a judge over us?'

Reader! your eyes are open to such pitiable folly. You sigh over a serfdom, which is content to do a tyrant's bidding, rather than defy a tyrant's rage. But such may be your own case. The Gospel, like Moses, approaches men. It tells them that they grind in Satan's prison-house. It calls them to arise from the dust, to lift up the head, to burst the fetters, to dare to be free. It shows them Jesus, the Captain of Salvation, inviting them to the banner of His cross. It assures those who this Leader never lost a battle--and never lost a man. It beseeches them to cast off the filthy fetters, and to stride boldly towards the sparkling crown. What answer is returned? Alas! multitudes hate the voice which would arouse them. They hug the bonds which bind them to perdition's cell. They little think how soon each link in that chain will become a deathless scorpion and a quenchless flame!

'Then Moses fled at this saying.' Reader! take heed. The decree may issue, he 'is joined to idols; let him alone.' An unwelcomed Savior may depart forever. The wings of love may fly away in judgment.

He was hidden as a stranger in the land of Midian forty years. But the God who was his shield in the crowd, was his sun in the desert. It is sad, that the Lord's servant must be earth's outcast. But it is sweet to see how heavenly wisdom can make the hardest usage to yield our choicest blessings. The sweetest honey is from the stony rock. There was work for Moses which required lamb-like meekness with lion-like resolve. He must be calm as the ocean when it sleeps--firm as the rock which smiles at storms. These are the lessons of tribulation's school--therefore, in tribulation he must be schooled. Metal becomes pure by long process in the furnace. The wisdom which is profitable in the busy haunts of busy men, grows in retirement's still shade. In the seclusion of Arabia, Paul drinks calmly of truth's fount. In the wilds of Midian, Moses sits at the feet of God.

At last the appointed time of rescue came. God's works are the reflection of decrees ordained of old. When His purposes were ripe, a marvel startles the shepherd-prophet. A Bush blazes before him, each branch, each fiber reddened in the flame. But neither branch nor fiber received hurt. The brittle wood waved an uninjured head. Well might Moses wonder. But wonder deepened into awe, when from the Bush a voice was heard, even the voice of God.

Reader! it becomes us now to ask, what is the Gospel of the burning Bush? Jesus Himself appears in His person, suffering, and all-resisting might.

His person--He is God, and yet He stoops to be made man. He is man, and yet He continues to be God forever. Withdraw the Godhead, and His blood cannot atone. Withdraw the manhood, and no blood remains. The union gives a Savior able, and a Savior fit. Look to the Bush! It shows this very union. The

wood denotes the poor and feeble produce of earth. It exhibits the 'tender plant'--the 'root out of a dry ground.' But it holds God as its inhabitant. The voice out of its midst proclaims, Your God is here.

His sufferings--Fire wraps the Bush. No clearer image can depict the hot assaults of wrath. The life of Jesus knew these well. It was one struggle with keen anguish. Earth was a thorny path. Hell shot its every shaft. Heaven darkened with the horrors of its frowns. All the fierce pains which infinite displeasure could inflict, made Him their prey. He wrung out all, which all the ransomed would have tasted, if hell-agonies had been their doom forever!

His all-resisting might--In vain the fire assailed the bush. It stood unharmed. So every blow recoiled from Jesus. Sustained by His indwelling Deity, He trod all foes beneath His feet. He burst the bands of death. He shivered the grave's gates. He stood victorious on the ruins of hell's empire. He mounted in triumph to the heaven of heavens.

We have next an unquestionable type of the whole family of faith. Persecutions and trials are the fire, which assails them with ceaseless fury. But still they thrive and strengthen and bud and blossom and flourish. How can it be? Deity indwells them! And where Deity resides there must be undecaying life.

The Church's story is a mirror of this truth. How often do we see it as a tiny bark tossed in engulfing waves. The powers of the mighty, the craft of the subtle, the rage of the frantic, have seized it with terrific grasp. Evil men have done their worst--evil spirits have aimed blows--evil fiends have put forth spite. Surely the fragile Bush must sink in ruin! But no! It defies all foes. It stands, and will stand forever, verdant and fragrant and fruitful. But the power of resistance is not its own. The Lord is in the midst of it! He has chosen it as His abode forever. They are precious tidings. 'In the midst of the seven candlesticks is one like unto the Son of man.'

It is true that Jesus, as God, holds all space within His hand. 'His center is everywhere, His circumference is nowhere.' But still the Church is the chosen home of His unbounded love. Here His all-protecting might, His all-preserving care, His full delights, repose. He received it from His Father as His spouse--His jewels--His peculiar treasure--His portion--the fullness of His body--the completeness of His mediatorial glory. He is engaged to seat it, as an undiminished family, before the throne. If one member be injured, Christ is marred; if one be absent, Christ is maimed. Hence He is ever with it--all heart to love--all eye to watch--all hand to help--all wisdom to direct--all power to beat back foes. Let, then, the fire rage! It must be mightier than Almightyness before the Bush can droop to nothingness.

Do these lines meet the eye of one who plots and strives against Zion's (the church's) welfare? Vain man, forbear! The promise ever lives, 'Lo! I am with you always.' Can you tear the sun from its high seat? Can you beat back ocean with a feather? Can you bind the lightning with a straw? Such task would be easier than to pluck Jesus from the Bush. Because He lives there, His people shall live also!

Here, too, another mystery is solved. Grace seems but a tender plant in the believer's heart. It has to contend with nipping frosts and desolating storms. Satan's rage burns hot against it. The world brings fuel upon fuel to consume it. The flesh blows fiercely to fan the flame. But grace still thrives! Its roots spread. Its branches rise. Its fruit ripens. Why? Christ walks within His garden--a guardian-God. His hand sowed each seed. The dew of His favor nourishes it. The smile of His love matures it. Hence it overtops all fiery foes, and lifts its head towards heaven.

Believer, think much of the 'goodwill of Him who dwelt in the Bush.' Fears then will flee away. If you stood alone, it would be presumption to hope. Because you are not alone, it is offence to tremble.

Look back. Many conflicts are behind, and yet you live. How is it? You reply with Paul, 'The Lord stood with me and strengthened me.' 'The Bush burned with fire, and the Bush was not consumed.' Your present fight is hot. But you hear a much-loved voice, 'Do not fear, for I am with you.' 'The Bush burns with fire, and the Bush is not consumed.'

You look forward. The horizon is dark with clouds of tribulation. But the same voice cheers, 'Do not fear, for I am with you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned.' The captive youths, a cloud of witnesses, an army of blessed martyrs, wave you forward. They tell that persecuting flames may be divested of all their sting. Rejoice then. The Bush shall burn with fire, but it shall not be consumed!

Reader! pause here, and search your conscience. Is your body a temple of Jesus Christ, through the Spirit? Is Christ dwelling in your heart by faith? Is Christ in you, the hope of glory? If it is not so, touch not the comfort of the burning Bush. Remember, there are thorns and briers, 'whose end is to be burned.' No Savior saves them. Tares must be bound in bundles for wrath's full-heated furnace. A terrible voice wails from the region of the lost, 'I am tormented in this flame.' 'The day comes that shall burn as an oven and all the proud, yes, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble.' 'The smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever.'

Reader! here are words by which, through grace, you may be saved. Turn not away to everlasting burnings. If you are so mad, this warning will lie, as a hot coal, upon your soul forever!

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