

The Red Sea

by Henry Law

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's power and provision, and following His guidance, in order to overcome overwhelming obstacles and achieve salvation.

Scripture: Exodus 14:19, Exodus 14:30, Matthew 11:28, Romans 8:31, Ephesians 2:8, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Revelation 20:15, Revelation 22:12

Topics: "Divine Deliverance", "Faith Trust"

Description

Henry Law preaches on the miraculous salvation of Israel from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, illustrating how God's hand of protection and deliverance is openly displayed in the lives of His children. He emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's promises and standing still in faith, even in the face of overwhelming obstacles and enemies. Law highlights the necessity of looking to Jesus for salvation, as self-efforts are futile, and encourages believers to move forward in their faith journey, guided by God's light. He concludes with a powerful reminder of the final victory of God's people and the eternal consequences for those who reject salvation.

Transcript

"Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians." Exodus 14:30

Israel's infancy is in a cradle of miracles. The people struggle into being amid displays of more than human help. They prosper, and prevail, in the clear sunshine of God's interposing hand. He watches over them and blesses them, not in the obscure cloak of providential arrangement, but in open manifestations of His present care. These ancient dealings are but a map of what God's children always find. Individual experience is a clear-toned echo to this sacred page. Many a lowly heart in many a lowly hut sees, by the Spirit's light, the features of its inner life in the grand marvels of this God-led race.

Reader! come then, encamp for a few moments by the waters of the Red Sea. We may discern Christ's glories there, as plainly as on the shore of Galilee. The host begins to march, only to find that it can march no further. The door of escape just opens to show escape receding from their grasp. The joyful morn brings in a fearful night. The budding flower hangs withered in their hand. The moving pillar leads to destruction's jaws! The camp is pitched. And what is the station? In front break the billows of the Red Sea. Terrific barriers enclose each side. Here stands a wall of rocks, which human steps cannot surmount. There frowning forts forbid approach. But is there safety in the rear? Oh, no! The deadly foe, with deadly rage, pursues. The entangled prey is enfolded in despair. Surely here is the hour when hope must die. To

stir is a watery grave. To stir not is to fall by cruelty's sharp scythe. The waves, the sword, alike gape ready to devour. The lashing surge, the battle-cry, speak fast-approaching death. Earth never saw poor prisoners so tightly barred.

Every child of God has some acquaintance with these straits. Through dreary years he may have slaved at bricks, beneath the yoke of hell's foul prince. At last he hears the Spirit's call to peace and freedom. He quickly strives to burst the chains. A few delighted steps are made, and Canaan's rest seems near. But suddenly fresh terrors gather round. The memory of evil days spreads as an ocean in the path. Wave upon wave presents tremendous hindrance. Behind, the thunders of the law wax loud. The fierce sword of justice glitters. On the right, nature's corruptions tower to the skies. On the left, Satan's batteries bristle with near death. These are appalling times. They alone can conceive the misery, who have drunk deep draughts of spiritual distress.

But let no one despair, who knows the Savior's voice, 'Look unto Me, and be you saved.' Other obstacles hem in the heaven-ward road. The sneers, the threats, the taunts, the false reports of persecuting men, form an impeding wall. Joseph and David, and Daniel, and other elders in the family of faith were thus encircled. But let the prayer fly upwards, 'Bring my soul out of prison that I may praise Your name.' And the song will soon go forth, 'He brought me forth also into a large place--He delivered me, because He delighted in me.'

Narrow resources often draw narrow bounds. Cherith's brook dries up. The widow says, 'I have but a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse.' Poverty obstructs the front. Increased demands cry pressingly in the rear. But broken means do not break the staff of hope. He who lives on the bread of life dies not for lack of earthly grain. The pensioner on heaven's gold will always have sufficiency of this world's dross! It is not pledged in vain, 'All things are yours--things present, and things to come.'

The sequel of this history proves all this. Look now to Israel's leader. He rides above this swell of trouble, in all the calmness of unshaken faith. Firm trust in God is a bolt to keep out fear. It is a door to let in peace. The sea, the swords, the rocks, the forts, are seen by him without dismay. He knows that all is well when God precedes--that all is safe when God protects--that all is sure when God gives promise. He had heard, 'Certainly I will be with you.' The word ensures success. He had been taught that the mighty Savior, the incarnate God, would spring from Judah's line. The tree must live which holds that seed. Towering on this rock, he commands, 'Do not fear, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today.'

'Do not fear.' What shall they fear, above whose head the Gospel-standard floats? Faith reads thereon, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' But use no fruitless efforts. The waves are deep. The foes are strong. There is no help in self. 'Stand still.' Leave all to God.

Reader! here is the Gospel-warning. There is no self-salvation. No power of man can save one soul from one sin's stain. Cease, then, the vain attempt. 'Stand still.'

Here, also, are Gospel-tidings. 'See the salvation of the Lord.' Jesus alone has finished all. Alone He paid the penalty of sin. Alone He satisfied each claim of God. Alone He brought in everlasting righteousness. Alone He trod down every hindrance which guilt and hell could raise. This work is gloriously accomplished. Receive it--and you live forever. Turn from it to self-deliverance--and self delivers you to sin's deserts.

The cheering word is added, 'The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.' Jesus is all might, all strength, all victory. All creatures which are, which have been, which shall be, are less than the least dust before Him! Who can resist when He uplifts His arm? Believer, all this power is put forth to be your shield and sword. The wrath of man, the malice of devils, can never slay a God-defended life. The tender Shepherd cries, 'My sheep shall never perish.' Stand, then, behind a fighting God, and you are high as heaven above all harm. Raise not the battle-cry, as if the charge was yours. Let all your breath be prayer and praise.

And now the voice from heaven is heard. 'Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.' Here is a watchword for the Christian camp. Forward, onward, upward, heaven-ward, should be the daily and hourly shout. Believer, is your life this rapidly-progressing course? Alas! how many loiter! The past year finds them no gainers in the holy race. Others, alas, go back. They did run well. Where are they now? They paused, they lingered. Dangers threatened. Ease allured. Pleasures seduced. They turned back. And can they be restored? 'O Lord God, You know.' Believer, rally your energies. In all haste move forward, onward, upward, heaven-ward.

Do overwhelming waves impede the way? Heed them not, if God distinctly speaks. He cannot lead you but in safety's path. Do you say, 'Go forward' contradicts 'Stand still?' It may seem so to reason's blinded sight. But faith finds harmony, when grace gives light. We take no step to expiate our sins, to pay our debts, to appease just wrath, or to procure redemption. While we 'Stand still,' Jesus does all. We are saved by grace, through faith. It is the work of Jesus. It is the gift of God.

But motion and progress prove that we have life. Efforts evince that we have strength. Works evidence that we have faith. Fruit is the sign of healthy trees. Warmth is the token that gratitude's bright flame glows warmly in the heart. Heaven is reached, not by toil, but in toil. Blessings descend, not for deeds, but on deeds. Faith comes with empty hand. Christ fills it with salvation. The saved hand soon brings the offerings of devoted love. Christ dies upon the altar of atonement. Our lives ascend, as incense to His praise. None go so surely forward to the throne as they who stand still at the saving cross.

My soul, mark next the prelude to the final scene. 'Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to a position behind them, and the pillar of cloud also moved around behind them. The cloud settled between the Israelite and Egyptian camps. As night came, the pillar of cloud turned into a pillar of fire, lighting the Israelite camp. But the cloud became darkness to the Egyptians, and they couldn't find the Israelites.' Exodus 14:19-20

Thus Jesus is a high wall of defense. He encompasses His blood-bought flock. They who would injure His redeemed must beat down His omnipotence. There is no passage for the destroyer's sword, but through the fort of a protecting God. He has, however, a two-fold aspect. What floods of light flow from His smile to each believing heart! Others see nothing but the dark frown of an avenging Judge. Like the pillar, He has two sides. 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father,' shines on one. 'Depart, you cursed ones,' is blackly lettered on the other.

Moses now lifts his rod. This hand is first made leprous. Then it is used as a minister of miracles. God works by humbled means. He brings down. Then He exalts. Man is nothing. God is all. The unruly billows heed the commanding sign. Submissive they retire. They open wide a passage through their trackless depths. The watery particles cement into solid walls. The ransomed go forward. Impossibilities flee before them. The God of creation wills deliverance, and all creation meekly lends its help.

The children of Israel, obedient to the heavenly call, go on in faith, and reach the longed-for shore. The children of Egypt rush in presumptuously, without command. O my soul, follow God fully, and stagger not. But never move without the light of guidance from on high. Faith walks dry-shod. Presumption drowns.

For a brief moment vengeance seems to pause. But in the morning-watch the Lord looked on them, and His look was trouble. Who can conceive the power of that eye? It broke the heart of Peter. It showed at once his sin and pardon. It brought the trembling woman to her knees. It made her tongue tell all.

Reader! soon will it pierce each corner of your soul. 'For every eye shall see Him.' Think, will the glance of the returning Jesus seal your eternal bliss, or drive you lost into despair's abode? The same instrument saves or destroys, as God commands. Thus the obedient waves flow back. With resistless might, they sweep the ruined to a wretched end. 'There remained not so much as one of them.'

The Holy Spirit erects a column on the shore, and writes a worthy record. 'Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians--and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.' O my soul, read it in prayer, in wonder, and in praise. It tells the final glory of the Gospel--the saved all saved--the lost all lost. Yes, the Lord will surely save His people with an everlasting salvation. No peril shall impede their triumph. No foe shall hinder. Trials and snares, afflictions and temptations shall not impede. The grave shall not detain. Death shall yield up its prey. The true Israel shall reach the land of never-fading joy. With palms in their hands, and crowns on their heads, they shall ascribe, in ceaseless songs, all victory to the cross of Jesus.

In ruined Egypt mark the last doom of the ungodly world. Too late they see their madness. Too late they strive to flee.

Reader! take warning. Perdition is a truth which many learn too late.

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