



“WARNED OF GOD.”

BY
E. H. C.



A. S. ROUSE,
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“By faith Noah, being *warned of God* of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”—HEB. xi. 7.



HE wisest of men said, “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.” (Prov. xxvii. 12.) This saying is most forcibly illustrated in the case of Noah entering the ark, and the drowning of the world outside. Noah was a prudent man. Being *warned of God* of things not seen as yet, and moved with fear, he prepared an ark. The margin reads, “He was wary.” He foresaw the threatened evil, and by faith he obeyed God. He took Him at His word, and was safely hidden when the judgment came. The simple (or foolish) people passed on careless and heedless, and were punished. The word of God is always true, so how could there be any other result? Impossible. God always means what He says. Hence the prudence of Noah on the one hand, and the folly

of the world on the other, for he was a preacher of righteousness, so that they were WITHOUT EXCUSE.

But what was it that brought about God's strange work? (for such judgment is: Isa. xxviii. 21.) It was the wickedness of men. "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. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it *grieved Him at His heart*. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created. . . . But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." (Gen. vi. 5-8.)

And, dear reader, do you think that the world is one whit better to-day? It is worse, far worse. Violence and corruption filled it then. Violence and corruption fill it now. But there is more. In Noah's day man had not yet received the law of God. He had a conscience, knowing good and evil; but he refused the one and clave to the other. Since then he has broken the law, slain the prophets, murdered the Son of God, resisted the Spirit, abused grace, and already the cry has commenced, and daily increases, "Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Peter iii. 4.)

Smooth-tongued prophets, who cry, "Peace, peace, and there is no peace," arrest the ears of thousands. Masses heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. (2 Tim. iv. 4.) Scarcely a doctrine of Christianity but what is undermined in some quarter. Men boast of the advance

of civilization, and the spread of education and the knowledge of the sciences. International congresses and exhibitions draw nations together in closer bonds. But yet *the heart* of man is unchanged, and every few months the world is startled by some awful outbreak, war, revolution, or riot, and is astonished at its own instability. Satan gilds the scene. Man vainly thinks he can bind Legion with unbreakable fetters and bands, only to find again and again the utter futility of his efforts. And yet, sanguine as ever, he renews his energies to improve that *flesh* which spat in the face of the Son of God, and crucified the Lord of glory.

“Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Sam. xvi. 7); and “that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.” (Luke xvi. 15.) As the eyes of the Lord look down from His holy dwelling-place, what do they behold? A world guilty of the blood of Christ, enslaved and deceived by the wicked one, with its back towards God, and its face towards the lake of fire. Here and there a few hearts seeking His glory, and filled with love to His Son, but the mass without God, without Christ, and having no hope in the world. Tens of thousands, in enlightened Christendom, resting content with the form of godliness, deny the power; and hundreds of thousands are following a false prophet, with doctrines of abominable wickedness, or worshipping stocks and stones, fit only for the company of moles and bats.

Moreover, "God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood. . . . And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh. . . . And thou shalt come into the ark; thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives, with thee." (Gen. vi. 13-18.)

Here we find God telling Noah of the character of the judgment that was coming, and pointing out the only means of escape. He would overwhelm the world with a flood, but says to Noah, "Make thee an ark." He believed God, and, without a question, obeyed. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he." (Gen. vi. 22.) He set to work to build the ark. The world was full of wickedness, and was ripe for judgment, but the long-suffering of God waited *while the ark was a preparing*. (1 Peter iii. 20.) Noah meanwhile, in the power of the Spirit of Christ, became a preacher of righteousness to the ungodly. Year after year rolled by, and the work of building went steadily on. The Lord had said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." (Gen. vi. 3.) No sign whatever of the judgment appeared during that long period. The world of the ungodly went upon its way, further still from God. Noah built the ark, and condemned the world; preached righteousness, and condemned unrighteousness. He saw no

sign, but he believed the word of God. The world saw no sign, and they disbelieved His word at the lips of Noah.

It is not difficult to picture in our minds the thoughts and conduct of an ungodly people at that day, with such evidence before our very eyes of the treatment of the gospel at the present time. Doubtless Noah was but a fool and madman in their eyes. Who else would build the largest ship that the world had ever seen, without any water to float it in? If he had built it on the sea-shore, and divulged to them some new scheme of trade whereby he would enrich himself and others, maybe he would have been reckoned a wise man. How could a world that lived to eat and drink, to marry and give in marriage, appreciate anything else? (Matt. xxiv. 38.) But to indulge in such fancies as the world being drowned, and build a ship in the midst of dry land! and, worse than all, to come forcing his views upon and preaching his rubbish to them—whoever heard of such folly and impertinence? 'Tis easy to picture the curled lip, the undisguised sneer, the bitter gibe of the fast men and worldly women of Noah's day.

But "by faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." (Heb. xi. 7.) He had the word of God for what he said, and what he did, and that was enough for him. Faith went on amidst all, and the ark was prepared, and God was prepared, and judgment was prepared—sure, swift, unmitigated judgment. But, alas! the

world of the ungodly, what of them? They had heard the preaching, but their hearts and ears were closed. UNPREPARED! Yes, unprepared, and *willingly so*. They had heard the warning of *judgment to come*, but their consciences were seared. Deluded, duped, and deceived by Satan, they loved the world, wallowed in sin, and rushed one and all to a common doom.

“And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark: for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.” (Gen. vii. 1.) And then, after further details about the beasts and fowls, He added, “For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. And Noah did according unto all that the Lord commanded him.” (Gen. vii. 4, 5.)

Having entered the ark, the seven days run on. One can fancy men saying, “We shall see what will become of the shipbuilder’s dreams now. Poor fellow! we are glad we are clear of such delusions; what fun we shall have at his expense in about a week’s time.” The days roll slowly by. One, two, three, four, five, six are gone. The seventh is entered. Twelve hours are passed, fifteen, twenty, twenty-three—oh! what is that? What a sudden gust of wind! Another! How dark and lowering that cloud looks on the horizon! Why, it is getting darker and darker every minute. The sun has disappeared; we are going to have

rain. The heavens grow blacker, and blacker still. The twenty-fourth hour of the seventh day is all but past. A few minutes more. A few seconds only now. THE TIME IS UP. The hundred and twenty years are past. The seven days are gone, the day of long-suffering is over. The hour of judgment is come. *What's that?*

A drop of water falls from the clouds. Another. Many. Ah! and what is that strange noise? what that rushing sound? "Don't be alarmed," says one to another, "it's all right; it's only a heavy passing storm." But the heavens grow darker yet, and as they gather blackness, pallor is depicted on every countenance. The busy hum of life ceases. A strange and unwonted stillness for the moment pervades the scene. Voices are hushed, and men's hearts fail them for fear, and for those things that *are come* upon the earth. The drops become showers, the showers a downpour, the downpour *a deluge*. The windows of heaven are opened. IT IS THE JUDGMENT OF GOD!

And, alas! alas! that strange rushing sound which made men start, which caused the strongest to tremble, the weak to blanch with fear,—what is it? Nearer and nearer it comes. Louder and louder is the roaring sound. 'Tis as the sound of mighty waters overflowing. 'Tis the fountains of the great deep broken up. The sea is overwhelming the land; the angry billows of the wrath of God. Up every valley and nook it comes. Waters above, waters beneath, waters around, waters everywhere. What, can it be true after

all? Are the words of Noah indeed coming to pass? Is this the deluge that he foretold? Is this the judgment that we ridiculed? Are we the fools and madmen, and he the wise man after all? Ah! yes, poor ungodly world, your time of grace is passed; and now, where will you seek a refuge in your dire distress, in the hour of your calamity and fear?

Well, let us not despair; while there is life there is hope. Recovering from the first panic, each seeks a refuge on the highest point to be found. Methinks we see the frightened mass rushing hither and thither, as sheep from a destroying wolf. One flies to his housetop; another climbs the highest tree; a third runs to the hilltop; a fourth clammers the mountain side. Husbands and wives, fathers, mothers, children, rich and poor, high and low; *all* are exposed to one common doom; but each with lingering hope that the waters will yet assuage, and that the rain will soon cease. But still the fountains of the great deep play, and the dark and rushing waters flow. Still the heavens, clothed with thickest clouds, discharge their ever-increasing torrents. Fields, vineyards, houses, trees, on all hands disappear, and with them despairing thousands—*the world of the ungodly*. Cries for mercy, groans of anguish, screams of terror, shrieks of fear rend the air, but all in vain. The day of long-suffering is past; 'TIS TOO LATE NOW!

Yet the waters flow; still it rains. See yon terror-stricken mass collected on the highest

hill around. Is there no hope? Is there no escape? Where is the ark? Where is Noah? Is it too late to enter in? Ah! yes, ye rejecters and neglecters of the preaching of righteousness, ye livers *without God*. When mercy entreated, ye would not; and now ye would, no mercy can be found. "The wages of sin is death." Soon the mighty waters engulph the struggling mass, and still it rains. Higher and higher yet the waters climb. Forty days and forty nights the deluge rises. Hill after hill disappears beneath the mighty deep, till all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, *died*. Fifteen cubits and upwards did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered. God *said it*, and it came to pass.

But where is Noah? Safe in the ark with all his house. THE LORD HAD SHUT HIM IN. (Gen. vii. 16.) The billows of judgment for the world are the billows of mercy for him. As the waters increased they bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth. The prudent man foresaw the evil, and hid himself. Noah believed God, and, instead of perishing with the world of the ungodly, passes unscathed through the most awful judgment the world ever saw; and when the waters of the deluge assuaged, was safe in the ark on the top of the mighty mountains of Ararat, to come forth again upon the earth through the mercy of God.

And now, dear reader, have these awful scenes, and God's signal mercy to Noah, no voice to you?

Listen to the word of the Lord at a later day. Listen to the warning of Him who was God manifest in the flesh concerning wrath to come—wrath that is nigh, even at our very doors—and, ere it be too late, flee, flee at once for refuge to the only ark of safety from the coming woe. “As the days of Noe were,” said Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, “so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and *knew not* until the flood came, and *took them all away*; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for *ye know not what hour* your Lord doth come.” (Matt. xxiv. 37-42.)

Face the dread reality, poor Christless soul, and flee at once to the everlasting arms of a loving Saviour-God. He bids you come. He forewarned of the coming deluge. It came. Again He forewarns of judgment, unparalleled in the history of this poor world, ending in the sudden manifestation in glory and judgment of the Son of man. (Luke xxi. 27; 2 Thess. i. 7-9.) Are you delivered from it? The day of grace runs rapidly by. God “is long-suffering to us-ward [as of old], not willing that any should perish,” &c. (2 Peter iii. 9.) But take care you do not trifle too long. Grace will cease, and judgment will flow, swift, irrevocable,

and sure. There is but one means of safety from the impending doom. The world's death-knell has long sounded. Grace alone holds back God's vengeance-sword. Christ, and Christ alone, is the ark of safety now. "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour." To Christ, to Christ, poor sinner, flee. "I am the door: *by me* if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Oh, enter now!

In Noah's day men *knew not*. Think of that. Knew not till the flood came, and took them *all* away. As it was, so it shall be. As in Noah's day, *so* in the days of the Son of man. "He that shall come WILL COME." (Heb. x. 37.) "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him," &c. (Rev. i. 7.) "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their *ungodly deeds* which they have ungodly committed, and of all their *hard speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (Jude 14, 15.) One shall be taken away in judgment, as the flood took all away in Noah's day, and another left in mercy for His glorious reign; but where will *you* be? Enter now into the ark of God's providing, and judgment shall never overtake you. All that are Christ's now shall be *caught up* to meet Him at that day. (1 Thess. iv. 15-18.) Yes, Noah was safe in the ark on Mount Ararat; but all who know Christ, and are in Him now, shall be safe *with* Him at that day in the Father's house in the glory of God.

Again we appeal to you, dear reader, and beseech you, by the mercies of God, to enter the ark while you may. You have not to build, like Noah. No, *the Ark is prepared*. "For God *so loved* the world, that *He gave* His only begotten Son," &c. (John iii. 16.) And *Jesus died*; yes, died for the glory of God, and to deliver sinners from the wrath to come. *There*, upon that cross, upon the Holy Lamb of God, the stroke of divine justice fell. (2 Cor. v. 21.) *There* the waves and billows of the judgment of God passed over the soul of His own Beloved One. He drank the bitter, bitter cup; He bowed His head; He died. *His blood was shed*. Buried in the sepulchre, *God raised Him from the dead*. "*Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: both low and high, rich and poor, together.*" (Psalm xlix. 1, 2.) God raised Him, raised Him from the dead, and *gave Him glory* at His own right hand. *There now* is found THE ONLY ARK OF SAFETY from the coming storm. Flee to Him; flee to Him now. With heart of love, with look of pity, with words of mercy, with arms outstretched in grace, He bids you come. Daily, hourly, momentarily, the day of judgment draweth nigh. Still the voice of mercy pleads with you, sinner, "Come to me." Deep, deep indeed is your need, whoever you may be; but He can meet it. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 18.) "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) Come to Jesus, and your sins will be all forgiven. (1

John ii. 12.) Come to Jesus, and you will have everlasting life. (John vi. 47.) Come to Jesus, and you are saved. All are invited; will you come?

The day of grace is all but past. Soon the heavens again shall gather blackness, and judgment fall. But then, instead of a flood, seal upon seal shall be broken, trumpet upon trumpet sound, and bowl upon bowl of the wrath of God fall upon the world of the ungodly, closing with the manifestation of the Son of man Himself, to judge His foes, and eventually the destruction of the whole world by fire. Despisers, rejecters, scoffers, mockers, neglecters, professors, *beware!* The flood came, and took them all away. *So shall it be in the days of the Son of man.* Not a soul of man escaped outside the ark. How shall you? *Christ is the Ark. In Him alone* is salvation to be found. "They shall not escape," God says to all outside. Once more, then, poor perishing sinner, we would plead with you, Will you ENTER NOW?

Oh, the blank despair, the awful remorse, the utter woe, the endless misery of the Christless soul, when once the door of mercy shall be closed! Listen to the voice of wisdom ere it cease to cry, or surely that voice shall say to you, "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." (Proverbs i. 26-28.) Wisdom pleads with

you, "Be ye reconciled to God." Oh, *the wondrous love, the boundless grace*, that await the repentant sinner's return! Will you come? The justice of the living God is arrayed *on your behalf*. It is not against you, but *for you*. God is just, and the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus*. Come, oh, come to Him *now!*

Noah, being *warned of God* of things not seen as yet, *prepared and entered the ark*. You too are warned. There was no sign then; there is no sign now. But the word of God tells again of coming woe; of things (terrible things) *not seen as yet*. The door of the ark is open wide. CHRIST IS THAT DOOR. All who believe are safe within. 'Tis everlasting security, for they are shut in by the Lord Himself. All outside will surely reap the fruit of their folly and sin in endless woe. You may lull yourself to sleep in carnal security, but the awful hour of judgment will arouse you. Alas! alas! it will be too late to flee. But now, by faith in Him, the salvation of God, present and eternal, full and free, shall be yours. And the wondrous grace that brings it will teach you godliness, as you await the Lord's return.

Finally, we appeal to you, sinners all, for the Judge is at the door, and the judgment slumbereth not. Be prudent, be wise, hide yourselves in this day of abounding grace. Come now to the blessed Lord Himself, who never casts out. BE WARNED OF GOD.

E. H. C.