

The Ship on Fire—A Voice of Warning

A Sermon

(No. 550)

Delivered on Sunday Evening, November 8th, 1863, on the
burning of the Ship “Amazon,” by the

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“Escape for thy life.”—Genesis 19:17.

“Thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my
life.”—Genesis 19:19.

HERE IS THE ALARM of mercy declaring the sinner’s duty—“*Escape for thy life.*” Here
is the work of grace, and the gratitude of the sinner after he is saved. “*Thou hast magnified
thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life.*”

The other day, there sailed down the Thames as stout a vessel as had ever ploughed the
deep. The good ship “Amazon,” had sailed the broad Pacific many a time, and what is there
to hinder her from once more reaching America in safety? Who would refuse to underwrite
her? Who among her crew or passengers has a fear for her safety? But in the book of
providence, there was a black line against that ship, and never more could she reach her
desired haven. The wind was exceedingly high: the vessel tarried awhile at Gravesend. There
was a little improvement in the weather: she sailed a little further; but cast anchor again,
and remained off Broadstairs. Matters went as usual in such weather. Night came on; the
watch was changed as usual; the captain turned in, feeling that all was right and safe. The
passengers were snug in their berths—a little the worse, perhaps, for the roll of the ship, but
as assured of security as men could be. In a moment, what a change had taken place! A
passenger perceives a smell of fire; the warning cry is raised. Everyone rushes upon deck.
Attempts are made to quench the fire; but when the hatches are lifted up, the wind rushes
in, and the fire is fanned to a dreadful, all-devouring conflagration. Further effort is of no
avail. Rockets are fired, as the signals of distress. The boats are let down, crowded with the
passengers. A lugger puts off to her, and a steam-tug hastens to the rescue, and, thanks be
unto the God of providence, all the passengers—the captain and chief officers last—are on
board the vessels and carried to Margate, where they see the melancholy, and yet satisfactory
spectacle of their vessel burning to the water’s edge, and then disappearing from view.

Now, as the good brother who was captain to that vessel, constantly comes here when
he is on shore, and as he is sitting in the midst of you to-night, I thought I might use the
burning of this vessel as a picture of spiritual things, out of which I might make an illustrated
sermon. These things happen not without design, and should not escape without improve-
ment.

Two things, then, to-night: they are both in the text and in the story of the ship on fire. First, *an alarm*—“Escape for thy life;” secondly, *grateful acknowledgment*—“Thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life.”

I. First, AN ALARM.

We come here to-night, to raise an alarm. True ministers of God. are great alarmists. It is their duty to be like Barnabas, who was a son of consolation; but it is equally their duty to be like Boanerges—sons of thunder. Thunder does not rock men to sleep, and plays no pleasant tune for fools to dance to; with its crash and roar, it wakes a slumbering world, and its dread volleys, echoed peal on peal, afford no dulcet notes for dainty ears. God’s servants should learn to thunder; for when God speaketh through them, the voice of the Lord is powerful and full of majesty; and in his temple doth everyone speak of his glory.

The alarm we have to give to-night, is that of the angel to Lot, with an emphasis of meaning—“Escape for thy life.” It is an alarm *suggested by tremendous danger*. When the cry of “Fire! fire! fire!” ran along the decks, and the cabins, and the saloons of the “Amazon,” everyone knew that there was no small danger to be encountered, for flame is a cruel tyrant and devours remorselessly. The very word “Fire!” has a razor-edge about it, cutting to the very quick. Terror has fire for her first-born. But the alarm we have to raise, is concerning a matter more terrific still—add to the word “Fire,” that dreadful syllable “Hell,” and then what shall more alarm than “*Hell fire?*” In that cry, we comprehend such weighty matters as eternity alone can reveal. The wrath to come! The judgment of the Eternal! The wrath of the Most High! Fire, when it is at its most furious pitch, is but a plaything compared with hell fire; yea, when it consumes a city; when it runs down the red lips of a volcano, and buries thousands; when it sets the sky and earth upon a blaze as in Egypt’s plagues, it is but child’s-play compared with the wrath of God, and that Tophet which is prepared of old, the pile whereof is wood and much smoke. Here is something at which the joints of a man’s loins may well be loosed, for there is eternity in it, infinity in it, deity in it; and where these three are set against a man, woe unto him. It is as when the fire is set in battle array against the stubble. Well may it be written by the prophet, “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burning?” Sinner, by the crushing terror of the woe which cometh, I beseech thee, “Escape for thy life.”

It is a danger not to be overcome. The fire-engine was brought out upon the deck of the burning ship; attempts were made to extinguish the fire; but the mischief was far too much in power to be driven from its stronghold. The like may be boldly declared of the evil which cometh upon the ungodly. Sinner, your danger is such that you cannot contend with it by any power of your own. There is a fire of sin within you which you cannot quench; there is a fire of hell without you which no drops even of your own blood shall be able to extinguish. You are in a danger which you are unable to cope with. There is no possibility that if you

remain in it, your utmost exertions or most strenuous efforts can avert the certain ruin which your state must bring upon you. If you neglect the only way of salvation, how can you escape? What awaits you but a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation? The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at the reproof of the Lord of hosts—how, then, canst thou endure the tempest of his anger, and the fury of his hot displeasure?

“O sinner, seek his face,
Whose wrath thou canst not bear;
Fly to the dying Savior’s wounds,
And find salvation there.”

It is a danger, too, a terrific danger *which makes no exception to anyone*. The captain is as much in danger as the poorest cabin-boy, if he cannot escape from the burning ship. The rich man, with ingots of gold in his cabin, will as certainly be burned alive as the poor traveler who could scarcely pay his passage. There is no distinction of persons in the judgments of God. Sinner, you may be great and mighty, but you shall go down to hell unless grace shall save you. Woman, thou mayst be amiable in thy temper and excellent in thy deportment, but thou shalt perish as surely as a harlot, unless Christ have pity upon thee. Man, thou mayst be upright, and shine before thy fellow-merchants as one of excellent repute, but the wrath of God abideth on thee except thou fleest to Jesus; for there is none other name given under heaven whereby ye must be saved; and out of that name, and apart from that name, whoever thou mayst be, though thou wert monarch of seven empires, thou art still in danger. Rich and poor, high and low, learned and ignorant, my cry is to you all, “O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord!”

Do not forget that we are in danger of *a consuming fire*—a danger which kills without remedy. It is not a fire which merely singes and scorches, but a fire which burns to ashes. As yonder ship must be burned up, and every passenger who cannot leave its burning deck must be consumed, so you, O unconverted men, are in danger of utter destruction from the presence of the Lord. “For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” I would I could speak upon this dreadful subject in a proper manner. Whitfield had tones and emotions which were fitting for such a subject. He would cry out, “Oh, the wrath to come! The wrath to come! The wrath to come!” He would cry, I say, until all his hearers responded with, “What must we do to be saved?” And good Baxter, trembling lest he should be guilty of men’s blood, while he delivered the message, as a dying man to dying men—knew the terrors of the law, and right earnestly he persuaded men to escape for their lives. O sirs, if I saw you in a burning house, there were not half so much need of earnestness as when I see you in the midst of a mass of sin and corruption which must be consumed by God’s anger, and you with it. Sinner, why wilt thou die? What can ail thee? What besots thee that

thou dost not perceive anything dreadful in the wrath of him who made thee? He can dash whole worlds to pieces—what can he not do with thee? Hast thou learned to be callous when thou hearest of eternity? Hast thine ear grown cold to that dreadful word, “Condemnation?” Canst thou read the story of those to whom he said, “Depart, ye cursed,” and not tremble? Canst thou know that thou art this day in danger of the judgment, and not be afraid? When the sword is sharp, and furbished, and taken out of its sheath, canst thou play about its edge? Canst thou yet make mirth? Then is there indeed, need for me to cry to thee, and for all God’s faithful ministers to cry with louder voice than mine—“Escape! escape! escape for thy life.”

The alarm of fire was needed because of *the security of the persons in danger*. Many on board the “Amazon” were sound asleep. Oh, how dreadful to be awakened out of sleep with the cry of “Fire! fire! fire! Some of them, when they awoke, seemed to have been so startled and so confused, that they had fairly to be dragged out of their berths that they might be rescued. There were none there, we have reason to believe, who would have been kept below through their own drunkenness or the carelessness of the crew. They were in a right state, with this exception, of course, that they were all alarmed—and men alarmed are not always ready to do the wisest thing, and as for the captain and his men they seem to have been as sensible as they were brave. My hearers, God’s ministers have to deal with passengers much more difficult to handle. Are not men asleep? Till the voice of God awakens us, we are all asleep. How you and I walked for years, and years, and years, upon the brink of the grave, as utterly unconcerned as though we were to live for ever; and when sometimes we were a little impressed by the passing bell, or an open grave, or an earnest sermon, how soon we went back again to ‘our old frivolity, and toyed with the flames of hell as though they were fancy’s dream. It is not so now. God has awakened us; but we had never been awakened if the voice which awakes the dead had not cried in our ear, “Escape for thy life.” Nay, worse, men are not only asleep, but when they do perceive their danger, they love their sins too well to leave them, even though hell stares them in the face. The best of them cry with Solomon’s sluggard, “Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.” Sinner, how hard it is to bring thee to serious consideration of thy ways. We cannot touch thy wits, or make thee reason like a man of sound mind. Thou wilt sooner be damned by thoughtlessness than give an hour’s careful meditation to thy soul’s affairs. We would fain drag thee out of thy sleeping berth, and even kick thee and strike thee, treating thee to rough usage, if we could by this means drag thee from the devouring flames; thou wouldst thank us well enough afterwards for these rough cuffs, if we could but wake thee. We hear complaints that the minister speaks too harshly and talks too much of judgment. Saved sinners never make that complaint. They know that nothing but these terrors will awaken some slumbering minds; and if they be awakened themselves, they are but too glad, however rough the means may have been. Are there not some in this house to-night who are hard, fearfully

hard, to be brought to sober thinking, because they are drunken and besotted with sin? Some of you, with your Sunday trading, will rather gain your sixpences and your paltry pence on the Sunday, than find eternal felicity in faith in the Lord Jesus. Others of you, with your tap-room companions, with your theatres, your balls, and worse places still, where lust wears no mask, are cutting the throats of your poor miserable souls. You cannot give up your vices; you will sooner be damned than be Christians. Well, so it must be, sirs, if ye will have these things, and will pawn your souls for them, so it must be; you have chosen your own delusions, and you shall inherit them. But O, do listen once more, while we warn you in God's name, "Escape for thy life," and trifle no more with hell and heaven, with thine own soul and judgment, God and his dear bleeding Son. If every preacher in London should suddenly begin to preach nothing but alarms, it would all be needed, for what a secure and reckless city is this. If every corner in the street had a Jonah in it, and that Jonah's sermon were nothing but this—"Yet a few more days and thou shalt be destroyed!" it were not too much for a city so given to slumber. We have waxen rich; we have grown careless, till we have become like Nineveh of old, a people at ease, and dwelling carelessly Isaiah might well say concerning London—"Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it." Let us take heed unto ourselves lest in the world to come this carnal security of ours should be like faggots to the fire, and the remembrance of our sloth should pour oil upon the flames. O God, let the alarm be heard, to-night by those who crowd this house, for thou knowest that many of them are sound asleep.

Again, it is an alarm which *requires instant attention*. A man on board a vessel, when he hears the cry of "Fire!" must not stop to arrange his clothes; he must not be concerned to see that his face is washed, that he has bound together that little bundle of papers, or packed up the portmanteau, or counted over the little purse of gold, or even snatched his little property from the cabin. At once, at once, must he climb the stairs and reach the deck, or he will never have stairs to climb, nor feet to climb with. Now or never. Quick is the word. Waste a moment, and it is all over with you; the fire is upon you, for it tarries not in its march. So is it with you to-night who fear not God. "Escape for thy life," is a cry for the present moment. Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Now, *now*, NOW. This is the only period God has allotted to you, take care that you use it, lest when your *to-days* are past, and you hope to see your *to-morrow*, you should have to spend your to-morrows in the pit of hell. Procrastination is not only the thief of time, but the thief of souls. *Now* is the day of salvation; I have never heard of any other day. I do not know, but I think this is one of the most difficult things in the gospel ministry, a matter worthy of the Holy Ghost's power—to make men seriously think about their souls at this present. I know, young man, you intend to think of these things when you are ill; you expect to have a long time upon a sick-bed, and then you suppose all will be right before you die. Who told you

you would ever lie upon a sick-bed at all? Yours may be a sudden death; and sudden death to such as you, are would be sudden damnation. As men stand upon the bank, and spring head-first into the water, so may you dash into hell. Death enters men's doors without knocking. The judgment may follow on the heels of your next sins. And what if you *should* lie upon a bed of sickness? You will have enough to do to bear the pain, to mourn over your weeping wife, and worry yourself about those little children who will be left fatherless: I tell you, sir, it is hard repenting upon a dying bed. Do not sew pillows to thine armholes, and make for thyself this fond hope, that thou shalt one day be saved. It is *now* or *never*, it is *now* or *never* with you. I speak as a prophet of God at this moment, I know I do; there are some of you to whom this *now* or *never* is a more applicable thing than you suppose. You will not see a new year. No Christmas festivities will be yours. You will be at home on Christmas-day, but it will be your long, lost home. "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." As the Lord my God liveth, before whom I stand, thus saith the Lord unto some of you—"There is but a step between you and death." Be warned, then, for as I will meet you on the other side the stream, at my Master's judgment-seat, I have bidden you give immediate, instantaneous attention to the Word of God. Consider your ways, O sinners, born to die. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, O trembler, and thou shalt be saved. Trust him, trust him. God help thee to trust Jesus to-night, for it is *now* or *never* with thy soul.

Again, this alarm *demand*s of every one of us who are unsaved, an undivided attention. You have fifty things to think about. You tell me you have a thousand cares. O sirs, a man whose life is in danger, has no other care than to save his life. Did those who were rescued from the "Amazon," have time to save their money and their gold? We are told that they were utterly destitute when they landed at Margate, and what signifies it? Would not a flush of joy be on their cheeks because their lives were preserved! If one said to his fellow, "Where is thy purse?" "Oh," saith the other, "never mind my purse, I am in the lifeboat; my life is saved." What shall it profit you, if you gain the whole world, and lose your own soul? And what is the loss after all, if you lose the world, if you gain your soul? Nay, those on board the ship had not time to save their clothes. The instincts of self-preservation made them run, just as they were, half-naked, to the vessel's deck, and so must you. I know you will tell me you are not living to make money; if you could just make ends meet, keep your family, and supply the wants of your children—that is all—are you not to think of this? It is well and good; far be it from me to discourage prudent carefulness in all matters; it is your business to see to temporal matters, but still your paramount business must be your soul; even necessities must not come between your soul and your most serious thoughts. You must see to this first and foremost, and remember there is a promise about it—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Those persons who escaped from the blazing vessel had, some of them, even to suffer in body. We read of one who broke his arm in the medley of the escape, but what of that? (*I

hear since, from the friends of the second mate, that the man did not break his arm.) Better to escape with a broken arm, than fry in those horrible flames with every bone in its place. It would be very little comfort to the poor passenger to save his bones entire, and to have his body consumed. “It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.” You are rightly considerate of your bodies, but still, if that poor body, which is to become worm’s meat one day, is worthy of so much thought, how much more ought you to give to your immortal spirit, which is to live for ever with God in glory, or with fiends in torment? Think first, I pray you, think chiefly, think now to-night with undivided heart, with consecrated thought upon your soul. Let comforts go, let pelf go, let raiment go, let life itself go—but do see to that which is better than life—thy soul—thine everlasting destiny.

Now, the alarm which I have tried to give—“Escape for thy life!” seems to me to suggest a very solemn question. “How can I escape?” says cue. Dost thou sincerely ask that question—“What must I do to be saved?” Remember there is but one way of rescue—the lifeboat of faith must put thee into the vessel of salvation—Christ Jesus. Stop in thine own vessel, and thou art burned; leap into those floods of wrath, and thou art drowned; get into that boat of saving faith, let that boat bear thee into the vessel of Christ Jesus, and thou art safe. Sinner, the road of salvation is, out of self into Christ. There are only two steps to heaven—out of self, into Christ. That man who has left himself as a burning vessel behind, left sin and left self-righteousness as a thing to be destroyed—that man who has taken Christ to be his all in all, and takes the cross to be the only thing to which he clings, is safe. Escape, I pray thee, for thy life, awakened and seeking sinner, for Jesus is the only foundation, he only is thy rock and thy salvation; come to him for shelter, and you are saved.

To conclude this matter of alarm, our meditation arouses a very solemn enquiry—*Will all be safe?* Will all in the vessel escape? What joy must there have been in the captain’s heart when he heard that not one had been left to burn in the vessel! Will all escape? Will every hearer in this huge house of prayer to-night be a singer in heaven? Dare we, in the judgment of charity, hope so? Well, well, let us try to hope, if so your charity wishes it, but I fear me, I fear me it will be hope without any grounds; for there are some here who love the drunkard’s cup, others who vomit the swearer’s oaths, and some who have the proud, self-righteous look which God hateth. O that we could hope that these would be transformed by grace through Jesus Christ, that so they might be saved! I am, I own it, very much afraid that all of you will *not* be saved, but that some of you will perish in your iniquities. It is not, however, our duty to pry into futurity, let us therefore, turn to that which far more concerns us, our own personal salvation. The enquiry changes—“Shall I be saved? If there be an alarm given, ‘Escape for thy life!’ Shall I be saved?” And what if it should be the preacher’s lot to be lost for ever! What, if after talking to you this morning of being sick of love to Christ, he should have to hear those doleful words, “I never knew you, depart, ye cursed!” And what if this

were to be the lot of the church-officers who sit around me, or of any one amongst you? Brother, you have passed the sacramental cup to others, what if the cup of devils be your portion for ever and ever! My brethren and sisters in Church fellowship, you may well put the question as did the apostles of old, “Lord is it I?”

“Shall I be banished for my life,
And yet forbid to die?
Shall I endure eternal death,
Yet death for ever fly?”

Shall it be so! My dear hearer, thou who makest no profession of religion, will you ask the question, Shall I, shall I perish in devouring flames, or shall I escape? The answer to that question, so far as you are concerned, at this moment, must depend upon whether there is now a work of grace in your heart. If thou believest that Jesus is the Christ, thou canst never perish. If thou dost not, and wilt not believe, thy destruction is most sure. O God Almighty, thou who alone canst impress the heart, lead everyone of us now to take such sure hold of Christ that we may never perish, neither may any pluck us out of his hand.

II. My time is fled, woe is me, when I had meant to have spoken with my whole heart upon another topic. It was GRATITUDE. Well, we will just run over the points, although most briefly. I will hope that you and I are saved; I will trust that we have been put into thy grace-vessel; I will believe that we have laid hold on Christ; may me belief be warranted by facts? Then this calls for gratitude. Gratitude of what kind? Gratitude *that I was awakened*. O my God, I bless thee that I was not permitted to sleep the sleep of death. I thank thee for that fever which made me fear, that loss which made me think, that dear dead babe which brought the parent to a Savior’s feet. I bless thee, Lord, for the minister’s earnest voice which shook me in my slumbers, for a mother’s tears which fell like cold drops on my sleeping brow, and made me wake. I thank thee, O God, that though others slumber, yet, thou hast awakened me, and made me look to my soul’s concerns. It is no slight mercy to be able to hear the trumpet of warning. It is a foundation mercy, but it is not the least of mercies to have an awakened conscience.

Secondly, I would thank God, and let every believer join with me, that when you and I were awakened, *the ship was not out to sea*. If the “Amazon” had been far out to sea when the cry of “Fire” was given, what must have been the result? How few could have escaped! But there she was, close to land. You and I, when we were awakened, were not in hell—not like the rich man, lifting up our eyes where hope could never come—we were still on praying ground, still on pleading terms with God, still off the Foreland, still where mercy could come to us, and grace could meet us. Sinner, if you have been awakened to-night, thank God for this, thank him that the trumpet which wakes you is not the trumpet of the archangel summoning you to judgment, but the silver trumpet of God’s messenger of mercy, inviting you to mercy banquet.

Let us thank God *it did not blow harder*, for there might have been much trouble in reaching the boat. When you and I were awakened to a sense of sin, it might have been just when death was coming, or when the terrors of conscience would have been too much for us, and when the fears of death might have kept us from a Savior. But, blessed be God, when we were aroused there was wind enough, we were conscience-stricken and smitten, but still not too much, or else the fire had been too vehement, and we had not escaped. Thank God, then, that he awakened us while there was really time to avail ourselves of the covenant lifeboat.

Let us be thankful again, that *we could use the signals*. I told you that the vessel sent up its rockets—signals of distress. Ah! what a thousand mercies it was that we could *pray*. I remember well when this was the only comfort my bursting spirit had, I could pray. Oh, to be on pleading terms with God! Thank God for this, awakened sinner, bless God for this. If you have not got so far as being completely saved, yet do praise him that you are allowed to fire off the rockets of desires, sighs, groans, sobs, tears, longings, and pantings, and that you can send them up where God can see them. Your cries, and groans, and tears will yet bring comfort and peace from heaven through the Lamb's redeeming blood. Rejoice, my beloved brethren, that the Lord has not abolished a mercy-seat, nor forgotten to be gracious. He saith "not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." He waits to be gracious. He delighteth in mercy. Before you call he will answer, and while you are yet speaking he will hear.

Thank God that *there were good officers on board to direct the passengers*. Without firm authority, men become a mob, and then, with every appliance which might save, few are rescued. Awakened sinner, be grateful that you have gospel ministers. Oh! what a mercy to have a gospel ministry! What an awful thing to sit under a half-and-half milk-and-water, yea-and-nay ministry, as was my lot when under conviction. I attended different places of worship, but what I heard was not the gospel. And I venture to say it, that a few years ago, in nine places out of ten in London, and in the suburbs, and throughout England, such a thing as the gospel was not preached, except by accident. It is preached NOW. It is not preached now as it should be, but it is preached *now*. What I mean by the gospel, is the doctrine that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, and that the simple trusting upon him is saving faith. This is a doctrine which the revival has brought up more clearly, and which the revival keeps before the public mind; but before that great movement came, it was a doctrine ignored and cast behind; too much of the preaching was a dry morality, or else philosophy which might tickle the ears of men who claimed intellect, but could never move the heart. Oh, thank God, poor sinner, that you do hear it rung in your ears—Come as you are! Come as you are! You hear the gospel sung to you:—

“Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,

O Lamb of God, I come! I come!
Just as I aim-thy love I own,
Has broken every barrier down:
Now, to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!”

We hold up to you no ceremonies, no feelings, no works, no orthodoxies; we only hold up Christ, Christ crucified, a substitute for sinners, a substitute for you if you trust him; and we tell you again and again, till we half fear of tiring you, that, trusting Jesus, you are saved. Now we have reason, if saved, to be grateful to God for gospel officers.

Then how grateful ought you and I to be that *the ship is come to the rescue*. Jesus came all the way from heaven to earth to save us—“Who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.” How shall we be grateful enough for this unspeakable gift?

“O, for this love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Savior’s praises speak.”

Better still: how grateful we ought to be that *we have got on board that ship*. Oh! joy! joy! joy! that blessed step which set me upon Christ! that blessed act which made me one with him. My soul would repeat now that grace-wrought deed of faith.

“A wounded, weak, and helpless worm,
On Christ’s kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and confidence,
My Jesus and my all.”

Be grateful for this; and, sinner, if thou canst now step into Christ and trust him with thyself, make earth ring with thy joy, and make heaven resound with thy praise.

Our gratitude, methinks, will be greatest of all *when we get safe on shore*, and look on this old hulk, the burning world, without a fear; we, will see her blaze and cast her dreadful splendours over the infinite leagues of space, until beings in far-off worlds shall ask, “What is this? A world on fire, whose elements dissolve with fervent heat.” But we, caught up together with the Lord, to dwell for ever with him, shall look on with complacency, having lost nothing because saved in him; having found in him our Savior, better than all we had before, and being, once for all on heaven’s *terra firma*, never to put to sea again, never to fear tempest, rock, wreck, or fire; but saved! saved! saved eternally!

Escape, sinner, escape for thy life. Remember, though thus I talk to thee, if thou shalt escape, free grace must have all the praise; and in the language of good Lot, thou wilt have to say—“Thou hast magnified thy mercy in saving my life.” May God send you away with a blessing, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.