

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS CHAPTER 7

In this chapter we have the performance of what was foretold in the foregoing chapter, both concerning the destruction of the old world and the salvation of Noah; for we may be sure that no word of God shall fall to the ground. There we left Noah busy about his ark, and full of care to get it finished in time, while the rest of his neighbours were laughing at him for his pains. Now here we see what was the end thereof, the end of his care and of their carelessness. And this famous period of the old world gives us some idea of the state of things when the world that now is shall be destroyed by fire, as that was by water. (See #2Pe 3:6,7) We have, in this chapter,

I. God's gracious call to Noah to come into the ark (#Ge 7:1), and to bring the creatures that were to be preserved alive along with him (#Ge 7:2,3), in consideration of the deluge at hand, #Ge 7:4.

II. Noah's obedience to this heavenly vision, #Ge 7:5. When he was six hundred years old, he came with his family into the ark (#Ge 7:6,7), and brought the creatures along with him (#Ge 7:8,9), an account of which is repeated (#Ge 7:13-16), to which is added God's tender care to shut him in.

III. The coming of the threatened deluge (#Ge 7:10); the causes of it (#Ge 7:11,12); the prevalence of it, #Ge 7:17-20.

IV. The dreadful desolations that were made by it in the death of every living creature upon earth, except those that were in the ark, #Ge 7:21-23.

V. The continuance of it in full sea, before it began to ebb, one hundred and fifty days, #Ge 7:24.

Ver. 1.

Here is,

I. A gracious invitation of Noah and his family into a place of safety, now that the flood of waters was coming, #Ge 7:1.

1. The call itself is very kind, like that of a tender father to his children, to come in doors, when he sees night or a storm coming: *Come thou, and all thy house*, that small family that thou hast, *into the ark*. Observe,

(1.) Noah did not go into the ark till God bade him; though he knew it was designed for his place of refuge, yet he waited for a renewed command, and had it. It is very comfortable to follow the calls of Providence, and to see God going before us in every step we take.

(2.) God does not bid him *go* into the ark, but *come* into it, implying that God would go with him, would lead him into it, accompany him in it, and in due time bring him safely out of it. Note, Wherever we are, it is very desirable to have the presence of God with us, for this is all in all to the comfort of every condition. It was this that made Noah's ark, which was a prison, to be to him not only a refuge, but a palace.

(3.) Noah had taken a great deal of pains to build the ark, and now he was himself preserved alive in it. Note, What we do in obedience to the command of God, and in faith, we ourselves shall certainly have the comfort of, first or last.

(4.) Not he only, but his house also, his wife and children, are called with him into the ark. Note, It is good to belong to the family of a godly man; it is safe and comfortable to dwell under such a shadow. One of Noah's sons was Ham, who proved afterwards a bad man, yet he was saved in the ark, which intimates,

[1.] That wicked children often fare the better for the sake of their godly parents.

[2.] That there is a mixture of bad with good in the best societies in earth, and we are not to think it strange. In Noah's family there was a Ham, and in Christ's family there was a Judas. There is no perfect purity on this side heaven.

(5.) This call to Noah was a type of the call which the gospel gives to poor sinners. Christ is an ark already prepared, in whom alone we can be safe when death and judgment come. Now the burden of the song is,

"Come, come;" the word says,

"Come;": ministers say,

"Come;" the Spirit says,

"Come, come into the ark."

2. The reason for this invitation is a very honourable testimony to Noah's integrity: *For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Observe,*

(1.) Those are righteous indeed that are righteous before God, that have not only the form of godliness by which they appear righteous before men, who may easily be imposed upon, but the power of it by which they approve themselves to God, who searches the heart, and cannot be deceived in men's characters.

(2.) God takes notice of and is pleased with those that are righteous before him: *Thee have I seen.* In a world of wicked people God could see one righteous Noah; that single grain of wheat could not be lost, no, not in so great a heap of chaff. *The Lord knows those that are his.*

(3.) God, that is a witness to, will shortly be a witness for, his people's integrity; he that sees it will proclaim it before angels and men, to their immortal honour. Those that obtain mercy to be righteous shall obtain witness that they are righteous.

(4.) God is, in a special manner, pleased with those that are good in bad times and places. Noah was therefore illustriously righteous, because he was so in that wicked and adulterous generation.

(5.) Those that keep themselves pure in times of common iniquity God will keep safe in times of common calamity; those that partake not with others in their sins shall not partake with them in their plagues; those that are better than others are, even in this life, safer than others, and it is better with them.

II. Here are necessary orders given concerning the brute creatures that were to be preserved alive with Noah in the ark, [#Ge 7:2,3](#). They were not capable of receiving the warning and directions themselves, as man was, who herein is taught *more than the beasts of the earth, and made wiser than the fowls of heaven*--that he is endued with the

power of foresight; therefore man is charged with the care of them: being under his dominion, they must be under his protection; and, though he could not secure every individual, yet he must carefully preserve every species, that no tribe, no, not the least considerable, might entirely perish out of the creation. Observe in this,

1. God's care for man, for his comfort and benefit. We do not find that Noah was solicitous of himself about this matter; but God consults our happiness more than we do ourselves. Though God saw that the old world was very provoking, and foresaw that the new one would be little better, yet he would preserve the brute creatures for man's use. *Doth God take care for oxen? #1Co 9:9.* Or was it not rather for man's sake that this care was taken?
2. Even the unclean beasts, which were least valuable and profitable, were preserved alive in the ark; for God's tender mercies are over all his works, and not over those only that are of most eminence and use.
3. Yet more of the clean were preserved than of the unclean.

(1.) Because the clean were most for the service of man; and therefore, in favour to him, more of them were preserved and are still propagated. Thanks be to God, there are not herds of lions as there are of oxen, nor flocks of tigers as there are of sheep.

(2.) Because the clean were for sacrifice to God; and therefore, in honour to him, more of them were preserved, three couple for breed, and the odd seventh for sacrifice, *#Ge 8:20.* God gives us six for one in earthly things, as in the distribution of the days of the week, that in spiritual things we should be all for him. What is devoted to God's honour, and used in his service, is particularly blessed and increased.

III. Here is notice given of the now imminent approach of the flood: *Yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain, #Ge 7:4.*

1. "It shall be seven days yet, before I do it."

After the hundred and twenty years had expired, God grants them a reprieve of seven days longer, both to show how slow he is to anger and that punishing work is his strange work, and also to give them some further space for repentance: but all in vain; these seven days were trifled away, after all the rest; they continued secure and sensual until the day that the flood came.

2. "It shall be *but* seven days."

While Noah told them of the judgment at a distance, they were tempted to put off their repentance, because the vision was for a great while to come; but now he is ordered to tell them that it is at the door, that they have but one week more to turn them in, but one sabbath more to improve, to see if that will now, at last, awaken them to consider the things that belong to their peace, which otherwise will soon be hidden from their eyes. But it is common for those that have been careless of their souls during the years of their health, when they have looked upon death at a distance, to be as careless during the days, the seven days, of their sickness, when they see it approaching, their hearts being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Ver. 5.

Here is Noah's ready obedience to the commands that God gave him. Observe,

1. He went into the ark, upon notice that the flood would come after seven days, though probably as yet there appeared no visible sign of its approach, no cloud arising that threatened it, nothing done towards it, but all continued serene and clear; for, as he prepared the ark by faith in the warning given that the flood would come, so he went into it by faith in this warning that it would come quickly, though he did not see that the second causes had yet begun to work. In every step he took, he walked by faith, and not by sense. During these seven days, it is likely, he was settling himself and his family in the ark, and distributing the creatures into their several apartments. This was the conclusion of that visible sermon which he had long been preaching to his careless neighbours, and which, one would think, might have awakened them; but, not obtaining that desired end, it left their blood upon their own heads.
2. He took all his family along with him, his wife, to be his companion and comfort (though it should seem that, after this, he had no children by her), his sons, and his sons' wives, that by them not only his family, but the world of mankind, might be built up. Observe, Though men were to be reduced to so small a number, and it would be very desirable to have the world speedily re-peopled, yet Noah's sons were each of them to have but one wife, which strengthens the argument against having many wives; for from the beginning of this new world it was not so: as, at first, God made, so now he kept alive, but one woman for one man. See [#Mt 19:4,8](#).
3. The brute creatures readily went in with him. The same hand that at first brought them to Adam to be named now brought them to Noah to be preserved. The ox now knew his owner, and the ass his protector's crib, nay, even the wildest creatures flocked to it; but man had become more brutish than the brutes themselves, and did not know, did not consider, [#Isa 1:3](#).

Ver. 11.

Here is,

I. The date of this great event; this is carefully recorded, for the greater certainty of the story.

1. It was in the 600th year of Noah's life, which, by computation, appears to be 1656 years from the creation. The years of the old world are reckoned, not by the reigns of the giants, but the lives of the patriarchs; saints are of more account with God than princes. *The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.* Noah was now a very old man, even as men's years went then. Note,

(1.) The longer we live in this world the more we see of the miseries and calamities of it; it is therefore spoken of as the privilege of those that die young that their eyes *shall not see the evil* which is coming, [#2Ki 22:20](#).

(2.) Sometimes God exercises his old servants with extraordinary trials of obedience patience. The oldest of Christ's soldiers must not promise themselves a discharge from their warfare till death discharge them. Still they must gird on their harness, and not boast as though they had put it off. As the year of the deluge is recorded, so,

2. We are told that it was in the *second month, the seventeenth day of the month*, which is reckoned to be about the beginning of November; so that Noah had had a harvest just before, from which to victual his ark.

II. The second causes that concurred to this deluge. Observe,

1. In the self-same day that Noah was fixed in the ark, the inundation began. Note,

(1.) Desolating judgments come not till God has provided for the security of his own people; see **#Ge 19:22**, I can do *nothing till thou be come thither*: and we find (**#Re 7:3**) that the winds are held till the servants of God are sealed.

(2.) When good men are removed judgments are not far off; for they are *taken away from the evil to come*, **#Isa 57:1**. When they are called into the chambers, hidden in the grave, hidden in heaven, then God is *coming out of his place to punish*, **#Isa 26:20,21**.

2. See what was done on that day, that fatal day to the world of the ungodly.

(1.) *The fountains of the great deep were broken up*. Perhaps there needed no new creation of waters; what were already made to be, in the common course of providence, blessings to the earth, were now, by an extraordinary act of divine power, made the ruin of it. God has laid up the deep in storehouses (**#Ps 33:7**), and now he broke up those stores. As our bodies have in themselves those humours which, when God pleases, become the seeds and springs of mortal diseases, so the earth had in it bowels those waters which, at God's command, sprang up and flooded it. God had, in the creation, set *bars and doors* to the waters of *the sea*, that they *might not return to cover the earth* **#Ps 104:9; Job 38:9-11**; and now he only removed those ancient landmarks, mounds, and fences, and the waters of the sea returned to cover the earth, as they had done at first, **#Ge 1:9**. Note, All the creatures are ready to fight against sinful man, and any of them is able to be the instrument of his ruin, if God do but take off the restraints by which they are held in during the day of God's patience.

(2.) *The windows of heaven were opened, and the waters which were above the firmament were poured out upon the world*; those treasures which God has *reserved against the time of trouble, the day of battle and war*, **#Job 38:22,33**. The rain, which ordinarily descends in drops, then came down in streams, or *spouts*, as they call them in the Indies, where clouds have been often known to *burst*, as they express it there, when the rain descends in a much more violent torrent than we have ever seen in the greatest shower. We read (**#Job 26:8**) that *God binds up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them*; but now the bond was loosed, the cloud was rent, and such rains descended as were never known before nor since, in such abundance and of such continuance: the thick cloud was not, as ordinarily it is, wearied with waterings (**#Job 37:11**), that is, soon spent and exhausted; but still the clouds returned after the rain, and the divine power brought in fresh recruits. It rained, without intermission or abatement, *forty days and forty nights* (**#Ge 7:12**), and that upon the whole earth at once, not, as sometimes, *upon one city and not upon another*. God made the world in six days, but he was forty days in destroying it; for he is slow to anger: but, though the destruction came slowly and gradually, yet it came effectually.

3. Now learn from this,

(1.) That all the creatures are at God's disposal, and that he makes what use he pleases of them, whether *for correction, or for his land, or for mercy*, as Elihu speaks of the rain, **#Job 37:11,12**.

(2.) That God often makes that which *should be for our welfare to become a trap*, **#Ps 69:22**. That which usually is a comfort and benefit to us becomes, when God pleases, a scourge and a plague to us. Nothing is more needful nor useful than water, both the

springs of the earth and the showers of heaven; and yet now nothing was more hurtful, nothing more destructive: every creature is to us what God makes it.

(3.) That it is impossible to escape the righteous judgments of God when they come against sinners with commission; for God can arm both heaven and earth against them; see **#Job 20:27**. God can surround men with the messengers of his wrath, so that, if they look upwards, it is with horror and amazement, if they look to the earth, *behold, trouble and darkness*, **#Isa 8:21,22**. Who then is able to stand before God, when he is angry?

(4.) In this destruction of the old world by water God gave a specimen of the final destruction of the world that now is by fire. We find the apostle setting the one of these over against the other, **#2Pe 3:6,7**. As there are waters under the earth, so *Ætna, Vesuvius*, and other volcanoes, proclaim to the world that there are subterraneous fires too; and fire often falls from heaven, many desolations are made by lightning; so that, when the time predetermined comes, between these two fires the earth and all the works therein shall be burnt up, as the flood was brought upon the old world out of the fountains of the great deep and through the windows of heaven.

Ver. 13.

Here is repeated what was related before of Noah's entrance into the ark, with his family and creatures that were marked for preservation. Now,

I. It is thus repeated for the honour of Noah, whose faith and obedience herein shone so brightly, by which he obtained a good report, and who herein appeared so great a favourite of Heaven and so great a blessing to this earth.

II. Notice is here taken of the beasts going in *each after his kind*, according to the phrase used in the history of the creation (**#Ge 1:21-25**), to intimate that just as many kinds as were created at first were saved now, and no more; and that this preservation was as a new creation: a life remarkably protected is, as it were, a new life.

III. Though all enmities and hostilities between the creatures ceased for the present, and ravenous creatures were not only so mild and manageable as that the *wolf and the lamb lay down together*, but so strangely altered as that the *lion did eat straw like an ox* **#Isa 11:6,7**, yet, when this occasion was over, the restraint was taken off, and they were still of the same kind as ever; for the ark did not alter their constitution. Hypocrites in the church, that externally conform to the laws of that ark, may yet be unchanged, and then it will appear, one time or other, what kind they are after.

IV. It is added (and the circumstance deserves our notice), *The Lord shut him in*, **#Ge 7:16**. As Noah continued his obedience to God, so God continued his care of Noah: and here it appeared to be a very distinguishing care; for the shutting of this door set up a partition wall between him and all the world besides. God shut the door,

1. To secure him, and keep him safe in the ark. The door must be shut very *close*, lest the waters should break in and sink the ark, and very *fast*, lest any without should break it down. Thus God made up Noah, as he *makes up his jewels*, **#Mal 3:17**.
2. To exclude all others, and keep them for ever out. Hitherto the door of the ark stood open, and if any, even during the last seven days, had repented and believed, for aught I know they might have been welcomed into the ark; but now the door was shut, and they were cut off from all hopes of admittance: for God *shutteth, and none can open*.

V. There is much of our gospel duty and privilege to be seen in Noah's preservation in the ark. The apostle makes it a type of our baptism, that is, our Christianity, **#1Pe 3:20,21**. Observe then,

1. It is our great duty, in obedience to the gospel call, by a lively faith in Christ, to come into that way of salvation which God has provided for poor sinners. When Noah came into the ark, he quitted his own house and lands; so must we quit our own righteousness and our worldly possessions, whenever they come into competition with Christ. Noah must, for a while, submit to the confinements and inconveniences of the ark, in order to his preservation for a new world; so those that come into Christ to be saved by him must deny themselves, both in sufferings and services.
2. Those that come into the ark themselves should bring as many as they can in with them, by good instructions, by persuasions, and by a good example. *What knowest thou, O man, but thou mayest thus save thy wife (#1Co 7:16)*, as Noah did his? There is room enough in Christ for all comers.
3. Those that by faith come into Christ, the ark, shall by the power of God be shut in, and kept as in a strong-hold *by the power of God, #1Pe 1:5*. God put Adam into paradise, but he did not shut him in, and so he threw himself out; but when he put Noah into the ark he shut him in, and so when he brings a soul to Christ he ensures its salvation: it is not in our own keeping, but in the Mediator's hand.
4. The door of mercy will shortly be shut against those that now make light of it. Now, *knock and it shall be opened*; but the time will come when it shall not, **#Lu 13:25**.

Ver. 17.

We are here told,

I. How long the flood was increasing--*forty days, #Ge 7:17*. The profane world, who believed not that it would come, probably when it came flattered themselves with hopes that it would soon abate and never come to extremity; but still it increased, it prevailed. Note,

1. When God judges he will overcome. If he begin, he will make an end; his way is perfect, both in judgment and mercy.
2. The gradual approaches and advances of God's judgments, which are designed to bring sinners to repentance, are often abused to the hardening of them in their presumption.

II. To what degree they increased: they rose so high that not only the low flat countries were deluged, but to make sure work, and that none might escape, the tops of the highest mountains were overflowed--*fifteen cubits*, that is, seven yards and a half; so that *in vain was salvation hoped for from hills or mountains, #Jer 3:23*. None of God's creatures are so high but his power can overtop them; and he will make them know that wherein they deal proudly he is above them. Perhaps the tops of the mountains were washed down by the strength of the waters, which helped much towards the prevailing of the waters above them; for it is said (**#Job 12:15**), *He sends out the waters*, and they not only overflow, but overturn, the earth. Thus the refuge of lies was swept away, and the waters overflowed the hiding-place of those sinners (**#Isa 28:17**), and in vain they fly to them for safety, **#Re 6:16**. Now the mountains departed, and the hills were removed, and nothing stood a man in

stead but the *covenant of peace*, #Isa 54:10. There is no place on earth so high as to set men out of the reach of God's judgments, #Jer 49:16; Ob 1:3,4. God's hand will *find out all his enemies*, #Ps 21:8. Observe how exactly they are fathomed (*fifteen cubits*), not by Noah's plummet, but by his knowledge who *weighs the waters by measure*, #Job 28:25.

III. What became of Noah's ark when the waters thus increased: *It was lifted up above the earth* (#Ge 7:17), *and went upon the face of the waters*, #Ge 7:18. When all other buildings were demolished by the waters, and buried under them, the ark alone subsisted. Observe,

1. The waters which broke down every thing else bore up the ark. That which to unbelievers is a savour of death unto death is to the faithful a savour of life unto life.
2. The more the waters increased the higher the ark was lifted up towards heaven. Thus sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions; and as troubles abound consolations much more abound.

Ver. 21.

Here is,

I. The general destruction of all flesh by the waters of the flood. *Come, and see the desolations which God makes in the earth* (#Ps 46:8), and how he lays heaps upon heaps. Never did death triumph, from its first entrance unto this day, as it did then. Come, and see Death upon his pale horse, and hell following with him, #Re 6:7,8.

1. All the cattle, fowl, and creeping things, died, except the few that were in the ark. Observe how this is repeated: *All flesh died*, #Ge 7:21. *All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was on the dry land*, #Ge 7:22. *Every living substance*, #Ge 7:23. And why so? Man only had done wickedly, and justly is God's hand against him; but *these sheep, what have they done?* I answer,

(1.) We are sure God did them no wrong. He is the sovereign Lord of all life, for he is the sole fountain and author of it. He that made them as he pleased might unmake them when he pleased; and who shall say unto him, *What doest thou?* May he not do what he will with his own, which were created for his pleasure?

(2.) God did admirably serve the purposes of his own glory by their destruction, as well as by their creation. Herein his holiness and justice were greatly magnified; by this it appears that he hates sin, and is highly displeased with sinners, when even the inferior creatures, because they are the servants of man and part of his possession, and because they have been abused to be the servants of sin, are destroyed with him. This makes the judgment the more remarkable, the more dreadful, and, consequently, the more expressive of God's wrath and vengeance. The destruction of the creatures was their deliverance from the bondage of corruption, which deliverance the whole creation now groans after, #Ro 8:21,22. It was likewise an instance of God's wisdom. As the creatures were made for man when he was made, so they were multiplied for him when he was multiplied; and therefore, now that mankind was reduced to so small a number, it was fit that the beasts should proportionably be reduced, otherwise they would have had the dominion, and would have replenished the earth, and the remnant of mankind that was left would have been overpowered by them. See how God considered this in another case, #Ex 23:29, *Lest the beast of the field multiply against thee.*

2. All the men, women, and children, that were in the world (except that were in the ark) died. *Every man* (#Ge 7:21,23), and perhaps they were as many as are now upon the

face of the earth, if not more. Now,

(1.) We may easily imagine what terror and consternation seized on them when they saw themselves surrounded. Our Saviour tells us that till the very day that the flood came they were *eating and drinking* (#Lu 17:26,27); they were drowned in security and sensuality before they were drowned in those waters, crying *Peace, peace*, to themselves, deaf and blind to all divine warnings. In this posture death surprised them, as #1Sa 30:16,17. But O what an amazement were they in then! Now they see and feel that which they would not believe and fear, and are convinced of their folly when it is too late; now they find no place for repentance, though they seek it carefully with tears.

(2.) We may suppose that they tried all ways and means possible for their preservation, but all in vain. Some climb to the tops of trees or mountains, and spin out their terrors there awhile. But the flood reaches them, at last, and they are forced to die with the more deliberation. Some, it is likely, cling to the ark, and now hope that this may be their safety which they had so long made their sport. Perhaps some get to the top of the ark, and hope to shift for themselves there; but either they perish there for want of food, or, by a speedier despatch, a dash of rain washes them off that deck. Others, it may be, hoped to prevail with Noah for admission into the ark, and pleaded old acquaintance, *Have we not eaten and drunk in thy presence? Hast thou not taught in our streets?*

"Yes," might Noah say, "that I have, many a time, to little purpose. I called but you refused; you set at nought all my counsel (#Pr 1:24,25), and now it is not in my power to help you: God has shut the door, and I cannot open it."

Thus it will be at the great day. Neither climbing high in an outward profession, nor claiming relation to good people, will bring men to heaven, #Mt 7:22; 25:8,9. Those that are not found in Christ, the ark, are certainly undone, undone for ever; salvation itself cannot save them. See #Isa 10:3.

(3.) We may suppose that some of those that perished in the deluge had themselves assisted Noah, or were employed by him, in the building of the ark, and yet were not so wise as by repentance to secure themselves a place in it. Thus wicked ministers, though they may have been instrumental to help others to heaven, will themselves be thrust down to hell.

Let us now pause awhile and consider this tremendous judgment! Let our hearts meditate terror, the terror of this destruction. Let us see, and say, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; who can stand before him when he is angry?* Let us see and say, *It is an evil thing, and a bitter, to depart from God.* The sin of sinners will, without repentance, be their ruin, first or last; if God be true, it will. *Though hand join in hand, yet the wicked shall not go unpunished.* The righteous God knows how to bring a flood upon the world of the ungodly, #2Pe 2:5. Eliphaz appeals to this story as a standing warning to a careless world (#Job 22:15,16), *Hast thou marked the old way, which wicked men have trodden, who were cut down out of time, and sent into eternity, whose foundation was overflowed with the flood?*

II. The special preservation of Noah and his family: *Noah only remained alive, and those that were with him in the ark, #Ge 7:23.* Observe,

1. Noah lives. When all about him were monuments of justice, thousands falling on his right hand and ten thousands on his left, he was a monument of mercy. Only with his eyes might he *behold and see the reward of the wicked, #Ps 91:7,8.* *In the floods of great waters, they did not come nigh him, #Ps 32:6.* We have reason to think that,

while the long-suffering of God waited, Noah not only preached to, but prayed for, that wicked world, and would have turned away the wrath; but his prayers return into his own bosom, and are answered only in his own escape, which is plainly referred to, **#Eze 14:14**, *Noah, Daniel, and Job, shall but deliver their own souls*. A mark of honour shall be set on intercessors.

2. He but lives. Noah remains alive, and this is all; he is, in effect, buried alive--cooped up in a close place, alarmed with the terrors of the descending rain, the increasing flood, and the shrieks and outcries of his perishing neighbours, his heart overwhelmed with melancholy thoughts of the desolations made. But he comforts himself with this, that he is in the way of duty and in the way of deliverance. And we are taught (**#Jer 45:4,5**) that when desolating judgments are abroad we must not seek great nor pleasant things to ourselves, but reckon it an unspeakable favour if we have our lives given us for a prey.