

Selected readings from Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, By
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Reading 140

“Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.” Genesis 8:9

Wearied out with her wanderings, the dove returns at length to the ark as her only resting place. How heavily she flies—she will drop—she will never reach the ark! But she struggles on. Noah has been looking out for his dove all day long and is ready to receive her. She has just strength to reach the edge of the ark, she can hardly alight upon it, and is ready to drop, when Noah puts forth his hand and pulls her in unto him. Mark that: *“pulled her in unto him.”* She did not fly right in herself, but was too fearful, or too weary to do so. She flew as far as she could, and then he put forth his hand and pulled her in unto him. This act of mercy was shown to the wandering dove, and she was not rebuked for her wanderings. Just as she was she was pulled into the ark.

You too, seeking sinner, with all your sin, will be received. “Only return”—those are God’s two gracious words—“only return.” What! nothing else? No, “only return.” She had no olive branch in her mouth this time, nothing at all but just herself and her wanderings; but it is “only return,” and she does return, and Noah pulls her in.

Fly, wanderer; fly fainting one, dove as you are, though you think yourself to be black as the raven with the mire of sin, fly back, back to the Savior. Every moment you wait only increases your misery; your attempts to flatter yourself and make yourself fit for Jesus are all vanity. Come now to him just as you are. “Return, backsliding Israel.” He does not say, “Return, *repenting* Israel” (there is doubtless such an invitation), but *“backsliding one,”* as a backslider with all your backslidings with you, Return, return, return! Jesus is waiting for you! He will stretch forth his hand and “pull you in”—in to himself, your heart’s true home.