

HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE?

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb. 2:3).

Spurgeon tells how a Welch minister introduced his sermon from this text. Leaning over the pulpit he said, "My friends, I have a question I cannot answer. You cannot answer it. If an angel were to come down from heaven he could not answer it. If somebody should come from hell he could not answer it. And the question is, 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation.'"

This text is a red light of warning on the road to hell. It is a reminder that there is danger ahead for the careless sinner. It is a question for which there is no positive and affirmative answer. It is a trumpet call to faith in Christ. We shall not attempt to give answer where there is no answer, but we will address ourselves to some questions that do have answers.



Location: 3.3 miles out Bryan Station Road. Right on Briar Hill Road.

- Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
- Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
- Evening Service 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m.

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I. What is it we need to escape?
 That word escape is associated with danger and calamity. It implies something terrible in the offing. And there is even though the masses will not believe it. There is a day coming which overshadows all other days. It is the day of judgment; the day when God's wrath will be poured out on poor, helpless sinners. The Bible points to that day and warns against being unprepared. It tells us how consternation will seize the unprepared in that day. It tells us how they will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them and hide them

from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, etc. It is the day when God will settle for all sins not settled for at Calvary. There are only two places and times for penal punishment of the wicked: one place was the cross, the other place will be hell.

Our text does not speak of some little inconvenience to be escaped; it is talking about the most horrible torment that can be thought of. It is not embarrassment at not having good enough clothes to wear or a nice enough car to ride in, or a fine enough house to live in; it is deliverance from the wrath to come. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

The text is not talking about discomfort in not having up-to-date gadgets in our homes, such as electric lights, running water, and a modern bath; it is talking about the misery of hell torments. Listen, there is something to be escaped!

"There's a great day coming, A great day coming, There's a great day coming by and by; When the saints and the sinners shall be parted right and left, Are you ready for that day to come?"

"There's a bright day coming, A bright day coming, There's a bright day coming by and by; But its brightness shall only come to them that love the Lord, Are you ready for that day to come?"

"There's a sad day coming, A sad day coming, There's a sad day coming by and by; When the sinner shall hear his doom, Depart, I know ye not, Are you ready for that day to come?"

And, let not anybody take comfort in the belief that that day is far off. It matters not when it comes, the suffering will be as long as if it were this day-- for it will be eternal in its duration.

II. Why can there be no escape for those who neglect salvation?

1. Because continuous sin will mean continuous punishment. That day will bring about fixity of individual character. In that day it will be said, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still, and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Rev. 22:11). Hell will effect no change in human character. The wicked will be conquered but not regenerated. They will not dare to lift a finger against God, but the wicked will still hate him in their hearts. And this hatred is the very essence of sin.

2. Because of the respect God has for His Son, Jesus Christ. God has provided salvation through the sufferings of His Son, and if God did not punish those who neglect and despise it, He would show little regard for what His Son has done. If there is to be no punishment for sinners then why punish Jesus Christ

for their sins. Can it be supposed God would punish His Son for the sins of sinners and then let sinners off who ignore all He has done?

3. Because there is only one salvation and to neglect that is to be without salvation. The way of escape is through the salvation Christ has provided, and there is no other way of escape. There is but one way to heaven, and Jesus Christ says, "I am the Way." There is only one truth that saves and Jesus Christ says, "I am the Truth." There is only one life that is eternal and Jesus Christ says, "I am the Life." "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

There are many religions but only one salvation. There are many roads of travel, but only one reaches to the pearly gates. There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

III. Why is this salvation called the great salvation? Several reasons suggest themselves:

1. Because of its cost. It cost the Saviour something to save sinners. Christ had to face the justice and judgment of God and bear our sins in his own body. Most things can be redeemed with silver and gold, but sinners had to be redeemed with the blood of God's Son. Brethren, we are high priced people. And we ought to perpetually love and serve our Redeemer. We ought to put His church above every other institution on this earth. We ought to keep His day as a memorial to His resurrection. We ought to honor Him with our tithes and offerings as love gifts. We ought to be His witnesses by lip and life.

2. Because of what it saves us from. It is great to be saved from the curse of God's law. It is great to be delivered from the wrath to come. It is great to be separated from haters of God.

3. Because of what it saves us to. Heaven is going to be a place of blessed associations. There will be nothing there to defile or make a lie. There will be no blasphemy there, no foul talk, no idle words will ever be spoken there, and nobody to threaten us there for believing God's word.

There will be no differences among the saints there. No jealousies--no pouters there--nobody refusing to cooperate in giving glory to God. There will be nobody there breaking the harmony of the heavenly choir by singing self praise.

There we shall hold converse with such great worthies as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They shall come from the East and the West, from the North and South and sit down in the kingdom of God. What a meeting we will have! What songs we will sing. One of them will be the song of Moses and the Lamb. We will pay tribute to the holiness of God's law and praise God for salvation through the Lamb. When John saw that holy city, he said, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and

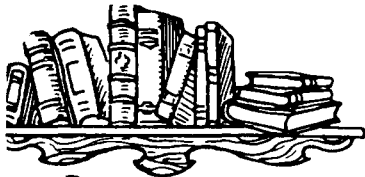
the Lamb is the light thereof." Of course, the Redeemer will be the main attraction of that city, but we will have fellowship with kindred spirits --fellowship with those saved by the same precious blood.

Neglect! Neglect is a demon in the souls of men that makes them rush headlong into the sea of perdition--the lake of fire. Who can estimate the cost of neglect? Neglect is bad anywhere. Neglect is enough to ruin a man. The businessman does not have to commit forgery or robbery to ruin himself; he has only to neglect his business. A sick man doesn't have to cut his throat to destroy himself; he has only to neglect the means of restoration. Most of the calamities of life are caused by neglect. The most terrible calamity in any life is caused by neglecting salvation! "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

— By the late C. D. Cole

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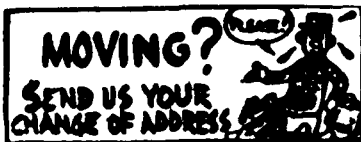
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