

How shall
we escape,
if we
neglect
so great
Salvation?

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...? (Hebrews 2:3)

It is a great privilege in life's short journey to be brought into contact with those essential truths concerning our origins, the great salvation provided by God for mankind, and our ultimate destiny. Man is full of his own ideas and has multiplied theories and religions on the face of the earth, to contrive answers to such matters with the resulting confusion and damning of many.

The salvation spoken of in the above quotation from the Bible is linked to the most significant of escapes that any individual could experience. It concerns that salvation from God's judgment of sin and the terrors of the Lake of Fire, in all its fullness of perpetual torment and damnation, that foreboding place of **"outer darkness ... weeping and gnashing of teeth"** (Matthew 25:30) **"where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"** (Mark 9:48). While there is absolutely no hope of any being, spirit or human, escaping out of this place, there certainly is from being cast into it.

How shall we escape if we neglect

The question is implicit: there is no possibility of any escape or deliverance whatsoever to those who neglect, fail to grasp hold of and make good to themselves that great provision that God has established to save a sinner from Hell. How dreadful for anyone to find themselves thrust out into a place like this, and yet that will be

our experience if we despise or even neglect the escape that God offers. Mankind foolishly jests and makes light of Hell and adds to his sins by caricaturing the devil, the master artificer of deceit and delusion, not realising his power over them until it is too late.

So great salvation

We only need to consider some of the aspects of this “so great salvation” to discover why neglect is so serious:

- a) Because of that from which we need to be delivered. The few short years of time on earth are insignificant compared to an eternity of solitude in that terrifying place already described.
- b) Because of the scope and the greatness of God’s love shown towards us, and the cost to Him and His beloved Son to provide this salvation: ***“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”*** (John 3:16). His death upon the cross culminated in His glorious bodily resurrection proving His great victory over death, sin, the grave and the devil himself. The Bible is full of this great theme in its prophetic utterances, recordings of the events in the Gospel accounts and explanation of the judicial aspects in the later epistles.
- c) Because of the significant blessings which the beneficiaries of this so great salvation receive. These are blessings for those who confess and turn from their sin, submitting to the ways of God and believing wholeheartedly on the work of the Lord Jesus upon the Cross. Those at peace with God, no longer fear His wrath, are forgiven and become recipients of His holy Spirit as a guarantee of those future blessings described as ***“an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you”*** (1Peter 1:4). They will suffer trials and afflictions on earth, but their ultimate security is sure.

Which at the first...

Furthermore, the One who has guaranteed this so great salvation by His own voluntary sacrifice on the cross, was the One who first declared it. He who is the Lord of heaven and earth, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe which we inhabit, He who was manifest in the flesh as the incarnate eternal Son of God, should be the One whose words our ears should first give attention to and obey. All one day will obey His voice when He calls the dead from the graves to judgment. He is the One to whom all future judgment of the living and the dead has been committed.

And was confirmed...

The book of Acts in the Bible records the testimony that was borne by those men who were eyewitnesses of the Lord's life, death and resurrection and the manner in which God so clearly worked with them in those early days, to confirm that they were indeed bearing witness to the truth: ***"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will"*** (Hebrews 2:4). Those days are past but their witness is recorded for us to convince all that these timid, frightened men were truly empowered through the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to bear a bold, sound and uncompromising testimony of all that God had accomplished.

Thus with such evidence of a divine work undertaken, it is folly not to acknowledge the reality of such a warning, whether we are atheistic, immoral or even religious. The Lord Jesus warned such individuals – ***"How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"*** (Matthew 23:33). The urgent word to those who were exhorted to flee from the overthrow of the ungodly cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, is still vibrant and valid for us today: ***"Escape for thy life"*** (Genesis 19:17).