

How shall we escape

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Date: 01 January 2000

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[0 : 0 0] turn to the chapter which we read the epistle to the hebrews chapter 2 and our text for this morning is verse 3 hebrews chapter 2 and verse 3 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 how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation here we have one of the great challenging verses of scripture it calls us to consider our lives to face up to what we are doing with the gospel and it warns us of drastic consequences if we do not make use of the opportunities and the privileges that we have as those who hear the gospel and to whom the word of salvation is preached by the grace of god we are told that christ tasted death for every man verse 9 tasted death for every man who will believe jesus died on the cross and this offer of salvation is made to every one of you it's made to everyone in the world a savior to deliver you from your sins and from the consequences of them and how terrible it is to despise that gospel offer and if we despise the gospel offer what essentially we're doing is despising the christ that the gospel offers to us first of all this morning i would like us to think on the the greatness of this salvation how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation why is it great salvation well the first reason that's given here is that it's great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the lord it's great because it's spoken to us by the lord there are lots of different religions in the world many of them are the thoughts of mere men buddhism for example it's the thoughts of buddha zoroastrianism it's the thoughts of zoroaster these various religions the thoughts of great men but what we have here are the thoughts of the lord which began to be spoken by the lord it's the word of the creator it's the word of the ruler of the universe the word of almighty god the one who one day will judge you and me and we're told here verse 2 if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation

which at the first began to be spoken by the lord so there's a contrast drawn here between the word spoken by angels and the word spoken by the lord what's the word spoken by angels this word which received a just recompense of reward the word was received by those who broke it the word spoken by angels is the law given on mount sinai now it would seem when we're reading in the old testament that the law given on mount sinai was given directly by god himself but in acts chapter 7 and verse 53 stephen tells us that the law was mediated by angels it was given by angels and we have a reference to that in deuteronomy 33 and verse 2 where the lord comes with ten thousands of his saints of his holy ones his angels so there was a sense in which the law given on mount sinai was the word given by angels it was mediated through angels but what we have here is the word given directly by the lord himself the law was great the five books that we have the five books of moses commonly called the torah at the beginning of the old testament they're a tremendous revelation of god and of his ways but the gospel it's even more wonderful because it is directly spoken by the lord himself further it's a great salvation not just because it was spoken by the lord but we're told in verse 3 that it was confirmed unto us by them that heard him it was confirmed to us by many witnesses not like

Mohammed he claimed to have got a revelation from god but he was just one and he wrote down his Quran his Quran and he was the only witness to it or Joseph Smith he claimed to have got these tables of stone on which the book of Mormon was written and then he wrote out this book and he passed it on one person but what we have in the gospel is the lord speaking and that word being confirmed unto us by them that heard him god spoke and that word was witnessed to and assured to us there was a testimony of others accompanying that word the Quran came from one man Mohammed the gospel it comes from many people we have four separate accounts of the gospel Matthew Mark Luke and John four individuals testifying to what they heard and they saw the word of God confirmed unto us by them that heard him it's not originating with one man it originates with

God and it's not born testimony to by one man it has the testimony of many confirmed unto us by those who heard him and furthermore God also bearing them witness with signs with signs and wonders and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his will why do you think Jesus went round performing miracles why did he give sight to the blind hearing to the deaf why did he make the dumb to speak and cleanse the leper and heal the paralytic why did he raise the dead why did he feed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes God bearing witness that Christ was his own son these were signs and testimonies assuring us that Jesus was the son of God he was no ordinary man there was a power there he was special and then after Jesus died and rose again and descended up to heaven the church went out evangelizing and as they went out with the message of the gospel God was bearing them witness with signs and wonders and many different miracles of the Holy Ghost we read in Acts chapter 3 of the man the lay man who was unable to walk we read of Lillimus the sorcerer on whom blindness came we read of Dorcas brought to life again as Peter prayed for her and many other miracles

[10:05] God testifying God assuring and proving that this is the truth it's the gospel now today we have certain churches that go around claiming to perform miracles Pentecostal and charismatic churches but the miracles are of a different order you don't find people who were blind from birth suddenly getting their sight you don't find people who have no legs and their legs suddenly growing you don't find people dead raised from the dead rather it's it's more the power of mind over matter oh but we have a new testament the record of true miracles and these miracles were given at that time because God was accompanying the revelation of his gospel with these signs confirming the word preached

God was assuring the world that this is the truth this gospel which was being proclaimed so great salvation why is it so great because it was spoken by the Lord because there were many witnesses because there was the witness of the signs and the wonders and the miracles that accompanied it but also it's great salvation because it saves us from a low condition verse 7 tells us thou madest him a little lower than the angels man was made lower than the angels the angels are in heaven they're much higher than us spiritual beings we're earthly we're that bit lower than them and yet we were saved and the fallen angels were bypassed the devils bypassed and God saves us he gives a gospel to us and when you think of it we sinned against God and we didn't just sin once but many times and we didn't just sin in little ways but in great ways against this great God so great salvation that reaches to this earth to creatures that reaches to sinful creatures corrupt creatures like you and me in all our guilt and in all our sinfulness yes and in our helplessness because we are here in this world sinning and we cannot stop every day of our lives we sin and we cannot save ourselves we cannot deliver ourselves there's nothing we can do to save us and the Lord reached down to us in the pit that we dug for ourselves in the miry clay and he picked us up and he pulled us out of that mess so great salvation reaching to us in our sin in our guilt in our lostness yes and in our hell disturbedness because you and I by nature are on our way to a lost eternity to an eternity of everlasting misery and God saved us so great salvation delivering us from such a mess but it's so great salvation too because of the heights to which it brings us to have your sins forgiven that's something wonderful isn't it to have all your crimes pardoned to have all your guilt removed each one of us have a conscience and we know that we do things wrong and we don't deserve God's mercy and yet

God to pardon us to wipe the slate clean that's something wonderful and that's what God does in the gospel so great salvation that washes away even the worst of sins that regenerates us the new birth it's something wonderful to be made a new person old things have passed away behold all things are made new a new creation in Christ Jesus that's what this gospel is all about and not simply that but to put his holy spirit in our hearts so that the spirit of God is in us the third person of the trinity put in our hearts so great salvation salvation so that we are adopted into God's family and made his children behold I says Christ in heaven behold

I and the children whom God has given me how amazing to think that you and I sons and daughters of Satan of sin and of wrath should be made the children of God so great salvation that we should be sanctified and made holy and made perfect and made glorious to whom he put in subjection the world to come we are made heirs and joint heirs with Christ and given a place in heaven a home with God and made eternally happy it's great salvation because of the low condition we were in and the high condition to which we are raised do you value it do you ever think about it how great this salvation is spoken by the

[16 : 46] Lord confirmed to us by those that heard him God bearing them witness with signs and wonders and miracles raising us from our creaturehood from our sinfulness as creatures raising us from hell raising us to be forgiven adopted brought into the family of God brought into heaven to be with God forever heirs and joint heirs with Christ so great salvation and further so great salvation when we consider the cost it wasn't cheap it wasn't easy for God to save us so great salvation because it involved God's own son coming into this world humbling himself and becoming one of us and suffering and carrying our sins and dying on the cross so great salvation because he who was the only begotten of the father who had been in the bosom of the father from all eternity he who was equal with God in power and glory became our savior and suffered for us because

God was there on the cross dying for us so great salvation when we look at that cross and we see God in our room and in our place suffering in human nature on our behalf so that we might have eternal life the captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering how could Christ be made perfect only in the sense that he was made the perfect savior savior without suffering he couldn't save us but he became the perfect savior through humbling himself and dying on the cross in our place tasting death for every man he tasted that death in all its bitterness in all its awfulness in all its cursedness so great salvation such a cost saving us with such sufferings and that's why the apostle says here to us how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation there's a warning there isn't there when you think about the greatness of our salvation the greatness of the gospel offer what God did in

Christ and what God is doing in the lives of men and women and what God will do for all those who receive his gospel how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward how shall we escape the word spoken by angels the law given on Mount Sinai was steadfast and every transgression was punished and punished with death serious punishment remember how Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron they thought they would come with their own sacrifice and do their own thing not according to the pattern laid down in the mount not according to the word given by angels but they had their own idea and their own suggestion about what would be good and so they came and they offered their sacrifice and God struck them down dead because they presumed to give their own offering in the place of the offering that God required they didn't listen to the word spoken by angels and so they were punished with death remember what happened to Cora

Dathan and Aburran who said to Moses and to Aaron you take too much upon yourselves we are holy too we will come and we will offer sacrifices just like you and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up the wrath of God remember the man who went out to gather sticks on the Sabbath day you wouldn't say it was a great crime gathering sticks on the Sabbath in order to light the fire for fuel for the fire but God said remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God in it thou shalt not do any work it is to be for the Lord what happened to the man who was gathering sticks God told the

Israelites to stone him to death every transgression of the words spoken by angels every transgression received a just recompense of reward how then shall we escape if we neglect the words spoken by the Lord himself but what could be worse than death surely there's nothing worse than death the man gathering sticks was put to death surely that's the ultimate punishment but there is something worse than death and that is the second death hell physical death is something horrid there's something ugly about it you know how when somebody dies there's nothing beautiful about it we hand the body over to undertakers we get somebody else to look after the duties that are required to dress the body and then the body is put in a beautiful wooden box and it's covered over with flowers and made to look so pretty there's something ugly about death that you cannot hide there's something horrid something awful about it some years ago the death penalty was abolished in our country because it was seen as so barbarous so horrid to hang somebody even for the worst of crimes and you see in our society today how people get so worked up about the suffering of calves calves and the tremendous extent they will go to in protesting against the suffering of calves and yet it's so strange too how there's other suffering and nobody protests about it the suffering of the unborn child that is aborted nobody bothers although millions of these children are massacred it's so strange our society today how we will protest about the sufferings of calves and yet nobody talks about the suffering of the child in the process of abortion but if death is painful

and frightening and ugly how much more so is the second death how terrible it is that living death where men as the scripture says will gnaw their tongues for pain and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever and ever the worst aspect of hell is its eternity if a person is in a hopeless state they commit suicide they cannot go on living they take away their own life and it seems like a release how often people will say that if somebody is suffering disabled perhaps and in pain and trouble and then they die and they say oh well they're released now yes there is a release from every suffering in this world but there's no release from the suffering of the next world it's [26 : 59] so awful and yet people treat it so lightly they treat it with contempt the word of God that tells us about the awfulness of our lost eternity if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression received a just recompense of reward how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which began at the first to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him how shall we escape how can we escape the awful torment of hell finally how do people neglect then this gospel what does it mean to neglect so great salvation surely it means not to value it not to appreciate it not to see its greatness to be blind to one's own need

I wonder are you blind to your need do you appreciate that you're a sinner are you aware of God's law which is against you are you conscious that God is angry with you are you afraid of being punished or do you despise God's justice and his law and his punishment do you appreciate the privileges of God's people their sins forgiven the Holy Spirit coming into their heart adopted into God's family sanctified by God prepared for heaven taken into glory to be with God forever do you appreciate these things or treat them lightly therefore we ought to give them more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip

Dad are you letting them slip the things which you have heard which you have heard since you were a little child on your mother's knee are you letting them slip year after year going by and these things slipping slipping out of your mind careless and not bothering too much about them remember how it's put in Hebrews chapter 4 let us therefore fear lest a promise been left us of entering into his rest any of you should seem to come short of it God has left us a promise of heaven this rest for the people of God do you fear that having been given this promise of heaven you should come short so that you don't reach there you don't get there you don't get in you don't get the blessing letting it slip treating it lightly missing out on the rest missing out on the heaven missing out on the so great salvation despising it we're told about Esau that he despised his birthright and sold it for a plate of broth whose God is his belly and whose glory is in his shame

I wonder is it like that with you valuing the trivial things of this world more than your birthright more than the spiritual blessings that God has bestowed upon you and will bestow upon you do you view the work of Christ in a light way when you think of God's son coming into this world and dying on the cross to save sinners do you think lightly of it and lay no great weight upon it the agony of the son of God tasting death for every man I wonder how you view the gift of salvation are there other gifts that you would value a lot more do you make excuses do you see things as more interesting the pleasures of the world your friends remember the friendship of the world is enmity with God it's hatred against God see a drowning man offer him offer him money he doesn't want it offer him a drink he certainly doesn't want it offer him music he doesn't want it there's only one thing a drowning man wants it's life what about you do you value eternal life or do you value the trivial passing trinkets of this world

Satan comes along and he tries to make the things of this world appear so precious that he only deceives you he's vehicle you he knows you he's but he's he's soandez he's he's he's he's he's he's he's he's he's he's you he's he's he's he's he's Bur