

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Salvation

Study Prayerfully & Study Carefully

Neglecting Salvation

Reading:
Hebrews Chapter 2

1. Introduction

This Sabbath I want to consider an important question the writer of Hebrews asks members of Yahweh's church. It is a *self-answering question*: where the answer is obvious. This question is not directed at unbelievers, who openly reject salvation. It is directed at believers, who have already accepted salvation, but who could be at risk of losing salvation. The question is:

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"
(Hebrews 2:3)

Note how the writer includes himself. He says '*How shall **'we'** escape; not *how shall **'you'** escape.* That word **'we'** encompasses everyone who reads the book of Hebrews. The word **neglect** means to pay no attention, or not enough attention, to fail to take proper care, to omit to do something through carelessness or forgetfulness. The process of neglect is usually slow and often imperceptible. Decay, mildew, rust, rot, deterioration and corruption of all kinds seldom appear immediately. Like neglect they take time. They come slowly.*

2. Once Saved Always Saved

Millions believe that once a person is saved, they are always saved. They can never be lost! Their names can never be blotted out of the **Book of Life**. Salvation, they believe, is guaranteed upon acceptance of Christ, no matter how the believer subsequently behaves. Is that what the Bible teaches? I can assure you that it doesn't. The Bible teaches that a believer's name can be deleted - blotted out - from the **Book of Life**. Consider these passages:

Deuteronomy 9: 13: *"Furthermore the LORD spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:*
14: *Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven:"*

Exodus 32: 31: *"And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.*
32: *Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.*

33: *And the LORD said unto Moses, **Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.***"

Psalm 69: 28: *"Let them be **blotted out of the book of the living**, and not be written with the righteous."*

Revelation 3: 5: *"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and **I will not blot out his name out of the book of life**, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."*

In other words names can be blotted out of the Book of Life. This means that after we have accepted the Saviour, we believers must continue to do something to retain our prospects of salvation. The Apostle Paul writes:

Philippians 2: 12: *"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling."*

3. What is Neglect?

But back to our text about neglecting salvation. What does that word **neglect** imply. The word **neglect** may be examined on two planes: the **physical** and the **spiritual**; bearing in mind that the physical plane is merely the shadow, the temporary object lesson of the realities that occur on the spiritual plane.

The Physical Plane

On the physical plane it is easy to determine what constitutes neglect. I list a few of many causes. Remember that word '**we**' includes us all.

- **Lack of Time:** We're too busy doing other things: making money or enjoying ourselves.
- **Lack of Resources:** No knowledge, no motivation, no money, no energy, no equipment etc.
- **Lack of Interest / Apathy:** Other interests have top priority.

When one or more of these three conditions is present - and there are other reasons - then the result is weeds, rust, mildew, dilapidation, dirt, decay and death. We see this all around: in our gardens, cars, clothes, houses etc. The second law of thermodynamics confirms this. In effect it says that: **unless things are maintained they decay**. In other words *neglect results in ruin*.

The Spiritual Plane

But what about our salvation; that all-encompassing eternal goal on the spiritual plane? Does that second law apply here? It surely does. Indeed that's why the second law of thermodynamics was installed. It was put there by the Creator to teach man that without outside input, all things physical - and **spiritual** - decay and die. But how does one neglect his/her salvation, that infinitely more important spiritual objective? Bear in mind that neglect on the spiritual plane has eternal consequences. Believe it or not the same three reasons for neglect are present.

- **Lack of Time:** Too busy doing other things.
- **Lack of Resources:** Spiritual understanding and power.
- **Lack of Interest:** in Prayer, Bible study, personal testimony.

4. How Shall We Escape?

You have all heard or read about famous escapes. Virtually every fictional story will include an escape drama. Escape from prison, shame, defeat, fire, famine, drowning, death etc. To the question **How shall we escape?** there are many potential answers:

- We cannot escape without outside help.
- We escaped with only the clothes we were wearing.

- We escaped, but some of our party lost limbs, eyesight, health and loved ones.

Job 1: 13: *“And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:*

14: And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

*15: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.***

*16: While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.***

*17: While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.***

18: While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

*19: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.**”*

The word **escape** opens up a wide range of experiences. One may escape with or without possessions. And - sad to say - some may not even escape with life. They may lose eternal life itself.

- How shall we escape?
- How will you escape?
- How will I escape if I neglect so great salvation?

To these spiritual questions there is only one answer. ***There is no escape -absolutely none.***

If we neglect salvation we will most definitely suffer loss and possibly even lose eternal life. That is a fact!

5. So Great Salvation

Bear in mind that salvation goes far beyond a rescue operation from sin and eternal death. Great as eternal life obviously is, there is a lot more to salvation than just living forever. What will we do throughout eternity? How will we occupy ourselves? Where will we go? Or will we, after a few million years, become bored with an endless life of blissful inactivity? What does that term ‘**great salvation**’ encompass? The writer of the book of Hebrews gives us part of the answer.

Hebrews 2: 6: *“But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?”*

7: Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

*8: **Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.** For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.”*

1 Corinthians 2: 9: *“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”*

In other words our ‘**great salvation**’ encompasses endless ages of power, glory and interesting activity under instruction and leadership of the Almighty. Indeed the redeemed will need an eternity to appreciate the worthwhile projects Yahweh has in store for us. To begin with He has scheduled Himself to re-create the universe and share it with the redeemed host.

They will become joint-heirs of all things with Christ.

Hebrews 1: 2: *“**Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of***

all things...

Romans 8: 17: “***And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ...***”

6. I Press On

Philippians 3: 8: “***Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,***
9: *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*
10: *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*
11: *If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*
12: *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*
13: *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*
14: ***I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.***
15: *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”*

There is no trace of neglect here. Paul had spiritual stamina. He weighed up the priorities and made his choice. All these things were so much garbage (dung) when compared to the glory Christ has in store for him - and for us! We ought to be of the same mind. Have you weighed up the eternal options concerning ***so great a salvation?*** Are you pressing on? Do you count all things as garbage, as dung, when compared to so great a salvation? Or are you, perhaps, neglecting your salvation? Am I?

These are serious questions we must continually ask ourselves.

Because there is absolutely no escape for anyone who neglects so great a salvation: no escape at all!

AMEN!

In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.

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