

“SO GREAT A SALVATION”

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“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. (v. 2) For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, (v. 3) how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us to those who heard Him, (v. 4) God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will,” Hebrews 2:1-4.

These verses are filled with meaning and great significance. They begin with *“therefore,”* v. 1, which denotes a connection between the information contained in chapter one and that which is alluded to in the beginning of chapter two. In chapter one, the inspired writer set forth the superiority of Jesus Christ over the angels who were involved in the giving of the law of Moses. Cf. Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19. Hence, **if** Jesus is greater than the angels, **then** His Law (i.e., the New Testament) is greater than *“the word spoken through angels.”* However, under that law *“every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,”* Heb. 2:2. So this leads us to the natural conclusion that *“we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard,”* and to the warning expressed in the form of the question, *“how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,”* v. 3, referring to the great *“salvation”* provided by Jesus Christ through His gospel. And regarding the apostles and inspired men who proclaimed that *“great salvation,”* the sacred writer informs us that God bore *“witness”* with *“signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit,”* v. 4.

With reference to the admonition for God’s people in this the gospel age to *“give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard,”* the reason for so doing is cited, it being *“lest we drift away,”* v. 1. *“Lest we drift away”* is a nautical term, one often used to refer to a boat “slipping” or “drifting” past its port or haven because the pilot neglected to pay attention. Yes, it is possible for Christians to become guilty of spiritual neglect and thus *“drift away”* from the gospel truths they formerly embraced and from the faithful, fruitful service to God which He demands and deserves from every person who, upon obedience to the gospel, obtained *“redemption”* through the blood of Jesus and *“the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace,”* Eph. 1:7. Hence, there is the ever-present need for Christians to *“give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard,”* v. 1, lest we *“neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to those who heard Him,”* v. 3.

We now come to the main objective of this article; it pertains to *“salvation”* described by the words *“so great.”* Yes, *“salvation”* is *“great!”* But **why** is salvation *“so great?”*

SALVATION IS “SO GREAT” ...

BECAUSE JESUS CHRIST IS ITS “AUTHOR.” In Heb. 5:9 Jesus is described as *“the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”* Jesus is greater than the Old Testament prophets, Heb. 1:1-2; He is greater than the angels, Heb. 1:4-14; He is greater than Moses, Heb. 3:5-6. And being God’s *“only begotten Son,”* John 3:16, the One through whom the universe was created, John 1:1-3, the One *“written”* about *“in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms,”* Luke 24:44, and the One who is sinlessly perfect, Heb. 4:15, then the *“great”* salvation of which **He** is the *“author”* is superior to the messages proclaimed by all the *“Johnny-come-lately’s”* who have come along since the day of Pentecost with a *“different”* gospel, Gal. 1:8-9. This includes Ellen G. White, Mary Baker Eddy, *“Pastor”* Russell, Mohammed, and countless others who have manifested unmitigated gall by developing doctrines, writing human creeds, and establishing religions of human origin.

BECAUSE IT IS “ETERNAL!” Jesus Christ is *“the author of eternal salvation”* to all who obey Him,” Heb. 5:9. Those who obey Christ by submitting to His saving gospel have been *“begotten...again to a living hope,”* it being *“an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven...”* I Peter 1:3-4.

BECAUSE IT IS “COMMON.” Please note Jude 3: *“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was*

once for all delivered to the saints. "Our common salvation" denotes a "salvation" available to all people, Jews and Gentiles, of all nationalities, and available to all upon the same terms. Obedience to the "common faith," Titus 1:4, qualifies a person to be partaker of the "common salvation," Jude 3. The very idea that people can be saved through obedience to the conflicting doctrines and commandments of men belies the fact that genuine "salvation" is indeed the "common salvation," Jude 3, and it detracts from everything which made genuine "salvation" "**so great a salvation!**" There is no way to both glorify God and ascribe "salvation" to doctrines and commandments of which man is the author!

BECAUSE IT PROVIDES SPIRITUAL FREEDOM. Jesus said, "*you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,*" John 8:32. Through obedience to that "*form of doctrine*" of which Jesus is the author, the saints at Rome had "*been set free from sin,*" Rom. 6:17-18. Yes, political freedom is to be desired, but political freedom pales into complete insignificance when compared to being made "*free from sin!*" This is made especially evident when we come to grips with the facts that: (1) "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*" Rom. 3:23, and (2) "*the wages of sin is death,*" Rom. 6:23. We become "**free from sin**" when we obtain forgiveness from sin, and this occurs when we obey the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:17-18.

BECAUSE OF THE GREAT SACRIFICE IT REQUIRED. The apostle Peter clearly taught that Christians "*were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver or gold,*" but they were redeemed "*with the precious blood of Christ,*" I Peter 1:18-19. We sing the hymn, "What Can Wash Away My Sins," and then the refrain, "Nothing but the blood of Jesus!" "*It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin,*" Heb. 10:4, and inasmuch as "*all have sinned,*" it is not possible for the blood of mere human being to take away sins. Indeed, our "salvation" is "**so great**" because it was made possible through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ upon that cruel cross!

BECAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY FROM WHICH IT DELIVERS A PERSON. Those who do not obey the gospel will "*be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,*" 2 Thess. 1:7-9. The location of that punishment will be "*in hell,*" Matt. 10:28, elsewhere described as "*the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels,*" Matt. 25:41.

BECAUSE OF THE GREAT BLESSINGS IT OFFERS. The location of these blessings is called "*heaven,*" the "*inheritance*" therein is described as "*incorruptible and undefiled,*" I Pet. 1:4. It is a place where "*God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed way,*" Rev. 21:4. It will be a place "*illuminated*" by "*the glory of God,*" a place void of all sin, and where its inhabitants will eternally eat of the "*tree of life,*" and drink of the "*the water of life,*" Rev. 21:23,27; 22:1-4.

CONCLUSION

More, much more, could be stated as to why the "salvation" Jesus offers is described as "**so great,**" and also why it is so foolish to "*neglect so great a salvation.*" But enough has been said to cause sober-minded people to long for that salvation, to obey the saving gospel which makes it available, and to discourage any child of God from drifting "*away*" or neglecting "**so great a salvation.**" Indeed, this is that to which we "**must give the more earnest heed!**"
