
Words of Truth

Hebrews 2:2-3

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We discussed Hebrews 2:1 in our last study. I am going to include it in the following quote to keep our minds on what is being contextually discussed, though we will move on to studying the next two verses. Here is the text we are looking at: *“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 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 2:1-3).

As we continue to read the Hebrew writer’s inspired efforts to establish the authority of Christ, we are seeing a look backwards. The Old Law was considered the disposition of angels (Acts 7:51-53 and Galatians 3:15-19). Before Moses began to lead Israel out of Egypt, the wrath of God was felt in the cities Sodom and Gomorrah because of sin that obviously included homosexuality (Genesis 18:16-19:29). In fact, these cities are reminders of God’s judgment even as we study through the New Testament (II Peter 2:6-9 and Jude 1:7). Once Moses began His work, God’s destructive judgment continued to be on display. When the children of Israel made their molten calf, three thousand men lost their lives (Exodus 32:1-35).

As Moses led the people, there were various times wherein God issued severe judgment because of transgressions. One of those examples is a time wherein Korah, the son of Izhar, caused an uprising against Moses and Aaron. As a result, the earth opened up swallowing those that rose up with Korah, their houses, and their goods. Then, a fire arose from the earth and consumed two hundred and fifty men. Then, there was a plague. In this event, they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah (Numbers 16:1-50).

Lest one would think that Moses was above the Law because He was a chosen messenger of God, the Lord punished him too when he erred. In one of the multiple times that the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron for food or water, Moses was told by God to speak to a rock that would become a water source. Moses erred. He hit the rock. As a result, Moses was not permitted to enter into the land promised to the children of Israel (Numbers 20:1-13 and Deuteronomy 32:48-52). When you read through what is often called the Old Testament you find many times wherein God brought about severe punishment on

those whom disobeyed His will (Genesis 3:1-24, Genesis 4:1-16, Genesis 6:1-9:17, Genesis 11:1-9, Leviticus 10:1-2, Numbers 15:32-36, Numbers 21:1-9, Numbers 25:1-9, Deuteronomy 28:15-68, I Samuel 15:1-35, II Samuel 6:1-7, II Samuel 11:1-12:23, II Samuel 24:1-25, II Kings 17:7-18:12, II Chronicles 36:1-23, Jeremiah 29:1-23, etc.).

Whether it is those to whom the Hebrew epistle was penned or us, when we look back at God's judgment we see that He can be very severe (Romans 1:18-32). These things are a lesson for everyone to consider (Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:1-13). Think about the question though, that the Hebrew writer asked, which was "how shall we escape?" God then, in issuing those severe consequences was a just judge (Deuteronomy 32:4). Now, it is Jesus who is our just judge (John 5:22-30).

When Paul preached a sermon in Athens he made this statement: *"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead"* (Acts 17:30-31). When we look backwards at the severity of God's judgment and then consider that He was winking at ignorance then, what does that show you?

People have been told to think on things various times through different statements throughout the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 4:39, Psalms 1:1-2, Psalms 119:59-60, Proverbs 4:25-26, Proverbs 6:6-9, Haggai 1:5, John 5:39, Ephesians 5:15-17, Philippians 4:8, James 4:5, etc.). "How shall we escape" is a great question to think upon. Where can one run to escape the judgment of our Lord? Everyone will answer to Him (Romans 14:7-12 and II Corinthians 5:10).

Then, when we consider neglecting so great salvation in connection to answering for our deeds, our minds should be greatly exercised. Under the Old Law, salvation was physical (Isaiah 1:18-20). Now, salvation is about eternity (Romans 6:17-23, Titus 1:1-3, Hebrews 4:14-5:9, and I John 2:25). Why would any supposed follower of God, who has any ability to reason, be negligent when it comes to the salvation of their soul? We cannot just consider our salvation as a given. It is not! The righteous are barely saved (I Peter 4:17-19). Both they then and us now need to be diligent in making our calling and election sure (II Peter 1:3-12).

As you come to the conclusion of Hebrews 2:3, there is a point being made about evidence. I am going to wait until our next study to fully address that point as we look at the end of verse three and what is written in verse four. To begin your thinking towards that study, consider how that our Lord does not expect anyone to blindly follow Him. Faith includes evidence (Hebrews 11:1). God says that we are to: *"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"* (I Thessalonians 5:21). So, don't take your salvation lightly. The evidence of what was and what is to come is abundant. Be prepared!