

# A Great Salvation

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[ 0 : 00 ] Hebrews 2, verses 5-9. If you're there, would you please stand with me?

! We honor the reading of God's Word together. For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere.

What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you care for him? You made him for a little while lower than the angels. You have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present we do not yet see everything in subjection to him, but we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, Jesus, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his Word. Would you please be seated? I once heard a pastor say the job of the preacher is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

[ 1 : 21 ] I don't know if that person who said that came to that conclusion through reading the book of Hebrews, but it certainly characterizes the flow of this book, which I believe is written like a sermon.

The main idea that the author of Hebrews wants his readers to understand and to believe is the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

He wants them to see from Old Testament scriptures that Jesus is the fulfillment of them, that he is the Messiah, that he is the Son of God, who is superior to angels and who is our superior high priest and king, who by his sinless life, atoning death, and victorious resurrection, secured a salvation for those who put their faith in him.

The author of Hebrews wants his audience to hold fast to their confession and confidence that Jesus Christ is Lord, his Savior, is better and far superior to anyone or anything.

As the author of Hebrews, inspired by the Holy Spirit, makes this point, he alternates between comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.

[ 2 : 34 ] And that's what we've seen to this point in our study of this book. In chapter 1, the author of Hebrews comforts his readers with the truth that God the Father in these last days has spoken to us through Jesus Christ, his divine Son.

He's testified that Jesus is the heir of all things, who created the world and who upholds the universe and is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature.

He then moves on to stress the superiority of Jesus over angels, because while angels played a role in mediating the Old Covenant as messengers who shared a word from God, Jesus is the word of God and the mediator of a new and better and superior covenant.

The author of Hebrews uses Old Testament Scriptures to prove this point, and he'll continue to do that. But bottom line, the truths about Jesus communicated in chapter 1 were meant to comfort these Hebrews who were enduring persecution for their faith in Jesus.

But the persecution was so intense that some of these Hebrews were drifting or were tempted to drift away from their confession from Jesus Christ and from the Christian faith.

[ 3 : 56 ] Thus, at the beginning of chapter 2, we see the author move from comforting the afflicted to afflicting those who are tempted to neglect the great salvation that Jesus has secured.

In verses 5 through 9, the author shifts back to comforting the afflicted by explaining why this salvation is so great, and subsequently why neglecting and drifting away from such a great salvation is incredibly foolish.

Verse 5 begins with the word for, which is also translated or can be translated as because. This indicates that the author is about to give a defense or he's about to make a case.

And what he's defending, what he's making a case for, is why our salvation is so great and why neglecting it or drifting away from it is so foolish. Which brings us to the main idea of this morning's message.

Which may be the longest main ideas that I've ever had. All things are subject to Jesus, who subjected himself to death and secured a great salvation for his subjects, who will reign with him in the world to come.

[ 5 : 09 ] All things are subject to Jesus, who subjected himself to death and secured a great salvation for his subjects, who will reign with him in the world to come. As believers, we can sometimes lock into the present aspects of our great salvation in Jesus without remembering or reflecting on the future aspects of our salvation, which expand and deepen our understanding of how great our salvation is. As we go through this text, what I hope that you'll see is, well, yes, in God's saving us, we are purified of our sins. We are sanctified. We are being sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and are no longer slaves to sin.

But as great as these things are, God has greater things planned for us in the world to come. Now, the author of Hebrews has already hinted at this in chapter 1, verse 14, where he talks about the destiny of angels and believers. There he says, are they, and he's referring to angels, not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are saved by Jesus Christ, who are to inherit salvation. In other words, those of us who are saved have experienced reconciliation with God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the forgiveness of our sins, the freedom of no longer being slave to sin. But as great as these things are, there are greater aspects of our salvation that we've yet to inherit, that we've yet to experience. There is a world to come. There is a future Jesus secured for us and a place in it for us that widens and deepens our understanding of just how great our salvation is and will cause us, like the author of Hebrews, to say, how could anyone neglect so great a salvation? What is this world to come?

What is this place believers will have, or what is the place that believers will have in it? Verses 5 through 9 tell us. And my hope is that at the end of this sermon, you'll have a greater knowledge, a greater joy in knowing just how great your salvation in Jesus Christ is.

If you're not a believer, I mean this sincerely again when I say I'm glad that you're here. I'm glad that you're here to hear about the great salvation of Jesus Christ.

And I'm sure that despite whatever it is that you believe, we can agree that this world is not the way it should be. And I think we can agree that you are not the way that you should be.

[ 8 : 05 ] And that in your heart of hearts, you long for something better. Friend, that longing is from God, in whose image you've been created.

Ecclesiastes 3.11 tells us that God has put eternity in our hearts. And friend, I trust that you know deep, deep down, despite how much you've tried to suppress the evidence of God, that you long for better, that you long to live in a world that is worth living in.

Jesus is the answer of your longing. And only he can truly satisfy you. Only he can fill the eternity-sized hole in your heart.

Because he is your eternal creator. And today you will hear the great salvation of Jesus Christ. And I hope that today is the day of your salvation.

All things are subject to Jesus, who subjected himself to death and secured a great salvation for his subjects who will reign with him in the world to come.

[ 9 : 19 ] In verses 5 through 9, we learn two aspects about salvation in Jesus Christ that makes it so great. The first, in verses 5 through 8, is that Jesus has redeemed what was lost due to man's sin.

Jesus has redeemed what was lost due to man's sin. Verse 5 again says, For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come of which we are speaking. In verse 5, the author of Hebrews jumps back into his argument of Jesus' superiority to angels by again pointing his readers to the destiny of angels in this world to come.

He uses Psalm 8 to remind his readers of the Bible's internal storyline so that they will see Jesus as the fulfillment, as the climax of that story.

He makes the point that God did not subject the world to come to angels. So then the question becomes, Then who is this world to come subjected to?

To find the answer for that question, We need to go back to the beginning of the Bible, to a time soon after the beginning of time. The Bible says that in the beginning, God created all things in six days.

[10:35] On the sixth day, God created man. Humanity is the climax. It's the pinnacle of God's creation. Genesis 1, 26 through 31 says, Then God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his own image. In his image, he created him. Male and female, he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion, that word's important, over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food. And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

[11:49] And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day. What do we see here? God creating humanity, male and female, uniquely in his image.

God giving humanity dominion, a Hebrew word that means to rule or subdue. Who did God give humanity dominion over? Everything in the inhabited earth.

In Hebrews 2.5, when it says the world to come, the Greek word translated as world there is a very specific term. The word is oikumene.

And unlike Greek words like cosmos and ion for world, this word literally refers to the inhabited earth. The author is referring to an inhabited earth to come.

Revelation 20 talks about the return of Christ to establish his reign on earth for 1,000 years before uncreating and then recreating the new heaven and the new earth in Revelation 21.

[12:50] There are many other verses that talk about this, but the point being made in Hebrews 2.5 is that angels will not rule the inhabited world to come and that God never promised angels dominion over the original created order.

It was man. It was Adam and Eve who received dominion over the inhabited earth. God created humanity in his image with a unique purpose, to bear his image and to exercise dominion over the earth he created.

Now hold on to that. In verses six through eight, the author of Hebrews quotes Psalm eight. Again, it says, it has been testified somewhere, what is man that you are mindful of him or the son of man that you care for him?

You made him for a little while lower than the angels. You have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet. In Psalm eight, David marvels over the great significance that God has given to human beings.

Again, God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the inhabited earth and subjected everything on the earth to them.

[14:06] However, they did not have dominion over themselves. They were subject to God's authority.

Genesis 2, 15 through 17 says, The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord commanded the man saying, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat.

For the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die. God gave Adam dominion over everything on the earth and everything on the earth would live in subjection to him, but he must never forget that he is subject to God.

God gave Adam and Eve one command. You have all of these fruit-bearing plants. Eat from them whatever you want.

Just don't eat the fruit from this one tree. That's it. Sounds like a pretty good deal, doesn't it? But we know the rest of the story.

[15:18] Satan enters the garden in the form of a serpent. He deceives Eve by tempting her to doubt the goodness and trustworthiness of God. He deceives her into believing that defying God will make her like God, that she can be her own authority and subject to no one.

Adam joins in her deception. They eat from the fruit of the tree that God forbid and instantly their eyes were opened. They saw their nakedness and they felt guilt and shame. When God enters the

garden, Adam and Eve don't say, God, we've done something bad.

We're so glad you're here. We know what do they do? They hide from his presence. But God in his grace calls out to them, where are you? And God in his grace makes the first sacrifice recorded in Scripture to clothe Adam and Eve.

They are still God's image bearers on the earth, but sin changed things. It brought a curse. The ground would no longer produce for Adam like it did before.

It would produce thorns and thistles and Adam's work as a result would be toilsome. Eve would have pain in childbirth and she'd resist her husband's authority. In other words, things would no longer be the way that God designed them to be.

[ 16 : 37 ] Man's place in this world, his dominion on the earth, would be a struggle. The plants, the animals, the weather would no longer cooperate with him.

Just as Adam and Eve resisted their subjection to God, so the earth, as a result of the curse, would resist humanity's dominion over it. I recently finished reading a book.

It's a true story about a man-eating tiger in eastern Russia. And the theory is that this tiger was enraged by a hunter who came across a boar that the tiger had recently killed.

And the hunter took the boar to his cabin, he ate some of it himself, and then he stored the rest to eat later. And this tiger picked up the scent of the boar and the hunter who stole his food and followed it to the hunter's house where he hunted the hunter and killed him.

The tiger then killed another man who was setting traps in its hunting area. And so in the tiger's mind, these men were competition for food and they became his prey.

[ 17 : 53 ] Siberian tigers are a protected species in Russia. And there are stiff penalties for killing a tiger. To protect tigers from poachers, the Russian government created an agency called Inspection Tiger.

However, when a tiger kills a person, it's the job of Inspection Tiger to track down and eliminate that tiger so that it doesn't kill anyone else. Why am I sharing this story with you?

The book isn't written by a Christian, but to me, it's a story that communicates mankind's desire and struggle for dominion in a sin-cursed world.

On the one hand, man has a desire to preserve endangered species which as a result of his sin are endangered in the first place. On the other hand, these people know, we know, that a person's life has more value than an animal's life.

even if it is endangered. And that it is right for them to kill this tiger, thus exercising dominion over it.

[ 19 : 05 ] And people like me read these books because we like stories about the struggle and triumph of people against nature. But this struggle was not part of God's original design for us on the earth.

Adam was our representative in the garden. His sin pledged all of humanity, all of the inhabited earth under the curse of sin. And Satan became the ruler of this world, of this system which promotes lies as truths and encourages sinful people to reject God and neglect His great salvation. 2 Corinthians 4.4 says, in their case, speaking of unbelievers, the God of this world, speaking of Satan, has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.

Now what's important for us to understand is that the devil is still God's devil. God is sovereign and has limited Satan's rule and power.

For now, God in His infinite wisdom has allowed Satan to operate in this way, in this world, but one day that will change. In John 12, 27 through 33, Jesus receives some Greeks, some Gentile proselytes to Judaism who unlike the leaders of the nation of Israel who were at that point plotting His death, these men desired to be in Jesus' presence.

[ 20 : 38 ] And Jesus understood that this shifting of attitudes meant that the hour for which He had come was at hand. and He says there, Now is my soul troubled.

And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify Your name. Then a voice came from heaven. I have glorified it and I will glorify it again.

The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said an angel has spoken to Him. Jesus answered, This voice has come for Your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world.

Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself. He said this to show by what kind of death He was going to die.

Now let's go back to the garden. Back to when God pronounced the effects of the curse of sin. Before God informed Eve and then Adam about the consequences of their sin, which were now a consequence for the earth and would be for their descendants as well, He addressed Satan first, the serpent.

[ 21 : 50 ] In Genesis 3.15, God said to Satan, I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

In other words, one day, Satan, I'm going to send a better representative. I'm going to send a better man.

You will bruise him. You will wound him. But he's going to crush you. The rest of the Old Testament progressively reveals who this better representative is, who this better man will be and what he will do and how he will redeem what's been lost because of sin, our sin.

In the New Testament, the identity of this better representative, of this better man is fully revealed. He is Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God, the eternal Word of God, the second person of the Trinity. He is the one Psalm 8 is ultimately about. Jesus lowered himself. He left the peace of heaven to enter our inhabited world that is cursed by sin.

[ 23 : 02 ] He added a human nature to his divine nature to succeed in all the ways that Adam failed and we fail. Philippians 2, 5-11 says, Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant.

And being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Look at Galatians 3, 13-14. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.

So then Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham, might come to the Gentiles so that we might receive the promised spirit through faith. Look at 1 Corinthians 15, 20-25.

But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruit of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

[ 24 : 29 ] But each in his order, Christ the first fruits, then at his coming, those who belong to Christ, then comes the end when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power for he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Where the first Adam, where our first representative failed to carry out his duties, the last Adam, Jesus Christ, succeeded. He is the author of our great salvation.

And in salvation, he sets us free from Satan's rule. He sets us free from slavery to sin. Colossians 1, 13-14 says, of those whose God has been gracious to save through Jesus Christ, the God-man, he has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

we've zoomed out of this text this morning to follow the flow of thought in Hebrews chapter 2. Again, in verses 1-4, the author implores us to be on our guard against drifting away from Jesus and neglecting his great salvation, which includes a world to come that isn't subject to angels, but to Jesus and to those whom he's been gracious to redeem and who will continue to experience him in ways that are amazing in the world to come.

Restoring the place God originally designed for us to have. A place that 1 Corinthians 6, 2-3 says will put us in a position to judge angels.

[ 26 : 14 ] Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world and if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? Do you not know that we are to judge angels how much more than matters pertaining to this life?

The word judge in the Greek there means to rule or to reign. All this to say that Jesus has redeemed what was lost due to our sin and second, Jesus will restore a man's place in the world to come.

Jesus will restore man's place in the world to come. After quoting Psalm 8, the author of Hebrews addresses a big problem in the rest of verse 8. There he says, Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control.

At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. There's a tension here. On the one hand, Jesus has conquered death.

He's risen. He's ascended to heaven. He reigns, and in many ways we see the inauguration of his kingdom now. The gospel has gone out. Many have experienced his great salvation, being born again and redeemed from the penalty of their sins and set free from slavery to sin.

[ 27 : 35 ] However, this world continues to be a chaotic place. we see the effects of sin around us all the time.

Tigers eat people. We see the continuing effects of sin in ourselves as we battle our flesh and our sinful desires. We see people continue to revolt against Jesus, against his followers, in doing so in shameful and painful ways.

We experience the oppressive rule of people over other people. We all know that this world is not the way that it should be and that we aren't the way that we should be.

The problem is that unbelievers, people of this world, are deceived by the prince of this world into thinking that they can solve the problem. They think different government structures, different economic structures, different environmental structures, different education structures will lead to peace and equality.

Now, some of these things could help or they could make things a lot worse. But they're all ways that deceive people from addressing the true problem.

[ 28 : 54 ] Sin is the problem. we are the problem because we are all born sinful. And if we're the problem, we can't be the solution.

How can sinful human beings be restored to the glory and honor that God originally intended? How can we experience the paradise that we all long for but haven't been able and we'll never be able to achieve on our own?

Verse 9 tells us, but we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

For a little while during his incarnation, salvation, some 30 something years of his life, when the eternal word of God added a human nature to his divine nature, Jesus appeared to be lower than the angels, coming in his first advent as a suffering servant, as God clothed in human flesh.

He was crowned with glory and honor, having accomplished his messianic task to suffer, to die, to redeem us from our sins by taking our place on the cross.

[ 30 : 33 ] We're there. He was forsaken by the Father as he who knew no sin became sin.

so those in him who have trusted in him, who have believed in him, become the righteousness of God. Human beings have conquered many things in this sin-cursed world.

We've conquered some life-threatening diseases, things that used to kill people in the past don't kill people anymore because of some of these cures that we've come up with.

That's good. We've engineered airplanes and space shuttles. It's pretty amazing. We've invented electricity, air conditioning, furnaces that produce heat in our house when it's below 30 degrees. We've invented automobiles. We continually make things to reduce our suffering in this world. And we've conquered a lot. But we haven't conquered death.

[ 31 : 46 ] We've learned how to lengthen our lives, but we haven't conquered death. Death strikes babies, teenagers, young adults, midlifers, and seniors.

Death takes the educated and the uneducated, the rich and the poor, the famous and the anonymous, the religious and the irreligious, sinners and saints.

Death is not subject to man. We don't see Psalm 8 yet fulfilled in us, but we do see it fulfilled in Jesus. The first Adam plunged humanity into sin and death.

death. The last Adam was plunged into death for the sake of humanity. The work of the last Adam undoes the work of the first. The first Adam sinned and was subject to toil and suffering on the earth that ended in death.

The second Adam, Jesus Christ, never sinned, but willingly toiled on the cross, suffering death to defeat it and restore the hope of Psalm 8 for all who are in him.

[ 33 : 09 ] Romans 6, 5-10 says, For if we have been united with him, speaking of Jesus, in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we also will live with him. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again.

And look at this, death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin once for all. By the life he lives, he lives to God.

friend, if you haven't trusted in Jesus to save you from your sins, please don't neglect so great a salvation. Don't trust sinful men for the solution to your problems or for this world's problems.

[ 34 : 16 ] Many have tried and all have failed. Jesus has brought you here to hear this truth. And he's calling to you, stop hiding from me.

Come to me and I will save you. Come to me and I will forgive you. Come to me, I have dealt with your sin problem. Come to me and I will forgive you.

Come to me and I will redeem you, I will restore you. Come to me and live. And that is what he's calling you today. Don't harden your heart.

Don't neglect your hope for salvation. For those of us whom God has been gracious to save, how do we adjust according to what we've heard?

I think it's this. We've sung about it already this morning. Remember what Jesus has done for you. Remember what Jesus will do for you.

[ 35 : 19 ] Remember what Jesus has done for you and will do for you. Jesus tasted death for you and for me. He did it to redeem, restore, and recover our lost destiny.

And so, how do you remember this great truth? Here's some basic ways. In the face of bad news, and there's a lot of bad news that we face every day, remember the good news.

in the face of sickness, in the face of suffering, in the face of your frustration, in the face of depression, in the face of death, remember your destiny in Jesus Christ.

Remember that you have a living hope, a hope you experienced when God saved you, and a hope that is yet to be revealed in this world to come.

Remember that for the believer, the best is always yet to come. We'll have God's word, have the last word in 1 Peter chapter 1 verses 3 through 5.

[ 36 : 33 ] And again, Peter talking to Christians who are being persecuted, gives them this encouragement. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you have done for us what we could never do for ourselves.

That, Lord, if it was us in the garden and not Adam, we would have done the same. And, Lord, we experience every day in this world just the consequences of the curse of sin.

We see it in ourselves. We see it in the ways that we think. We see it in what we do and what we say. We see it in the things that we should do that we don't.

We see it in our relationships, Lord. We see it in our workplaces. We see it in our communities, in our nation, in the world, Lord. We even see it sometimes in the church.

[ 38 : 08 ] God, throughout your word, we hear this call for your people to remember, to remember what you've done and to not forget.

Lord, forgive us that so often we forget. Lord, even those of us whom you've been gracious to save, we're thankful for our salvation, but we don't think about what is yet to come.

And we allow this world to get us down. We allow this world to distract us from the truth and from our purpose in it. Lord, we act as if at times that death has not been conquered.

Forgive us for that. And Lord, help us to remember your word this morning. Help us, Lord, to live our lives in the ways that you've enabled us to live them, afraid of nothing, certainly not death, because for the believer, death is just the beginning of eternal life and the things, Lord, that we have yet to inherit.

And so, God, may we be looking forward, looking forward to the future that you have for us and living our life in the present with anticipation of what you have prepared for us and obedience to

what you've commanded because we know that you love us in your ways are best.

[ 39 : 31 ] Lord, help our light to shine in the darkness that people would hear the good news of who you are, and what you've done. And we pray that you'd be gracious to save them, that they would inherit this great salvation as well.

Thank you for providing it. Thank you for all that you do and all that you want. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I'm I'm I'm I'm I'm I'm