

Our Ultimate Independence Day

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[0:00] Would you take your Bibles and open to Hebrews chapter 2.

! I quoted a moment ago from verse 3. But our text this morning is going to be starting with verse 5. However, I do want to begin once again with verse 3. In fact, this time I want to read the entire verse.

Hebrews chapter 2 and verse 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? Are you there? Are you with me? You can say amen to that. 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 by those who heard it, or heard Him, literally.

[1:23] Now, I read a little bit of history a moment ago about our country and about what was leading up to this day, July 4th.

And I mentioned that we have a liberty today, a salvation today that was certainly granted by God, according to His grace and His providence, bought and paid for by the blood of our ancestors. And what I read a moment ago really was the precursor to the bloodletting. The fighting and the shedding of blood to gain our independence took place after this day, July 4th in 1776.

And I mentioned that in one sense of the word, salvation. An application of the word salvation, certainly we could apply salvation to the liberty we have as a nation today.

God granted us a great salvation. And yet, I'm not a history teacher. I'm a preacher of the gospel.

[2:35] And so I want to move very quickly to the most important application of the word salvation and certainly the most important application of the phrase great salvation.

I want to very quickly move to that and remind you of an even greater salvation than the one we have experienced as a nation and continue to experience today.

A greater salvation, one that many of you here today have experienced, possibly every one of you. I don't know your heart, don't know where you are spiritually, but possibly I am speaking to a group of people and every one of you have received this great salvation.

And it is a great salvation that God has granted to His people true freedom. True freedom. Now we enjoy freedom as a nation right now.

And yet, that could go away just like that. It's inconceivable maybe in our day that an invading army could come to our shores and conquer us and bring us under their rule.

[3:48] It may be inconceivable to us today and yet it still could happen today. If not today, maybe 10 years, maybe 20 years, maybe 100 years. If Jesus doesn't come, He is coming, but we don't know when He's coming.

And so we may enjoy what we would call freedom today and we could enjoy today liberty as a nation and yet that could be gone.

In a moment it could be gone. But the salvation of which Paul, who I believe wrote Hebrews, and you can debate with me about that some other time if you want, the salvation of which Paul wrote here in Hebrews chapter 2 is a salvation, a great salvation that granted true freedom, a permanent freedom.

A permanent independence, not from the tyranny of King George III, but from the penalty of sin and the tyranny of Satan.

In reality, Christians celebrate that Independence Day every time we assemble on Sunday. We're celebrating that today. In fact, we are celebrating a two-fold Independence Day, aren't we?

[5:05] We gather here on any Sunday, we are celebrating an independence that was signed 2,000 years ago, signed with blood, not the blood of our ancestors, per se, but the blood of Jesus.

The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the history of that Independence Day really takes in the whole of history itself and beyond.

Because, you see, to trace it, to trace our Independence Day, our spiritual Independence Day, you would have to go, journey all the way back to eternity past, before the foundation of the world. And that Declaration of Independence was ratified 2,000 years ago, give or take a few years, ratified some 2,000 years ago and ratified where?

Not in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but at Calvary. Ratified there at the cross and ultimately at the empty tomb of the risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[6:17] And so, I can say to you with all confidence that my independence, my declaration of independence became a reality for me, became a part of my human and spiritual experience 45, some 45 years ago.

That's when I enjoyed my Independence Day. 45 years ago. And it was signed by Jesus at the cross. It was sealed by Jesus at His empty tomb.

And it was delivered to me, signed, sealed, and delivered to me 45 years ago when I put my faith and my trust in Jesus Christ as my only Lord and Savior.

Bless God for His Independence Day. Not independence from God. Let me qualify something here real quick. Even though we're talking about the ultimate Independence Day, and I'm going to get to that in just a minute, I'm not talking about independence from God.

I'm talking about independence from the penalty of sin and the tyranny of Satan. I experienced that 45 years ago.

[7:27] My declaration of independence. My great salvation. And that is true of every one of you here. If you put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ and been born again.

You can say, whenever it was for you, for me 45 years ago, for you maybe longer, maybe some of you just a few short years ago, maybe for some here it'll be today.

It'll be your declaration of independence from the penalty of sin. Condemnation of sin. And the tyranny of Satan. Maybe it'll be today.

And isn't that great? Our great salvation. Now hold on to your socks. By the way, that's just an expression. You don't have to really reach down and hold on to your socks.

In fact, don't hold on to your socks. Because what we're going to learn from this text in Hebrews will, well, bless your socks off. may sound a little too common, a little idiotic, but seriously, what we're going to learn here in this text is great.

[8:38] It will bless you. And it is, what I've already said, and I'm going to say it again, it is what I want to call our ultimate independence day. Our ultimate independence day.

You see, the great salvation that was mentioned there in verse 3, this so great a salvation, is indeed great.

Right? It's great. My sins are forgiven. Eternal life has been given. Communion with Jesus Christ, a communion that can never end, that cannot fail, that cannot be thwarted by anything that would happen in this world today.

Communion with Jesus Christ that is close and pure and is intimate and is wonderful and adoption into the family of God. All of that is great, isn't it?

Isn't it? Just because only, you know, maybe two-thirds of you are, or a third of you are missing, doesn't mean that those who are here cannot enter into the praise.

[9:46] All right? So if I say great, you say what? Amen. Say amen. It's a great salvation. Oh, that's great. And yet, according to Hebrews, we don't have all of it yet.

We've not yet experienced the fullness of it yet. There is more to come. Much more to come.

And I'm not just talking about heaven. All right? Every one of us would agree, yeah, there's more to come and we're going to go to heaven and it's going to be great there. But I'm talking about something even more than that.

That is ultimately our destination. But I'm talking about a salvation to its fullest. It's something that we have not yet experienced the fullness of yet.

And yet it's coming. And now let's read the text, okay? That's an introduction. Verse 5. By the way, I'm reading from the New King James Version this morning, okay?

[10:51] Maybe I give you a little commercial. I'm going to read from the New King James Version from now on until God changes it. And if you're at the point where you need to buy a new Bible, then if you want the same Bible as the pastor's going to be using, then buy you a New King James Version.

Nothing wrong with the New American Standard. And if you want to continue to use that on Sunday, that's fine. But I have just discovered that there are more folks who have King James and New King James.

And the New King James is just enough like the King James that you won't be alienated. And so on Sunday morning and Sunday night, I'm going to be reading from the New King James Version. Okay? Is that all right? All right. Verse 5. For He has not put the world to come. If you're in the habit of underlining passages or phrases in your Bible or words, then you might just underline the world to come.

Specifically, to come. For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

[12:02] Subject to angels. For one testified in a certain place, that would be David, by the way, saying, What is man that you are mindful of him?

Or the son of man that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower or literally for a little while lower than the angels.

You have crowned him with glory and honor and set him over the works of your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet. I need to remind you something here just by, by, well, just for clarification.

It is correct that his and him have lowercase h's. The ultimate fulfillment is in Jesus, in him, capital H, but he's speaking to man here.

Specifically, those who are redeemed. Just want to clarify that and that will make more sense as we go along. For in that he, there is a capital H there, God, he put all in subjection under him.

[13:28] Little H. He left nothing that is not put under him, but, pay close attention to this last verse, but now we do not yet see all things put under him.

But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

Alright? That's our text for this morning. He is speaking here, Paul, again, is speaking here to those who are, according to chapter 1 verse 14, those who are going to inherit salvation.

Let's make that clear so we can set this text in its context. In fact, look at chapter 1 and verse 14 very quickly. Chapter 1 verse 14, Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who, what does it say, inherit salvation, will inherit salvation, those who will.

And so he's talking to a group of people who are going to inherit this salvation of which he speaks. and it is, this salvation is, according to chapter 2 verse 3, such a great salvation.

[14:57] Do you see that in verse 3? We've already read that text. This salvation is such a great salvation that neglecting it will bring about an inescapable consequence.

That's what he says in verse 3. I just read of that a moment ago. How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It has an inescapable consequence for all those who neglect this salvation.

And this great salvation, again, that he speaks of there in verse 3, reaches into the future and promises something beyond man's wildest dreams to set this text up.

That's what he's talking about. Now, let's just see then from this text in Hebrews chapter 2 what this great salvation is that I'm calling the ultimate independence day.

Let's see from this text in Hebrews chapter 2 why we don't have it now. We have some of it now, certainly. We have the foretaste of it now, certainly.

[16:03] We have the guarantee of it now, yes, but we do not have it all yet and we need to understand why. Why we don't have it now, this ultimate independence day.

and how and when it will be restored to us and more importantly who has made it all possible.

That's what we're going to see in this text. And so I'm going to divide it into three parts.

And first of all, let's see what I want to call man's glorious destiny. Because that's what this is all about. It's not talking about something you have right now. Though in a sense, in the sense of eternity and in the sense of the mind and heart of God, we do have it now, but we've not realized it yet.

We've not entered into it yet. And so it is our destiny. It's something out there in the future. And it's very clear here in verse 5.

Very clear that God's, what God's word is pointing to, that he's pointing to something that's out there in the future. And it says there in verse 5, this world to come is what we have been talking about.

[17:12] That's what the apostles have been talking about. The world to come. Now what is this world to come? Well, it's man's destiny.

That is, redeemed man's destiny. Those who name the name of Christ, the born again people of God, what is this world to come for them?

Well, what does the world to come mean in the text? It's translated, part of it is translated from the Greek word oikumene, and it means the inhabited earth.

In fact, if you have, some of your Bibles might even have that footnoted there. Over in the footnotes, maybe in the center column at the bottom of the page, you may have in quotations literally inhabited earth.

That's the world to come. And so what we're talking about very clearly from the text is that there will be one day an inhabited world that is to come. Not this world.

[18:14] You need to understand that here from the text. He's not talking about this world. That is the world that you and I experience today. Not this world, but a new world that is to come.

And it is, I believe, the great millennial kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ and his church. The millennial kingdom. The thousand year reign.

Now, not everyone agrees with that. And if you disagree with that, then you can, as Adrian Rogers used to say, you can come up to me after the service and apologize. But, no, I'm just, I'm not.

You can have a different view. It's not a point of fellowship. But I believe very clearly, not only from this text, but many other texts in the Bible, that there will be a thousand year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When he comes and raptures his church, this world will fall into the greatest tribulation that has ever been, that has never been seen or ever will be seen again.

[19:20] For seven years, this world is going to be eclipsed by the wrath of God upon sin, upon this creation. God's people, the church, are going to be with Jesus.

We're going to be caught up out of here. And for seven years, we're going to enjoy fellowship with him. The marriage feast of the Lamb, for one thing. And then after that seven years, Jesus is going to come back and set foot again upon this earth and his church with him.

And he's going to establish a thousand year reign here on this new earth, a new earth here. The millennial kingdom.

I believe is the world to come, the inhabited world to come. It's not this world. It's a new world that's going to come. And you can read about that in Zechariah chapter 14 or you can read about it in Revelation chapter 20.

And we may read a little bit from Revelation 20 a little bit later. And we don't have time to delve into just what this new heaven and new earth is going to be, what it's going to be like.

[20:24] You can read about that and study that on your own. But the point here in verse five that I want to bring us to quickly is that this world to come, this millennial kingdom will not be ruled by angels.

That's the point here. Not be subject to angels. That is Paul's point here. Now, this present world is ruled.

To an extent, ruled by angels. Did you know that? Now, under the sovereignty of God, God has not relinquished any of his sovereignty.

Don't misunderstand. But right now, this world is ruled by angels, primarily fallen angels, demons, and their king is the devil.

Did you know that? This world is ruled by them. By King Satan. He is, according to John 12, 31, the prince of this world.

[21:33] And he commands a very well-organized, demonic army. It's spread around this globe. Paul speaks of that in Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 12.

He calls them rulers and principalities and world powers of darkness that are at work around this globe right now, right here in America.

In every country of this world. World powers of darkness, Paul calls them. And spiritual forces of evil are at work and spread around this globe under the command of the devil himself.

But not only fallen angels, but we also have to understand that holy angels as well have a kind of sovereignty over this world. Okay?

That's clear from scripture. And so, in this present world, world in which we're living right now, our ancestors lived before us and until Jesus comes, our children and their children and their children

are going to be living in this present world, the rule of this earth is now in the hands of both fallen and holy angels.

[22 : 54] Very clear from scripture. But what about the world to come? What about it? What about the inhabitants of the new world to come?

The great millennial kingdom? What about it? Well, if the world to come is not going to be subject to angels, their rule, their authority, their granted sovereignty, if the world to come is not going to be in subjection to angels, either fallen or holy angels, then to whom will it be subject?

Have any guesses? Who will rule the world during the millennium? All right? I heard Jesus out there and if you say Jesus, Jesus will be the king during the millennium, then you're absolutely right.

But only mostly right. Let me ask you something. In the beginning, before God or when God created everything, right after he created everything and Adam and Eve put them in the garden, who did God intend to be the ruler of this world?

Adam and Eve. Man. Genesis 1.26, where the Godhead are speaking, speaking in plurality of the Godhead, then God in all of his plurality said, let us make man in our image according to our likeness.

[24 : 40] They, that is man, will rule the fish of the seas, rule the birds of the sky, rule the animals, and rule all of the earth.

You can check that out in Genesis chapter 1, verse 26. Now, man was created to be the king of the earth. That's right.

Man was created to sit on the throne of the earth and to rule the earth. And God's final destiny for man is to one day rule this earth again.

That's what we understand from this text and this quotation from Psalm 8. And he is quoting Psalm 8. See, that is what the writer of Hebrews is talking about. Man's glorious destiny.

He begins there. And he does this by quoting, again, the Old Testament. Specifically, Psalm 8, as I mentioned a moment ago, where David, when you read that Psalm, you just understand, you just kind of enter into the emotion of it.

[25 : 46] And you understand that David is utterly amazed and overcome by the revelation that God has given him concerning man's destiny. And he quotes some of it here in verse 6.

Look at it again. What is man that you are mindful of him? Or the son of man that you take care of him?

You have made him, literally, for a little while. Make a little correction here, I think, to the new King James.

For a little while, you made him lower than the angels. You crowned him with glory and honor. And set him over the works of your hands.

You have put all things in subjection under him, under his feet. It's a quote from Psalm.

[26 : 46] This is man's destiny. His glorious destiny. Revelation chapter 20. Listen to. In verse 4.

And I saw thrones and they sat on them. And judgment was committed to them. Who are they? Them. The redeemed of all the ages. It's what John saw. Judgment was committed to them. In verse 6.

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. That's you and me. Over such the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years.

I take that very literally. You might take that figuratively. Some of you might. I take that very literally. We shall reign with him a thousand years.

[27 : 51] During the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is man's glorious destiny. But next we need to consider man's grievous tragedy.

Because obviously this destiny is not a reality right now. Now it's real in the mind and heart of God. And because you love him and have entered in communion with him and according to God's word it is a reality in your own heart though you do not see it yet.

Because for a little while we are lower than the angels. But we do see it coming. And how did we lose it?

I mean we once had it. It was God's intent from the very beginning. But now we've lost it. This glorious destiny. But only for a little while. And the reason is because of man's grievous tragedy. Look at verse 8 again. In Hebrews. You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him.

[29:01] He left nothing that is not put under him. This is our glorious destiny. But. Here's another phrase you ought to underline. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

Now why is that? Why are we experiencing this world today? Where man is not ruler over it.

Why? Well because something happened. Something devastating happened. And so today man is not king of the earth as he was intended to be from the beginning.

Man fell from his destiny. Man that is in mankind. Okay. That includes all of us here. Mankind fell from his destiny.

Fell from his place of authority. And why? Because man's sin. It goes all the way back to Adam and Eve back there in the garden.

[30:10] Man's sin. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden. The earth then through them became corrupt. Not just mankind and all those who would be born after them.

Including us. But even the creation itself has become corrupt. Because when sin entered the world so did death enter the world. And so we're living in a corrupt world.

And we can thank Adam and Eve for that. Although if we'd been there we would have done the same. No doubt. That they did. The earth was corrupted with Adam and Eve.

And Adam immediately lost his kingdom. Lost his rule. Lost his authority. And now because Adam represented all mankind.

All fell from their destiny. In Adam. You can read about that in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 21 and 22. In Adam all die.

[31:08] The earth now is no longer subject to him. It is now subject to Satan. This world in which we live. There is now a new.

Someone has said a new chain of command. Man fell all the way down to the bottom. And the earth. This earth. This creation. Under the devil. Now rules man.

Oh yes it does. And it's really not very hard to see. First place the Bible says very clearly in 1 John 5 19. That the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

That's the devil by the way. This whole world lies in the power. Under the power of him. And it's easy to see. For example. If you pay much attention to ecology.

Then you'll know right off. Very clearly. That man does not rule this world. The world rules him. Just put on a bathing suit. And go out in your backyard this week. Someday this week.

[32:06] And lay out there under the sun for about 10 hours. And see what happens to your body. You think you're in control. Pay much attention to ecology.

You know that's the case. You're not in control. The world's in control of us. If you pay much attention to meteorology. Then you're going to see very clearly that man is not in charge of this world.

The world rules over him. I mean just think of next time we have a tornado come through this part of Oklahoma. Then you'll realize that you're not in control of things.

We're not in control of this earth. Not like Adam and Eve were before they fell. This world is under the control of the devil himself. And so if you pay much attention to geology.

To give you another example. Then you'll easily see that man is not in control of this earth. It clearly rules us. There are earthquakes and volcanoes and all kinds of geological catastrophes that happen on this planet.

[33:11] Even some that a little helped along with man. You know we dig down under the earth to find the oil and now we can't cap it off. We're not in control of this planet.

We have lost that rule. We have lost that authority. If you pay any attention to etymology then you'll know that this world is in control of you. You're not in control of it.

When we first moved to Arkansas several years ago I learned that firsthand. I boasted the fact that mosquitoes never did bother me. We moved to Arkansas and the folks there in the church said well just brother Don just wait.

I tell you the mosquitoes there pick you up and carry you off. That is after they suck all the blood out of you. We're not in control of this planet. Huh? Are we?

You pay attention to that. I mean there are insects and bugs and I don't know what's happening here. Bugs and wasps. I hate those things. And spiders.

[34:14] My wife pointed out a curled up thankfully curled up and dead brown recluse right down here in the hallway down here down the steps. That make you feel good? We live in a dangerous world.

We're not in charge of things. This world's in charge of us. If you pay any attention to microbiology then again you see very clearly that the world is in charge.

We're not in charge. We're not ruling over this planet. I mean there's AIDS and SARS and H1N1 and all these other things that we can contract. All these diseases and such.

We're not in charge of this planet. See there's this grievous tragedy that was brought about by the sin of our first parents Adam and Eve and we've just carried that on you know and it's getting worse and worse.

If you pay attention to criminology brother Tom then you know that this world we're not in charge of this world. This is a dangerous planet. And nearly everywhere you go there's danger.

[35 : 18] It's not a safe place for man. I'm not trying to make you feel a little uneasy here. But just trying to point out the fact that man has lost his rule over the planet.

There is this grievous tragedy that's taken place and virtually everything that God has given man for blessing and for good has become our enemy. Because of the curse of sin.

But God did not intend it to be this way. He really did not. Not in the beginning. And by the way according to verse 7 it will continue to be this way for a little while.

There is a limit to it. It's going to one day come to an end. Because someday in the world to come we'll not have any more mosquitoes.

I'm convinced of that. Not going to have those. Someday in the world to come we're not going to have any hospitals. Someday in the world to come lawyers are going to be out of business.

[36 : 32] Jesus and his church will rule this planet. Right now in my front yard I have these beautiful pecan trees and many of them are infested with webworms.

One of these days there will be no webworms. The game of politics. One day will be over.

Guys like Rush Limbaugh will be out of a job. One of these days there will be no more wars.

Someday in the world to come.

See man that is redeemed man will reign on this earth once again. Day is coming when in the wonderful gracious plan of God the dominion that man lost back there in the garden of Eden through sin that dominion will be given again.

Jesus of course. Jesus. Jesus. So I want you to see not only man's glorious destiny and man's grievous tragedy but man's gracious recovery.

[37 : 56] man's gracious recovery. Let's just put all this together. Verse 8. You have 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 do not yet see all things put under him. Now one day it will be.

And the reason why we don't see that yet is because it hasn't happened yet. But it will. And how do we know that it will? Verse 9. But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels.

That is he became a man too remember. Came here and dwelled among us. Made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor that he by the grace of God might taste death for everyone.

Now folks listen. The only the one and only way that man can ever again be king over this planet.

[39 : 14] King over creation. The only way that could ever happen again would be for the curse of sin to be removed. What is the curse of sin? Death.

And the only way the curse of sin can be removed is for the penalty to be paid. Right? What's the penalty? Death.

Penalty for sin is death. According to the Bible we understand that you and I man mankind we cannot save ourselves.

We can't do this for ourselves. Because our death will not remove the penalty of sin. It'll pay for it but the payment is eternity in hell.

And then if there was an end to eternity there still would not be any payment sufficient. So our death won't pay for sin. Our death will not remove the penalty of sin.

[40 : 19] So what is the answer? Well I want you to turn to Romans chapter 6 and we'll discover the answer.

Romans chapter 6 and verse 5 for if literally since we have been united together in the likeness of his death that is Jesus' death certainly we also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection.

knowing this that our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be done away with that we should no longer be slaves to sin for he who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him knowing that Christ having been raised from the dead dies no more death no longer has dominion over him for the death that he died he died to sin once for all but the life that he lives he lives to God likewise you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord that's that's how that's how it is restored see your pastor Don Coleman died 45 years ago I really didn't I'm healthy right now physically I hope I am but I died a long time ago spiritually speaking right some of you have a similar testimony though the years may be different we died and I died the death that Paul described here in Romans the passage

I just read and also in Galatians chapter 2 verse 20 I have been crucified with Christ I died 45 years ago and the moment I put my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at that moment I was identified with Christ I died with him crucified with him died with him on the cross and I was raised with him and so for Don Coleman your pastor the curse of sin has been removed I'm just telling you my testimony been removed and so I am now King Don that's who I am King Don now I haven't received my inheritance yet and my dominion as king yet but one day I will with all believers my crown has been restored it has though I've not realized it yet

[43 : 45] I know it through faith in God's word and yet the reality of it has not yet bloomed in my life come to full blossom and yet it's nevertheless true and that's the case with every one of you who put your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and been born again every one of you know and love Jesus Christ your crown has been restored the very moment you received him as your Lord and your Savior you were united in reality united with him you were crucified with him you were buried with him and he has raised you up to a brand new life life without the curse or with the curse of sin removed we're still here in the presence of it still having to deal with it now that the curse has been removed and so in

Christ we are kings and queens as believers it's not just me it's you too if you know Jesus we're kings and queens now we do not have our kingdom yet but it's coming maybe sooner than we think and that's what Hebrews is talking about Jesus Christ tasted death for you and for me and he did it to restore our lost destiny what we lost in Adam we now have gained in Christ in Jesus and one day we'll see it you look forward to that huh that's that's that hope that we need to fix our minds on one day it'll happen and if you have been kind of searching for some reason for why you exist now you know our great self the ultimate independence