



THE ETERNAL STATE

A Study on Heaven and Hell



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When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: (Matthew 25:31-32)

Here is that day about which Paul said to the Athenians that, God “hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:31) and not only Scripture but every man’s conscience is an early warning system for the terrifying events to take place on that day. The prophet Zephaniah tells us, “that day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Zephaniah 1:15).

Paul told the Thessalonians that you “yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night” (1 Thess 5:2) and Peter tells us that “the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10).

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (1 Thessalonians 4:16). All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and [they] shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:28b,29).

And John “saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works (Revelation 20:11-12).

And so the great day of judgment will arrive at last: When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: (Matthew 25:31-32).

Who can imagine that day? The magnitude of it overwhelms the mind and the senses! Who can conceive of the vast panorama of resurrected men, women and children before the throne of judgment? Everyone who has ever lived must be there! Every knee must bow before Him. And who can imagine the majesty of the Lord Jesus, when He shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, seated on the throne of His glory? Men, women and children are separated into two camps which are clearly distinguished by their appearance. We recognize a clear difference. On the one side we see Adam and Eve, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Hezekiah and Manasseh standing with Peter, James and John, Paul, Luther and Jonathan Edwards, all grouped together on the right side of the throne, all appearing in glorious raiment. On the other side, quite separate, we recognize Cain, and Pharaoh and Judas, and many, many others, all appearing in vile raiment, misshapen in iniquity, appearing hateful to themselves and each other, with none of the natural beauties of which they once boasted. Now they see themselves in contrast to the one seated on the throne and shame covers their faces. But those in the other camp rejoice to see their long-awaited Beloved and to see themselves as like unto the one seated on His throne. They rejoice to be standing in the company of the redeemed with those of like precious faith in wonder and awe before the glorious throne.

The world has often mocked and scorned, “what is your beloved more than another beloved?” (Song 5:9) While His people wept over their sins, the world continually taunted, “Where is your God?” (Psalm 42:3) “Where is the promise of His coming?” (2 Peter 3:4) But He tells us to wait, and be patient, “for yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry (Hebrews 10:37). For now, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. But in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (Romans 8:36-37)

I. On the Right Hand

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Matthew 25:34)

a. The verse

- i. Who is here speaking? This is the King of Glory, the one to whom the Father has committed all judgment (John 5:22), given all power and authority (Matt 28:18), the one who judges all nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9). This is the One who opens and no one shuts, and who shuts and no one opens (Rev 3:7).
- ii. To whom is He speaking? He speaks to those on his right hand, to those who are blessed of His Father. These are the elect whom the Father predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph 1:5). And so, being children by regeneration and adoption, they are heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).
 1. During His earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus lived and died to redeem these. He was delivered up to crucifixion for their offenses, raised from the dead for their justification and ascended to the right hand of the majesty on high for their glorification.
 2. And in the lifetimes of these, His Word went out to them individually, calling each one, saying “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest” and because He prayed the Father, the Father drew them to Himself through the Son, by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. These, His people, were made willing in the day of His power and He saved them to the uttermost because He ever lives to make intercession for them.
- iii. What does He say to them? “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” This is the consummation of electing grace into everlasting glory! This is the moment of the manifestation of the sons of God, and the marvelous mystery of the gospel – of being joint heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17).
 1. How is it acquired? By inheritance – this is the marvel of the Holy Covenant – the inheritance is acquired by virtue of union with Christ by grace alone through faith alone
 2. Whence the Kingdom? It is prepared by God from the foundation of the world. The kingdom was prepared for them before they were born.
 3. What is the inheritance? The Kingdom of Heaven – Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you...”

b. Kingdom of Heaven

And so, the first part of this study is an examination of the final estate of the blessed of the Father, confessing (as we must) that, "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" (1 Corinthians 2:9). For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but then we will know even as we are known (1 Corinthians 13:12).

*When I stand before the throne
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart;
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe.*

Yes we know in part, but what we know in part is not inconsiderable though, as it has evidently pleased the Lord to give us strong encouragements in the Word, such as, "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 away" (Revelation 21:4). Let's look at this in three ways.

i. The City of God

Those who confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth (Heb 11:13) confess that here there is no continuing city (Hebrews 13:14), but they desire a better place, that is, a heavenly one: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Hebrews 11:16)

1. The city of God has foundations – the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve Apostles, with Christ as the chief corner stone, elect and precious. He is that tried and precious stone which the builders rejected, but is the root and foundation of the whole city.
2. "His foundation is in the holy mountains." The foundation is the infinite, eternal, only-begotten Son. "Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Selah" (Psalm 87:1, 3) "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face" (Psalm 89:14)
3. "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). His righteousness and truth are the foundation – "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deuteronomy 32:4 KJV) – so, the Lord Jesus Christ is the one foundation.

*The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word:*

*From heav'n He came and sought her
To be His holy Bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.*

John was carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shown that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God (Revelation 21:10). And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass (Revelation 21:21).

1. This is the royal daughter of Psalm 45, all glorious within; Her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors (Psalm 45:13-14).
2. This is the Church, the Bride of Christ. For Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:25-27)
3. This is the holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, with its streets of pure gold, transparent as glass; with its twelve gates each of a single pearl, its walls of precious stones, was said by the angel to be "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev 21:9).
 - a. That the saints may eternally set their feet upon that which the men of the world now set their hearts. There is precious treasure in heaven which can neither be corrupted nor plundered.
 - b. It is not a carnal treasure but treasure of "a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory." It will make each one there rich to the exceeding satisfaction of the soul, such as earthly treasure never can.

But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. (Revelation 21:22-23)

4. The Temple
 - a. The temple is the place where the holy God meets with man, in the Holy of Holies, over the mercy seat. Now, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are that holy temple. Christ is that temple, as He spoke of the temple of His body (John 2:21), the temple not made with hands.
 - b. And furthermore, as Paul wrote, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16) and elsewhere, "ye also are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among

them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people" (2 Corinthians 6:16).

- c. And the earthly temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built. (1 Kings 6:7). So, likewise, the soul is made meet to be partakers of the inheritance by regeneration necessary to make a soul suitable for being built into the holy temple of God – "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house" (1 Pet 2:5).

5. The Light

- a. Christ is and has always been the light of the world, who lights every man coming into the world. In the city of God, there is no other light and no need of any. The Lamb is its light. The gates are not shut by day and there is no night there, the Lord God is its light.
- b. Thus, the city of God is as much the dwelling place for God as it is for men. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God" (Revelation 21:3).
- c. What ravishing beauty will then captivate the hearts of men as the Sun of righteousness shines in his full strength on the streets of the city made of pure gold!

ii. The Society (Hebrews 12:22-24)

1. The saints will have the society of all the holy angels there. But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels (Hebrews 12:22). These were once ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation and loved them for the Lord's sake, encamped round about them to preserve them from danger: now they will joyfully welcome them to their everlasting habitations; and rejoice to see them come at last into their kingdom and so we will be one company with them and glorify the Lamb together (Rev 5:11-12).
2. The saints will have the society of the other saints. We come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, to the spirits of just men made perfect. As Jesus said, "many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:11). Thus the fellowship of the saints, which is so dear to us during our time on earth, will make up no small part of the enjoyment of heaven.
3. The saints will have the society of God Himself. We come to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel

(Hebrews 12:23-24). Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3)

- a. In the God-Man, the human nature is in unbreakable union with the infinite and eternal Second Person of the Trinity, the eternally begotten Son of God. His humanity which was once a little lower than the angels is now crowned with glory and honor.
- b. His people are in union with Him by grace through faith and so become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Thus, we are kings and priests – in Him – a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9)
- c. The Mediator is, as it were, the center-piece of God's glory – He is the pride and glory of heaven, the eternally begotten Son, the exact representation of the Father, a marvel. He is now the God-man, the Son of Man, a marvel. He is the Messiah, the perfectly holy, perfectly humble Mediator of the new covenant who gave His life as a ransom for many, to redeem the ones given to Him by the Father. Marvelous beyond words
- d. Now He calls them to inherit the blessing which He Himself earned and freely gives – for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen. (Romans 11:36)

iii. The Beatific Vision

"Father, I will that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. (John 17:24)

1. Jesus, in His High Priestly prayer, reveals to us the highest state of blessing to which man can attain – this is the beatific vision? That is, to be with Him and to behold His glory, to gaze steadfastly into the face of Christ, to see there the love He bears for His people – this is the highest state of blessedness a man can obtain.
2. The Psalmist wrote, "one thing I have desired of the LORD. That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple" (Psalm 27:4)
 - a. What is the one thing that you desire of the Lord? David desired the same that Jesus prayed for – that He would always be with the Lord to behold His glory. "When You said, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek." (Psalm 27:8)
3. John Owen wrote, "The enjoyment of heaven is usually called the beatific vision; that is, such an intellectual present view, apprehension, and sight of God and his glory, especially as manifested in Christ, as will make us blessed unto eternity. Wherefore, in the contemplation of this mystery does a great part of our blessedness consist; and farther our thoughts cannot attain."

4. All this is summed up for us in the Priestly blessing, “The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace” (Numbers 6:24-26). In this threefold blessing, the bountiful goodness of God Himself is communicated to us in the light of His countenance.
 - c. Now, maybe you’re saying to yourself, heaven sounds a bit dull. Maybe the idea of being fully satisfied by gazing upon the face of Jesus Christ seems anticlimactic and underwhelming. But please recall that Christ is the Creator of all the variety of things in the world. He is the fountain of life: in His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psalm 16:11). If His highest prayer was for us to be with Him where He is, and to behold His glory, then we ought to humble ourselves and exalt Him in our minds and come to realize that He is all-in-all, and all for us.
 - d. So, there is joy in heaven, but it is holy joy; there are pleasures in heaven, but they are holy pleasures; there are places in heaven, but it is holy ground—that holiness which in every place, and in every thing there, makes all of it very unappealing to the unregenerate. “There shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie” (Rev 21:27).
 - i. Those who do not relish fellowship of the saints, will find the thought of such everlasting company as tedious beyond compare. The business of the saints there would be an intolerable burden to the unregenerate, seeing it is not agreeable to their nature.
 - ii. To be taken up in beholding, admiring, and praising him that sits on the throne, and the Lamb, would be work unsuitable, and therefore undesirable, to an unrenewed soul. And to say nothing of its everlasting continuance! How would those who now account the Sabbath day a burden, be willing to give up all to enjoy this everlasting Sabbath in the heavens!?!

II. On the Left Hand

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41)

These had just seen the blessed of the Father inherit the kingdom of heaven. Think of the gall and bitterness, hatred and rage that overwhelms them because they believe themselves more worthy of blessing than those miserable wretches, some of whom they knew in their lifetimes, now entered in to the kingdom of heaven. Nothing reveals our sense of entitlement more than the display of free grace to the undeserving. Thus God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty (1 Cor 1:27).

And men will cry out enraged and in the gall of bitterness, “Lord, Lord, didn’t we do good works, didn’t we do many mighty works in your name? Surely we deserve heaven as much as those others?” But the Lord will declare to them, “depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness, I never knew you!” (Matt 7:23)

- a. The punishment of loss

- i. Truly, these wanted nothing to do with Christ or God in their lifetimes. Oh, no doubt, some had gone to church and heard many sermons yet had always kept God at arms length. The gospel slighted will make the sense of loss far greater but each one in that company is guilty of forsaking God, the fountain of living waters, and hewing for themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water.
- ii. But in that day all pretense will fly away, and the black cloud of God's dreadful indignation and wrath will break upon their heads, to reveal the true inner nature of sin and the curse – everlasting separation from the blessing of the One who is the only Good. Many once ridiculed coming to God by Christ and Christ was lightly esteemed by them all – but in that day, as His Word says, “though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them” (Ezekiel 8:18).
- iii. Now He says, “Depart from Me”... “because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit. (Isaiah 65:12-14)

Because I have called and you refused, then they will call on me, but I will not answer; Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled to the full with their own fancies. (Proverbs 1:24-31)

- iv. Be sure that when the words ring out, “Depart from me, ye cursed,” that there will not be even the slightest doubt as to the source of the curse. Though the King calls the blessed, “the blessed of My Father,” these are not called the cursed of the Father, because they are not cursed from the Father but from Adam and from themselves. They refused God when He called. Now God refuses them when they call.

b. The End of Common Grace

Being finally separated from God, they are deprived of all good. The good things which they set their hearts upon in this world, are beyond their reach there. That world is gone forever. Many mistook their good in the world for the favor of God. But now the covetous man cannot enjoy his wealth, nor the ambitious man his honours, nor the sensual man his pleasures, no, not a drop of water to cool his tongue, Luke 16:24-25. No meat or drink there to strengthen the faint; no sleep to refresh the weary; and no music, or pleasant company, to comfort and cheer up the sorrowful. And as for those good things they despised in the world, they shall never more hear of them, nor see them. No offer of Christ there, no pardon, no peace; no wells of salvation in the pit of destruction. In one word, they shall be deprived of whatever might comfort them, being totally and finally separated from God, the fountain of all goodness and comfort. All the things in which men have put their trust will be seen to be emptiness and vanity on that day.

- c. The punishment of sense. They depart “into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”
 - i. The place is most dreadful.

1. It is a place utter darkness. "Truly light is sweet" (Eccl 11:7) but nothing sweet is to be found in that place. The king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Matthew 22:13). This is the final abode of those wandering stars, to whom was reserved the blackness of darkness for ever (Jude 13).
 2. Dismal and melancholy must the state of the damned be, in that region of horror, where is not the least comfortable gleam of light to their eyes. As there is no night in heaven, but eternal day, so there is no day in hell, but an eternal night, an everlasting gloom. How terrible never to see the light again!
 3. It is the everlasting fire, the Lake of Fire, the everlasting burnings. Isaiah wrote, "It is not a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before!" (Is 47:14) The rich man was "tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:24) and these "shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night" (Rev 14:10,11).
 4. Our fire cannot affect a spirit, but by way of sympathy with the body to which it is united: but hellfire will not only pierce into the bodies, but directly into the souls of the damned: for it is "prepared for the devil and his angels," those wicked spirits, whom no fire on earth can hurt. How vehement then must that fire be which pierces directly into the soul, and makes an everlasting burning in the spirit, the most lively and tender part of a man, wherein wounds or pains are most intolerable!
- ii. The society of that place is most dreadful
1. They depart into a place "prepared for the devil and his angels" – oh what a dreadful thought! There will be found those rebellious angels whom God spared not, but cast down to hell, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter 2:4). There will be found that spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph 2:2). There he will torment those who may not even have believed in his existence until that dreadful day. But, whether they owned him or not, as Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8:44) and now their father who owns them will show himself to be very real to his subjects.
 2. These devils go about now as roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour: but then they shall be confined in their den with their prey. To be closed up in a den of roaring lions, girded about with serpents, surrounded with venomous asps, and to have one's soul eaten by jackals, altogether and at once, is a comparison too low, to shew the misery of the damned, shut up in hell with the devil and his angels.
- iii. The presence of God is inescapable

1. David said, "if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there" (Psalm 139:8) and so, even though the Lord has commanded them to depart, whither shall they flee from His presence? (v 7)
 2. And so we read that these are "tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb" (Rev 14:10). Didn't they depart? Maybe they felt some relief for a moment, but there is no escape from His presence. His face which is the greatest comfort and beauty of holiness to the elect, is an everlasting horror of holiness to the reprobate. For "who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?" (Nahum 1:6)
 3. On earth, the knowledge of God was suppressable to some extent, the mind distractable. But then there will be the unmitigated presence of the infinitely holy God – no distractions, no diversions, no interruptions, no protection – though they call to the rocks to "fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" (Rev 6:16) – these have no escape from the face of God.
 4. Their worm shall not die – conscience will be a worm to gnaw and prey upon them; remorse for their sins shall seize them and torment them for ever, and they shall not be able to shake it off, as once they did; for "in hell their worm dieth not," Mark 9:44, 46. Their memory will serve but to aggravate their torment, and every new reflection will bring another pang of anguish, Luke 16:25, "But Abraham said," to the rich man in hell, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things."
- iv. There they will find a prison they can never escape out of; a lake of fire, where they will be ever swimming and burning; a pit, whereof they will never find a bottom. The worm that dieth not shall feed on them, as on bodies which are interred: the fire that is not quenched shall devour them, as dead bodies which are burned. Their eyes shall be kept in blackness of darkness, without the least comfortable gleam of light; their ears filled with frightful yellings of the infernal crew. They shall taste nothing but the sharpness of God's wrath, the dregs of the cup of his fury. The stench of the burning lake of brimstone will be the smell there; and they shall feel extreme mental and physical pains forever more.
- d. The aggravation of the whole
- i. The endless continuance of it -- If "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," Proverbs 13:12, then hope eliminated will fill the heart with hatred and rage against God, their known irreconcilable enemy; and under it, they will roar for ever, like wild animals in a cage, and fill the air with their blasphemies for evermore.
 - ii. Consider, 1. how unpleasant it is to lie one whole night on a soft bed in good health, when we would like to sleep but cannot. But oh, how dreadful must it be to lie in sorrow, wrapped up in scorching flames through eternity, in that place where there is no rest day nor night!—2. How terrible would it be, to live with great pain for fifty or sixty years! Yet even in this, it is never so bad that one

does not get an occasional respite. And so what is even that compared with the worm that never dies, and the fire that is never quenched—3. how the endless state of hating God drives one deeper into the pit, continuing ever-increasing wrath.

III. Use

a. To the unbeliever

- i. You who are yet in your natural state, lift up your eyes and take a view of the eternal state. Arise, ye profane persons, ye ignorant ones, ye formal hypocrites, strangers to the power of godliness, flee from the wrath to come. Delay not a moment longer: "Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;" lest he swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest. Take warning in time. They who are in hell, have no use for such warnings but are enraged against themselves, because they slighted the warnings when they had them.
- ii. See the absolute necessity of fleeing to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith for justification; likewise for sanctification; for holiness of heart and life. The avenger of blood is pursuing thee, O sinner; make haste and escape to the city of refuge. Wash now in the fountain of the Mediator's blood, so that you don't hear the dreadful words, "depart from Me!" But today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart. Receive the whole Christ, with your whole heart, lest you be cast whole into the Lake of Fire.

b. To the believer

- i. Confirm the foundation upon which you are established. No one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3:11). Every Christian must dig down deep to lay the foundation on this rock (Luke 6:48).
 1. "But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." (Luke 6:49)
- ii. The Psalmist wrote, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12). When we consider our lives in the light of eternity, the number of our days is found to be very short. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (2 Corinthians 4:17). And what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26) Repentance, and bitter mourning for sin, on earth, are very light in comparison of eternal weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth in hell.
- iii. Consider the greatness of the salvation--
*When I hear the wicked call
on them for rocks and hills to fall,
and when I see them start and shrink
on the fiery deluge brink,
then, Lord, shall I fully know,
not till then, how much I owe*

References:

1. Thomas Boston, "Man's Fourfold State"
2. Richard Baxter, "The Saints' Everlasting Rest"
3. John Owen, "Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ"
4. John Howe, The Blessedness of the Righteous Opened.

"Rest! How sweet the sound. It is melody to my ears! It lies as a reviving cordial to my heart, and from thence sends forth lively spirits, which beat through all the pulses of my soul! Rest! not as the stone that rests on the earth, nor as this flesh shall rest in the grave, nor such a rest as the carnal world desires. O blessed rest! when we rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" when we shall rest from sin, but not from worship; from suffering and sorrow, but not from joy! O blessed day! when I shall rest with God! when I shall rest in the bosom of my Lord! when I shall rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing and praising! when my perfect soul and body shall together perfectly enjoy the most perfect God! when God, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me, and rest in his love to me, as I shall rest in my love to him; and rejoice over me with joy, and joy over me with singing, as I shall rejoice in him! (Richard Baxter)