

The Sin of Unbelief

by C.H. Spurgeon

Unbelief is a sin that prevents the power of the gospel from working and disables a man for the performance of good works.

Duration: 41:03

Topics: "Faith And Unbelief", "Salvation And Judgment"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the theme of unbelief and its consequences. He highlights how unbelief can hinder individuals from coming to Christ and receiving salvation. The preacher emphasizes the power of faith and how it is essential for a Christian's spiritual growth and effectiveness. He also warns about the punishment that unbelief brings, using the example of Noah and the flood. The sermon concludes with a vivid depiction of the torment of unbelief in hell contrasted with the bliss of faith in heaven.

Transcript

The Prince of Preachers Charles Haddon Spurgeon has been called England's greatest contribution to the spread of the gospel in the 19th century. One of his contemporaries said that the chief secret of Spurgeon's attractiveness was the fact that in every sermon, no matter what the text or the occasion, he explained the way of salvation in simple terms. He was a man to whom the Lord Jesus Christ was more dear than all the universe, whose boast was in the name of the Lord all the day long.

Spurgeon's messages remain one of the great treasure houses of Christian literature, still bringing the light of the gospel and the comfort of the scriptures to hungry souls long after the preacher has passed into glory. This is Charles Kelch inviting you to listen to a message from the Prince of Preachers. C. H. Spurgeon preached this message on January 14th, 1855, at the New Park Street Chapel in Southwark, England.

It is entitled, The Sin of Unbelief, and the text is 2 Kings, chapter 7, verse 19. And that Lord answered the man of God, and said, Now behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. One wise man may deliver a whole city.

One good man may be the means of safety to a thousand others. The holy ones are the salt of the earth, the means of the preservation of the wicked. Without the godly as a preservative, the race would be utterly

destroyed.

In the city of Samaria there was one righteous man, Elisha, the servant of God. Piety was altogether extinct in the court. The king was a sinner of the blackest dye.

His iniquity was glaring and infamous. Jehoram walked in the ways of his father Ahab, and made himself false gods. The people of Samaria were fallen like their monarch.

They had gone astray from Jehovah. They had forsaken the God of Israel. They remembered not the watchword of Jacob, The Lord thy God is one God, and in wicked idolatry they bowed before the idols of the heathens.

And therefore the Lord of hosts suffered their enemies to oppress them, until the curse of evil was fulfilled in the streets of Samaria. For the tender and delicate woman, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness, had an evil eye to her own children, and devoured her offspring by reason of fierce hunger. In this awful extremity the one holy man was the medium of salvation.

The one grain of salt the entire city, the one warrior for God, was the deliverance of the whole beleaguered multitude. For Elisha's sake the Lord sent the promise that the next day food, which could not be obtained at any price, should be had at the cheapest possible rate, at the very gates of Samaria. We may picture the joy of the multitude when first the seer uttered this prediction.

They knew him to be a prophet of the Lord. He had divine credentials. All his past prophecies had been fulfilled.

They knew that he was a man sent of God, and uttering Jehovah's message. Surely the monarch's eyes would glisten with delight, and the emaciated multitude would leap for joy at the prospects of so speedy a release from famine. Tomorrow, would they shout, Our hunger shall be over, and we shall feast to the full.

However, the Lord on whom the king leaned expressed his disbelief. We hear not that any of the common people, the Plebeians, ever did so, but an aristocrat did it. Strange it is that God has seldom chosen the great men of this world.

High places and faith in Christ do seldom well agree. This great man said, Impossible, and with an insult to the prophet, he added, If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be. His sin lay in the fact that, after repeated seals of Elisha's ministry, he yet disbelieved the assurances uttered by the prophet on God's behalf.

He had doubtless seen the marvelous defeat of Moab. He had been startled at tidings of the resurrection of the Shunammite son. He knew that Elisha had revealed Ben-Hadad's secret and smitten his marauding host with blindness.

He had seen the bands of Syria decoyed into the heart of Samaria, and he probably knew the story of the widow whose oil filled all the vessels and redeemed her sons. At all events, the cure of Naaman was common conversation at court. And yet, in the face of all this accumulated evidence, in the teeth of all these credentials of the prophet's mission, he yet doubted and insultingly told him that heaven must become an open casement ere the promise could be performed.

Whereupon God pronounced His doom by the mouth of the man who had just now proclaimed the promise, Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And providence, which always fulfills prophecy, just as the paper takes the stamp of the type, destroyed the man. Trodden down in the streets of Samaria, he perished at its gates, beholding the plenty, but tasting not of it.

Perhaps his carriage was haughty and insulting to the people, or he tried to restrain their eager rush, or, as we would say, it might have been by mere accident that he was crushed to death, so that he saw the prophecy fulfilled, but never lived to enjoy it. In his case, seeing was believing, but it was not enjoying. I shall this morning invite your attention to two things, the man's sin and his punishment.

Perhaps I shall say but little of this man, since I have detailed the circumstances, but I shall discourse upon the sin of unbelief and the punishment thereof. And first, the sin. His sin was unbelief.

He doubted the promise of God. In this particular case, unbelief took the form of a doubt of the divine veracity, or a mistrust of God's power. Either he doubted whether God really meant what he said, or whether it was in the range of possibility that God should fulfill His promise.

Unbelief hath more phases than the moon, and more colors than the chameleon. Common people say of the devil that he is sometimes seen in one shape and sometimes in another. I am sure this is true of Satan's firstborn child, unbelief, for its forms are legion.

At one time I see unbelief dressed out as an angel of light. It calls itself humility, and it saith, I would not be presumptuous. I dare not think that God would pardon me.

I am too great a sinner. We call that humility, and thank God that our friend is in so good a condition. I do not thank God for any such delusion.

It is the devil dressed as an angel of light. It is unbelief after all. At other times we detect unbelief in the shape of a doubt of God's immutability.

The Lord has loved me, but perhaps He will cast me off tomorrow. He helped me yesterday, and under the shadows of His wings I trust, but perhaps I shall receive no help in the next affliction. He may have cast me off.

He may be unmindful of His covenant and forget to be gracious. Sometimes this infidelity is embodied in a doubt of God's power. We see every day new straits.

We are involved in a net of difficulties, and we think, surely the Lord cannot deliver us. We strive to get rid of our burden, and finding that we cannot do it, we think that God's arm is as short as ours, and His power as little as human might. A fearful form of unbelief is that doubt which keeps men from coming to Christ, which leads the sinner to distrust the ability of Christ to save him, to doubt the willingness of Jesus to accept so great a transgressor.

But the most hideous of all is the traitor in its true colors, blaspheming God and madly denying His existence. Infidelity, deism, and atheism are the ripe fruits of this pernicious tree. They are the most terrific eruptions of the volcano of unbelief.

Unbelief hath become of full stature when quitting the mask and laying aside the disguise. It profanely stalks the earth, uttering the rebellious cry, No God, striving in vain to shake the throne of the divinity by

lifting up its arm against Jehovah, and its arrogance would snatch from His hand the balance and the rod, re-judge His justice, be the God of God. Then truly unbelief has come to its full perfection, and then you see what it really is, for the least unbelief is of the same nature as the greatest.

I am astonished, and I am sure you will be, when I tell you that there are some strange people in the world who do not believe that unbelief is a sin. Strange people, I must call them, because they are sound in their faith in every other respect, only to make the articles of their creed consistent as they imagine, they deny that unbelief is sinful. I remember a young man going into a circle of friends and ministers who were disputing whether it was a sin in men that they did not believe the gospel.

Whilst they were discussing it, he said, Gentlemen, am I in the presence of Christians? Are ye believers in the Bible, or are ye not? They said, We are Christians, of course. Then said he, Does not the scripture say, Of sin, because they believe not on me? And is it not the damning sin of sinners that they do not believe in Christ? I could not have thought that persons could be so foolhardy as to venture to assert that it is no sin for a sinner not to believe on Christ. I thought that, however far they might wish to push their sentiments, they would not tell a lie to uphold the truth, and, in my opinion, this is what such men are really doing.

Truth is a strong tower and never requires to be buttressed with error. God's word will stand against all man's devices. I would never invent a sophism to prove that it is no sin on the part of the ungodly not to believe, for I am sure it is, when I am taught in the scriptures that this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.

And when I read, He that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not on the Son of God. I affirm, and the word of God declares it, unbelief is a sin. Surely with rational and unprejudiced persons it cannot require any reasoning to prove it.

Is it not a sin for a creature to doubt the word of its maker? Is it not a crime and an insult to the divinity for me, an atom, a particle of dust, to dare to deny His words? Is it not the very summit of arrogance and extremity of pride for a son of Adam to say, even his heart, God, I doubt Thy grace? God, I doubt Thy love! God, I doubt Thy power! O sirs, believe me, could ye roll all sins into one mass? Could ye take murder and blasphemy and lust, adultery and fornication, and everything that is vile, and unite them into one vast globe of black corruption? They would not equal then the sin of unbelief. This is the monarch sin, the quintessence of guilt, the mixture of the venom of all crimes, the dregs of the wine of Gomorrah. It is the A1 sin, the masterpiece of Satan, the chief work of the devil.

I shall attempt this morning for a little while to show the extremely evil nature of the sin of unbelief. And first the sin of unbelief will appear to be extremely heinous when we remember that it is the parent of every other iniquity. There is no crime which unbelief will not beget.

I think that the fall of man is very much owing to it. It was in this point that the devil tempted Eve. He said to her, Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? He whispered and insinuated a doubt.

Yea, hath God said so? As much as to say, Are you quite sure he said so? It was by means of unbelief, that thin part of the wedge, that the other sin entered. Curiosity and the rest followed. She touched the fruit, and destruction came into this world.

Since that time, unbelief has been the prolific parent of all guilt. An unbeliever is capable of the vilest crime that ever was committed. Unbelief, sirs, why, it hardened the heart of Pharaoh.

It gave license to the tongue of blaspheming Rabshakeh. Yea, it became a deicide and murdered Jesus. Unbelief, it has sharpened the knife of the suicide.

It has mixed many a cup of poison. Thousands it has brought to the halter, and many to a shameful grave, who have murdered themselves and rushed with bloody hands before their Creator's tribunal because of unbelief. Give me an unbeliever.

Let me know that he doubts God's word. Let me know that he distrusts His promise and is threatening. And with that for a premise, I will conclude that the man shall by and by, unless there is amazing restraining power exerted upon him, be guilty of the foulest and blackest crimes.

Ah, this is a Beelzebub sin. Like Beelzebub, it is the leader of all evil spirits. It is said of Jeroboam that he sinned and made Israel to sin.

And it may be said of unbelief that it not only sins itself, but makes others sin. It is the egg of all crime, the seed of every offense. In fact, everything that is evil and vile lies couched in that one word, unbelief.

And let me say here that unbelief in the Christian is of the selfsame nature as unbelief in the sinner. It is not the same in its final issue, for it will be pardoned in the Christian. Yea, it is pardoned.

It was laid upon the scapegoat's head of old. It was blotted out and atoned for. But it is of the same sinful nature.

In fact, if there can be one sin more heinous than the unbelief of a sinner, it is the unbelief of a saint. For a saint to doubt God's word, for a saint to distrust God after innumerable instances of his love, after ten thousand proofs of his mercy, exceeds everything. In a saint, moreover, unbelief is the root of other sins.

When I am perfect in faith, I shall be perfect in everything else. I should always fulfill the precept if I always believed the promise. But it is because my faith is weak that I sin.

Put me in trouble, and if I can fold my arms and say, Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide, you will not find me using wrong means to escape from it. But let me be in temporal distress and difficulty. If I distrust God, what then? Perhaps I shall steal or do a dishonest act to get out of the hands of my creditors.

Or, if I kept from such transgression, I may plunge into excess to drown my anxieties. Once take away faith, the reins are broken, and who can ride an unbroken steed without rein or bridle? Like the chariot of the sun with Phaeton for its driver, such should we be without faith. Unbelief is the mother of vice, it is the parent of sin, and therefore I say it is a pestilent evil, a master sin.

But secondly, unbelief not only begets, but fosters sin. How is it that men can keep their sin under the thunders of the Sinai preacher? How is it that when Boanerges stands in the pulpit and by the grace of God cries aloud, Cursed is every man that keepeth not all the commands of the law! How is it that when the sinner hears the tremendous threatenings of God's justice, still he is hardened and walks on in his evil ways? I will tell you, it is because unbelief of that threatening prevents it from having any effect upon him. When our sappers and miners go to work around Sebastopol, they could not work in front of the walls if they had not something to keep off the shots, so they raise earthworks, behind which they can do what

they please.

So with the ungodly man, the devil gives him unbelief. He thus puts up an earthwork and finds refuge behind it. Ah, sinners, when once the Holy Ghost knocks down your unbelief, when once He brings home the truth in demonstration and in power, how the law will work upon your soul! If a man did but believe that the law is holy, that the commandments are holy, just, and good, how he would be shaken over hell's mouth! There would be no sitting and sleeping in God's house, no careless hearers, no going away and straightway forgetting what manner of men ye are.

Oh, once get rid of unbelief, how would every ball from the batteries of the law fall upon the sinner, and the slain of the Lord would be many! Again, how is it that men can hear the woosings of the cross of Calvary and yet not come to Christ? How is it that when we preach about the sufferings of Jesus and close up by saying, Yet there is room, how is it that when we dwell upon the cross and His passion, men are not broken in their hearts? It is said, Law and terrors do but harden, all the while they work alone, but a sense of blood-bought pardon will dissolve a heart of stone. Methinks the tale of Calvary is enough to break a rock. Rocks did rend when they saw Jesus die.

Methinks the tragedy of Golgotha is enough to make a flint gush with tears, and to make the most hardened wretch weep out his eyes in drops of penitential love. But yet we tell it you, and repeat it oft, but who weeps over it? Who cares about it? Sirs, ye sit as unconcerned as if it did not signify to you. Oh, behold and see, all ye that pass by, is it nothing to you that Jesus should die? Ye seem to say it is nothing.

What is the reason? Because there is unbelief between you and the cross. If there were not that thick veil between you and the Savior's eyes, His looks of love would melt you. But unbelief is the sin which keeps the power of the gospel from working in the sinner.

And it is not till the Holy Ghost strikes that unbelief out, it is not till the Holy Spirit rends away that infidelity and takes it altogether down, that we can find the sinner coming to put his trust in Jesus. But there is a third point. Unbelief disables a man for the performance of any good work.

Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, is a great truth in more senses than one. Without faith it is impossible to please God. You shall never hear me say a word against morality.

You shall never hear me say that honesty is not a good thing, or that sobriety is not a good thing. On the contrary, I would say that they are commendable things. But I will tell you what I will say afterwards.

I will tell you that they are just like the cowries of Hindustan. They may pass current among the Indians, but they will not do in England. These virtues may be current here below, but not above.

If you have not something better than your own goodness, you will never get to heaven. Some of the Indian tribes use little strips of cloth instead of money, and I would not find fault with them if I lived there. But when I come to England, strips of cloth will not suffice.

So honesty, sobriety, and such things may be very good amongst men, and the more you have of them the better. I exhort you, whatsoever things are lovely and pure and of good report, have them. But they will not do up there.

All these things put together without faith do not please God. Virtues without faith are whitewashed sins. Obedience without faith, if it is possible, is a gilded disobedience.

Not to believe nullifies everything. It is the fly in the ointment. It is the poison in the pot.

Without faith, with all the virtues of purity, with all the benevolence of philanthropy, with all the kindness of disinterested sympathy, with all the talents of genius, with all the bravery of patriotism, and with all the decision of principle, without faith it is impossible to please God. Do you not see then how bad unbelief is? Because it prevents men from performing good works. Yea, even in Christians themselves, unbelief disabled them.

Let me just tell you a tale, a story of Christ's life. A certain man had an afflicted son, possessed with an evil spirit. Jesus was up in Mount Tabor, transfigured.

So the father brought his son to the disciples. What did the disciples do? They said, Oh, we will cast him out. They put their hands upon him, and they tried to do it.

But they whispered among themselves and said, We are afraid we shall not be able. By and by the diseased man began to froth at the mouth. He foamed and scratched the earth, claspings it in his paroxysms.

The demonic spirit within him was alive. The devil was still there. In vain their repeated exorcism.

The evil spirit remained like a lion in his den, nor could their efforts dislodge him. Go, said they, but he went not. Away to the pit, they cried, but he remained immovable.

The lips of unbelief cannot affright the evil one, who might well have said, Faith I know, Jesus I know, but who are ye? Ye have no faith. If they had had faith, as a grain of mustard seed, they might have cast the devil out. But their faith was gone, and therefore they could do nothing.

Look at poor Peter's case, too. While he had faith, Peter walked on the waves of the sea. That was a splendid walk.

I almost envy him treading upon the billows. Why, if Peter's faith had continued, he might have walked across the Atlantic to America. But presently there came a billow behind him, and he said, That will sweep me away.

And then another before, and he cried out, That will overwhelm me. And he thought, How could I be so presumptuous as to be walking on the top of these waves? Down goes Peter. Faith was Peter's life-boy.

Faith was Peter's charm. It kept him up. But unbelief sent him down.

Do you know that you and I all our lifetime will have to walk on the water? A Christian's life is always walking on water. Mine is. And every wave would swallow and devour him.

But faith makes him stand. The moment you cease to believe, that moment distress comes in, and down you go. Oh, wherefore dost thou doubt then? Faith fosters every virtue.

Unbelief murders everyone. Thousands of prayers have been strangled in their infancy by unbelief. Unbelief has been guilty of infanticide.

It has murdered many an infant petition. Many a song of praise that would have swelled the chorus of the skies has been stifled by an unbelieving murmur. Many a noble enterprise conceived in the heart has been

blighted ere it could come forth by unbelief.

Many a man would have been a missionary, would have stood and preached his master's gospel boldly. But he had unbelief. Once make a giant unbelieving, and he becomes a dwarf.

Faith is the Samsonian lock of the Christian. Cut it off, and you put out his eyes, and he can do nothing. Our next remark is, Unbelief has been severely punished.

Turn you to the scriptures. I see a world all fair and beautiful, its mountains laughing in the sun and the fields rejoicing in the golden light. I see maidens dancing and young men singing.

How fair the vision! But lo, a grave and reverent sire lifts up his hand and cries, A flood is coming to deluge the earth. The fountains of the great deep will be broken up, and all things will be covered. See yonder ark! One hundred and twenty years have I toiled with these my hands to build it.

Flee there, and you are safe. Ah, old man, away with your empty predictions. Ah, let us be happy while we may.

When the flood comes, then we will build an ark. There is no flood coming. Tell that to fools, we believe no such things.

See the unbelievers pursue their merry dance. Hark, unbeliever, dost thou not hear that rumbling noise? Earth's bowels have begun to move, her rocky ribs are strained by dire convulsions from within. Lo, they break with the enormous strain, and forth from between them torrents rush, unknown since God concealed them in the bosom of our world.

Heaven is split in sunder, it rains, not drops, but clouds descend. A cataract like that of old Niagara rolls from heaven with mighty noise. Both firmaments, both deeps, the deep below and the deep above, do clasp their hands.

Now, unbelievers, where are you now? There is your last remnant. A man, his wife clasping him round the waist, stands on the last summit that is above the water. See him there, the water is up to his loins even now.

Hear his last shriek, he is floating. He is drowned. And as Noah looks from the ark, he sees nothing, nothing.

It is a void profound. Sea monsters whelp and stable in the palaces of kings. All is overthrown, covered, drowned.

What hath done it? What hath brought the flood upon the earth? Unbelief. By faith Noah escaped from the flood. By unbelief the rest were drowned.

And, oh, do you not know that unbelief kept Moses and Aaron out of Canaan? They honored not God. They struck the rock when they ought to have spoken to it. They disbelieved, and therefore the punishment came upon them, that they should not inherit that good land for which they had toiled and labored.

Let me take you where Moses and Aaron dwelt, to the vast and howling wilderness. We will walk about it for a time. Sons of the weary foot, we will become like the wandering Bedouins.

We will tread the desert for a while. There lies a carcass whitened in the sun. There another, and there another.

What means these bleached bones? What are these bodies? There a man and there a woman. What are all these? How came these corpses here? Surely some grand encampment must have been here cut off in a single night by a blast or by bloodshed. Ah, no, no! These bones are the bones of Israel.

Those skeletons are the old tribes of Jacob. They could not enter because of unbelief. They trusted not in God.

Spies said they could not conquer the land. Unbelief was the cause of their death. It was not the Anakims that destroyed Israel.

It was not the howling wilderness that destroyed them. It was not the Jordan which proved a barrier to Canaan. Neither Hivite nor Jebusite slew them.

It was unbelief alone which kept them out of Canaan. What a doom to be pronounced on Israel after forty years of journeying! They could not enter because of unbelief. And now to close at this point, for I have been already too long.

Let me remark that you will observe the heinous nature of unbelief in this, that it is the damning sin. There is one sin for which Christ never died. It is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

There is one other sin for which Christ never made atonement. Mention every crime in the calendar of evil, and I will show you persons who have found forgiveness for it. But ask me whether the man who died in unbelief can be saved.

And I reply, there is no atonement for that man. There is atonement made for the unbelief of a Christian because it is temporary. But the final unbelief, the unbelief with which men die, never was atoned for.

You may turn over this whole book, and you will find that there is no atonement for the man who died in unbelief. There is no mercy for him. Had he been guilty of every other sin, if he had believed, he would have been pardoned.

But this is the damning exception. He had no faith. Devil sees him.

O fiends of the pit, drag him downward to his doom. He is faithless and unbelieving, and such are the tenants for whom hell was built. It is their portion, their prison.

They are the chief prisoners. The fetters are marked with their names, and forever they shall know that he that believeth not shall be damned. This brings us now to conclude with the punishment.

Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. Listen, unbelievers, you have heard this morning your sin. Now listen to your doom.

You shall see it with your eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. It is so often with God's saints. When they are unbelieving, they see the mercy with their eyes, but do not eat it.

Now here is the corn in this land of Egypt, that there are some of God's saints who come here on the Sabbath and say, I do not know whether the Lord will be with me or not. Some of them say, well, the

gospel is preached, but I do not know whether it will be successful. They are always doubting and fearing.

Listen to them when they get out of the chapel. Well, did you get a good meal this morning? Nothing for me. Of course not.

You could see it with your eyes, but did not eat of it because you had no faith. If you had come up with faith, you would have had a morsel. I have found Christians who have grown so very critical that if the whole portion of the meat they are to have in due season is not cut up exactly into square pieces and put upon some choice dish of porcelain, they cannot eat it.

Then they ought to go without, and they will go without until they are brought to their appetite. They will have some affliction which will act like quinine upon them. They will be made to eat by means of bitters in their mouth.

They will be put in prison for a day or two until their appetite returns, and then they will be glad to eat the most ordinary food off the most common platter or no platter at all. But the real reason why God's people do not feed under a gospel ministry is because they have not faith. If you believed, if you did but hear one promise, that would be enough.

If you only heard one good thing from the pulpit, here would be food for your soul, for it is not the quantity we hear but the quantity we believe that does us good. It is that which we receive into our hearts with true and lively faith that is our profit. But let me apply this chiefly to the unconverted.

They often see great works of God done with their eyes, but they do not eat thereof. A crowd of people have come here this morning to see with their eyes, but I doubt whether all of them eat. Men cannot eat with their eyes, for if they could, most would be well fed.

And spiritually, persons cannot feed simply with their ears, nor simply with looking at the preacher, and so we find the majority of our congregations come just to see. Ah, let us hear what this babbler would say, this reed shaken in the wind. But they have no faith.

They come and they see and see and see and never eat. There is someone in the front there who gets converted, someone down below who is called by sovereign grace. Some poor sinner is weeping under a sense of his blood guiltiness, another is crying for mercy to God, another is saying, Have mercy upon me, a sinner.

A great work is going on in this chapel, but some of you do not know anything about it. You have no work going on in your hearts, and why? Because you think it is impossible. You think God is not at work.

He has not promised to work for you who do not honor Him. Unbelief makes you sit here in times of revival and of the outpouring of God's grace, unmoved, uncalled, unsaved. But, sirs, the worst fulfillment of this doom is to come.

Good Whitfield used to sometimes lift up both his hands and shout, as I wish I could shout, but my voice fails me. The wrath to come, the wrath to come! It is not the wrath that now that you have to fear, but the wrath to come. And there shall be a doom to come, when ye shall see it with your eyes, but shall not eat thereof.

Methinks I see the last great day, the last hour of time is struck. I heard the bell toll its death knell. Time was.

Eternity is ushered in, the sea is boiling, the waves are lit up with supernatural splendor. I see a rainbow, a flying cloud, and on it there is a throne. And on that throne sits one like unto the Son of Man.

I know Him. In His hand He holds a pair of balances. Just before Him the books, the book of life, the book of death, the book of remembrance.

I see His splendor, and I rejoice at it. I behold His pompous appearance, and I smile with gladness that He comes to be admired of all His saints. But there stands a throng of miserable wretches, crouching in horror to conceal themselves, and yet looking, for their eyes must look on Him whom they have pierced.

But when they look, they cry, Hide me from the face! What face? Rocks, hide me from the face! What face? The face of Jesus, the man who died, but now is come to judgment. But ye cannot be hidden from His face. Ye must see it with your eyes, but ye will not sit on the right hand, dressed in robes of grandeur.

And when the triumphal procession of Jesus in the cloud shall come, ye shall not march in it. Ye shall see it, but ye shall not be there. Oh, methinks I see it now! The mighty Savior in His chariot, riding on the rainbow of heaven.

See how His mighty coursers make the sky rattle while He drives them up heaven's hill. A train girth in white follow behind Him, and at His chariot wheels He drags the devil, death, and hell. Hark how they clap their hands! Hark how they shout, Thou hast ascended up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive! Hark how they chant the solemn lay, Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth! See the splendor of their appearance.

Mark the crown upon their brows, see their snow-white garments. Mark the rapture of their countenances. Hear how their song swells up to heaven while the Eternal joins therein, saying, I will rejoice over them with joy, I will rejoice over them with singing, for I have betrothed the unto Me in everlasting kindness.

But where are you all the while? Ye can see them up there, but where are you? Looking at it with your eyes, but ye cannot eat thereof. The marriage banquet is spread, the good old wines of eternity are broached, they sit down to the feast of the King. But there you are, miserable and famished, and ye cannot eat thereof.

Oh, how ye wring your hands! Might ye but have but one morsel from the table! Might ye be but dogs beneath the table! Ye shall be a dog in hell, but not a dog in heaven. But to conclude. Methinks I see thee in some place in hell, tied to a rock, the vulture of remorse gnawing thy heart, and up there is Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.

You lift up your eyes, and ye see who it is. That is the poor man who lay on my dunghill, and the dogs licked his sores. There he is in heaven, while I am cast down.

Lazarus! Yes, it is Lazarus! And I, who was rich in the world of time, am here in hell. Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue. But no, it cannot be, it cannot be.

And whilst you lie there, if there be one thing in hell worse than another, it will be seeing the saints in heaven. Oh, to think of seeing my mother in heaven while I am cast out! Oh, sinner, only think, to see thy brother in heaven, he who was rocked in the selfsame cradle and played beneath the same roof tree. Yet thou art cast out.

And, husband, there is thy wife in heaven, and thou art amongst the damned. And seest thou, father, thy child is before the throne, and thou, accursed of God and accursed of man, art in hell. Oh, the hell of hells will be to see our friends in heaven and ourselves lost.

I beseech you, my hearers, by the death of Christ, by his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by all that is holy, by all that is sacred in heaven and earth, by all that is solemn in time or eternity, by all that is horrible in hell or glorious in heaven, by that awful thought forever. I beseech you, lay these things to heart, and remember that if you are damned, it will be unbelief that damns you. If you are lost, it will be because you believe not on Christ, and if you perish, this shall be the bitterest drop of gall that ye did not trust in the Savior.

This message, The Sin of Unbelief, was preached by Charles Haddon Spurgeon on January 14, 1855. This is Charles Kelch inviting you to join me again for another message from the Prince of Preachers.

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