

Title: **“I AM ESCAPED TO TELL THEE.”**

Text: Job 1:19

Subject: *The Reason I am Here*

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Tape # Z-51a

Readings: *Bob Poncer and David Burge*

Introduction:

Do you ever wonder — “Why am I here? Why did I escape that danger? — Why has the Lord healed me of that disease?” I think about that a good bit. That is what I want to talk about in this message. I want to show you, my family, the people who are dearest to me, why the Lord has been pleased to spare my life, why he has been pleased to leave me in this world a while longer.

I know this: **He has not left me here because I need to become more fit for heaven.** I have proved, by long and painful experience, that living in this world will not make me more fit for the glory that awaits me in eternity.

(Romans 7:14-24) “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (15) For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. (16) If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good. (17) Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (18) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. (19) For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. (20) Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. (21) I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. (22) For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: (23) But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (24) O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

I know the Lord has not left me here to make me more fit for heaven for another reason. — **I am already fit for heaven! Christ is my fitness!**

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(Colossians 1:12-14) “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins.”

I am fit for heavenly glory, made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light by virtue of my union with Christ and three great works of grace he has performed for me.

- Righteousness
- Redemption
- Regeneration

Near, so very near to God,
Nearer I cannot be,
For in the person of His Son,
I am as near as He!

With His spotless garments on
I am as holy as God’s Son!

If the Lord has not left me here to make me more righteous, more holy, and more fit for heaven, why am I still here? Turn with me to the Book of Job, and I will show you. I am reading from Job chapter 1, beginning with the first verse. — Job 1:1.

(Job 1:1-19) “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name *was* Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. (2) And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. (3) His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

(4) And his sons went and feasted *in their* houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. (5) And it was so, when the days of *their* feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings *according* to the number of

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them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

(6) Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. (7) And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. (8) And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

(9) Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? (10) Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. (11) But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. (12) And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath *is* in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

(13) And there was a day when his sons and his daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: (14) And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: (15) And the Sabeans fell *upon them*, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.** (16) While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.** (17) While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.** (18) While he *was* yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters *were* eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: (19) And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and **I only am escaped alone to tell thee.**”

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There are many ways in which my own experience of God’s grace and his good providence compel me to adopt the language used by Job’s messengers as my own.

Looking back to the day of my birth, had not the Lord God preserved me from my mother’s womb, I would have surely perished. Many did in those days. But he who formed me in the belly loved me. Before I came forth from my mother’s womb, he sanctified me and ordained me as his messenger to you (Jeremiah 1:5). — *“And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”*

My childhood, like yours, was filled with perils and dangers, in which multitudes dropped all around me. Many with whom I attended school are in hell today, others are in prison; and I would certainly have been in one or the other, had it not been for the fact that God spared me. He preserved me by his boundless, free grace and distinguishing mercy. — *“And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”*

When, as a youth I lived at the edge of hell, playing with death, with my fists clinched, shaking them in my ever-gracious God’s face, courting his wrath every day, flirting with hell every night, the only reason I did not perish in the way I chose is the fact that I was *“preserved for Jesus Christ”* from eternity (Jude 1). Nothing else can satisfactorily explain why my actions did not result in my death. — *“And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”*

Oh the wonders of God’s distinguishing love toward me as the highly favored object of his mercy, by which he hedged me about and kept me (Hosea 1:6), when I had no awareness of his love for me, when I was utterly unconscious of the fact that he was watching over me and performing all things for me (Psalm 57:2), preserving me unto the day that he would call me by his grace! **Hawker asked** with astonishment, “Who shall count the sum of distinguishing mercy, in preserving and upholding providences, during the whole of an unconverted state?”— *“And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”*

Then, after he called me by his grace, giving me life and faith, salvation and forgiveness in Christ, how magnificently he has continued to uphold and preserve me from all evil, sparing my life in the midst of one

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one sickness and then another! Why has he spared me? Why do I still reside in this tabernacle? I am convinced that there is no other reason but this: — “*And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*”

All around me I see multitudes dying and dead in trespasses and sins, unawakened, unconcerned, unregenerated. I understand, (O Spirit of God remind me constantly!), that **I have been spared, that I live to “declare the works of the Lord”** (Psalm 118:17). — “*And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*” God give me grace to proclaim with earnestness the glorious gospel of Your dear Son. **To tell all who can be reached by my voice, and pen, and influence of the wonders of redeeming love.** — “*Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul*” (Psalms 66:16). — “*And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*” Tonight, I want to tell you, as simply and plainly as I can “*what he hath done for my soul.*” I am going to tell you what the Lord God has done for my soul in twelve statements, twelve statements taken directly from the pages of Holy Scripture; but these twelve statements found in the Book of God are statements describing my own soul’s experience. I know this will be a blessing to you, because if you are the Lord’s, as I make these twelve statements, they will sound like the echo of your own soul’s experience. — We do not all experience grace the same way; but we do all experience the same grace.

Rather than giving them to you in the order of their occurrence, or in the order of their experience, I want to give you these twelve statements, by which I will tell you what the Lord God has done for my soul in the order in which they are found in Holy Scripture. We will begin in 2 Samuel 6:21.

1. **The Lord chose me.**

(2 Samuel 6:21) “And David said unto Michal, *It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD.*”

He chose me...

- Unto Salvation
- To be His Servant

2. **He has made an everlasting covenant with me.**

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(2 Samuel 23:5) “Although my house *be* not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all *things*, and sure: for *this is* all my salvation, and all *my* desire, although he make *it* not to grow.”

3. **The Lord has dealt bountifully with me.**

(Psalms 13:6) “I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.”

4. **He healed me.**

(Psalms 30:2) “O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.”

5. **It is the Lord God who has kept me alive.**

(Psalms 30:2) “O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.”

6. **The Lord God, my Savior, has redeemed me.**

(Psalms 31:5) “Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”

7. **He performs all things for me.**

(Psalms 57:2) “I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth *all things* for me.”

8. **How often he has revived and quickened my dead, languishing heart by his grace!**

(Psalms 119:50) “*This is* my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.”

(Psalms 119:93) “I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me.”

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9. **The Lord graciously and continually comforts me.**

(Isaiah 12:1) “And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.”

(Isaiah 40:1-2) “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
(2) Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.”

10. **At the appointed time of love, he called me by his grace.**

(Galatians 1:15-16) “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called *me* by his grace, (16) To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:”

11. **He loved me!**

(Galatians 2:20-21) “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (21) I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

12. **And, last, but not least, “the Lord stood with me.”**

(2 Timothy 4:17) “Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.”

Amen.