

Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

Jonathan Edwards

'Text'

'Their foot shall slide in due time.' Deuteronomy 32:35

Implications of Text

1. That they were *always exposed* to destruction.
2. It implies that they were *always exposed* to *sudden unexpected* destruction.
3. Another thing implied is that they are *liable to fall of themselves*.
4. That *the reason why they are not fallen already*, and don't fall now, is only that *God's appointed time is not come*.¹

'Doctrine'

Nothing keeps wicked men, at any one moment, out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God.

Clarification

'mere pleasure of God.'

Considerations:

- I. There is no want of power in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment.
- II. They deserve to be cast into hell
- III. They are already under a sentence of condemnation to hell.
- IV. They are objects of anger and wrath like that expressed in hell
- V. The devil stands ready to seize them as his own when God permits.
- VI. There are in the souls of wicked men those hellish principles reigning, that would presently kindle and flame out into hell fire, if it were not for God's restraints.
- VII. It is no security to wicked men for one moment, that there are no visible means of death at hand.
- VIII. Natural men's prudence and care to preserve their own lives don't secure 'em a moment.
- IX. All wicked men's pains and contrivance they use to escape hell and rejecting Christ, don't secure 'em from hell.
- X. God has laid himself under no obligation by any promise to keep any natural man out of hell one moment.

Application

To Awaken the unconverted persons in this congregation.

You are Unaware ...

You probably are not sensible of this;

... this is the Reality

Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf

God's Wrath

The wrath of God is *like great waters*.

The *bow of God's wrath is bent*, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood.

¹ Gallagher, 'Some Unfinished Business', 205.

Implication

Thus are all you that never passed under a great change of heart.

Response to Your Objection

However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it.

Description of God's Wrath

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked;

Plea

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in.

Consider God's Wrath

Whose wrath it is: the wrath of the infinite God.

'Tis the fierceness of his wrath that you are exposed to.

The misery you are exposed to is that which God will inflict to that end, that he might show His everlasting wrath.

How Dreadful a State ...

... of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath, and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation, that has not been born again, however moral / strict / sober / religious they may be.

An Extraordinary Opportunity to Receive Mercy ...*For the Old*

Are there not many here that have lived long in the world, that are not to this day born again, and so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and have done nothing ever since they have lived, but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath?

For the Young

And you that are young men, and young women, will you neglect this precious season that you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities, and flocking to Christ?

For Children

And you children that are unconverted, don't you know that you are going down to hell, to bear the dreadful wrath of that God that is now angry with you every day, and every night?

For All

And let everyone that is yet out of Christ, and hanging over the pit of hell, now hearken to the loud calls of God's Word and providence.

Flee God's Wrath

Therefore let everyone that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come ... lest you be consumed [Genesis 19:17].