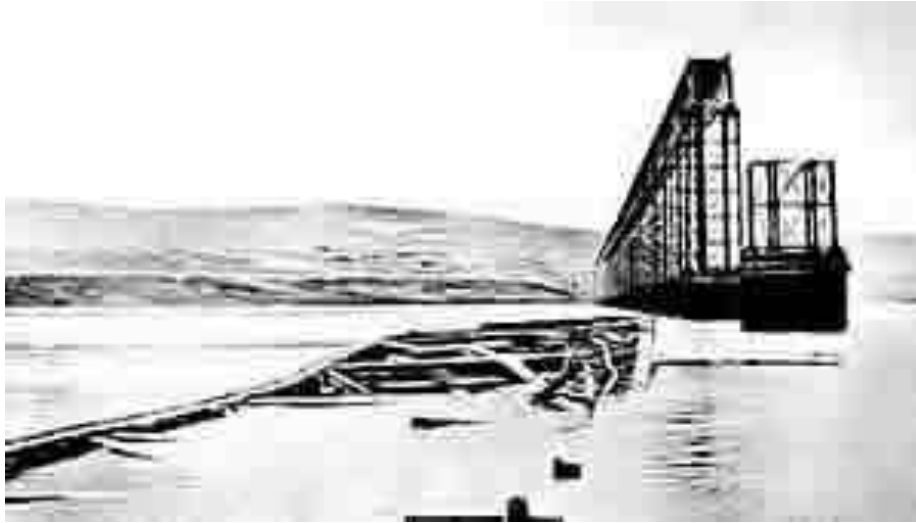


The Tay Bridge Disaster



One December night, during a severe windstorm, a passenger train traveling from Edinburgh to Dundee, Scotland, sped down the tracks. At 7:14 pm it passed the railroad station near the great Tay Bridge. This bridge crossed a large inlet of the ocean called the Firth of Tay. The station master watched the train pass. He saw the red sparks shoot out of the smokestack only to be swiftly blown away by the wind. He saw the lurid red glow of light from the back of the locomotive as the stoker shoveled coal into the firebox of the engine. He watched each of the six passenger cars pass in quick succession. The interiors of the passenger cars were illuminated by oil lamps. In the blur of the rushing train he could see the silhouettes of the many passengers. He could make out the men in their bowler hats and also several women in their wider brim hats tied down by scarves.

The Tay Bridge was the longest bridge in the world during its day. It was nearly two miles long. It had a total of 85 cast iron spans that sat on as many columns made out of masonry and concrete. Some of the spans were almost 250 feet long. Sections of the bridge were 80 feet above the water to allow large ocean going ships to pass under it. Thomas Boucher was the celebrated engineer who built the bridge. He was later knighted for this service to his country.

Little did anyone on the train know they would pass into eternity before they crossed the bridge. Have you ever stopped to think how short life is? For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Surely eternity which is at the exit terminal of this life is not far from any one of us. God has given us the single span of a lifetime to cross before we are there. In the span he has given us, we must come to Christ as Lord and Savior if we are ever going to enter into heaven. Those who fail to do so will be swallowed up into a horrible eternity of darkness. These shall be cast into outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

What must you do to pass into the outer darkness when you die? Nothing, just continue to travel through life never caring that the Lord Jesus loves you and went all the way to the cross that you might be saved.

What must you do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. He will save you the moment you put your faith in him. Even now he is watching you to see what you will do with the gospel message.

The station master was also watching as the train pulled on to the bridge. He watched as it traveled across the many spans of the bridge, and soon in the distant darkness he could no longer see the form of the train or the outline of the bridge. All he could see was the faint glow of the lights of the train as it moved along. When the train was on the middle of the bridge all of its lights abruptly went out and the whole scene was swallowed up in darkness. Alarmed by the sudden disappearance of the lights the station master tried to telegraph the station at the other end of the bridge to find out what had happened.

However, the message wouldnt go through because the telegraph line which ran along the bridge had been broken. Thinking something terrible must have happened, the station master put on his foul weather gear and took a lantern and went out into the night to see for himself.

The wind was so fierce that at times he had to crawl on the bridge to avoid being blown off. He went a long distance before he made a shocking discovery. The entire mid section of the Tay Bridge had disappeared. Carefully he crawled to the edge of the last standing section and held his lantern over it and peered into the darkness below. Somewhere down there was the train with all the people on board but all he could see was the black wind-driven waves.

Seventy-five people perished on the train when the Tay Bridge collapsed. Multitudes of people in todays world are in danger of perishing because they havent believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

A powerful steam engine pulled the train to the disaster on the bridge. What is the driving force that is keeping so many people from hearing the gospel and believing on the Lord Jesus? The answer isnt particular views of science, or false religions, or faulty philosophies. Those are more like cars that are being pulled along than the driving force itself. I will tell you what this driving force is. Deep down in the heart of man, in the heart which is the well-spring of all his actions, he has been afflicted with a terrible malady. A dreadful disease called sin has entered his heart and makes him rebel against his Maker.

Sin which takes many shapes and forms is pulling men away from God and away from hearing the message of his grace. It is the awful force in the heart driving him away from God into the darkness of eternal night.

In the Bible the word sin sometimes refers to acts of disobedience to Gods will. Other times the word sin refers to the nature of enmity in the heart of man that produces those acts of disobedience. The source is more terrible by far than any acts it produces. Each one of us has committed acts of sin and is guilty before God. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And each one of us has a sinful nature. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it.

Not withstanding all this, God loves us, and sent his Son to be our Savior. The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. What does each man or woman need to do because of the terrible problem of sin? They need to repent. God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. To repent means to pass the same judgment on yourself that God has already passed on you. In his perfect knowledge and understanding,

He sees you as a ruined, lost, and undone sinner, completely unable to save yourself. You must see yourself this way too. This is what true repentance means. True repentance always leads to faith in The Lord Jesus for salvation. Jesus Christ alone is the Great Physician that can heal the sin-sick soul. He is the Savior for mankind. There is no other place or person in the entire universe to look for help for the problem of sin.

Jesus Christ is the Savior of sinners, because at the cross he was made the supreme sacrifice for sins. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed. When a sinner comes to the Lord Jesus, their transgressions and iniquities are gone forever, because the Lord Jesus paid the ultimate price of death for them. Through the great work on the cross, sinners can find peace and healing. The peace he gives is deep and lasting. No other peace in the world compares to it. Peace I leave with you, the Savior said, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. The healing of soul begins the moment a person trusts him for the forgiveness of sins and continues until they are taken up into heaven where never again will they experience a thought or wish unholy. Their hearts, completely healed, will be able to experience the joys of heaven which earthly words can only begin to describe. These joys they knew in part on earth but in heaven they will know them in a wonderful fullness. Wont you come to the Great Physician of the human soul so that such a bright and happy eternity will be yours?

The train passed on and perished in the darkness that night. Dont let yourself continue to be driven by sin until you perish into everlasting darkness but come to him who said, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Come while there is yet time.