



## **SATAN'S CRUEL LIE AGAINST OUR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER**

In religious instruction for children written some years ago is found this word picture of hell:

"Look into this little prison. In the middle of it there is a boy, a young man. He is silent; despair is on him. He stands straight up. His eyes are burning like two burning coals. Two long flames come out of his ears. His breathing is difficult. Sometimes he opens his mouth and a breath of blazing fire rolls out of it. But listen! There is a sound just like that of a kettle boiling. Is it really a kettle which is boiling? No; then what is it?

Hear what it is. The blood is boiling in the scalded veins of that boy. The brain is boiling and bubbling in his head. The marrow is boiling in his bones! Ask him, put the question to him, why is he thus tormented? His answer is, that when he was alive, his blood boiled to do very wicked things, and he did them, and it was for that he went to dancing-houses, public-houses, and theatres. Ask him, does he think the punishment greater than he deserves? 'No,' he says, 'my punishment is not greater than I deserve, it is just. I knew it not so well on earth, but I know now that it is just. There is a just and terrible God. He is terrible to sinners in hell—but He is just!' -J. FURNISS, "The Sight of Hell," Tracts for Spiritual Reading, sec. 27, p. 20.

It is indeed astonishing what people may be led to believe in the name of religion. It is yet more unbelievable how responsible high churchmen feel free to pass favorable judgment upon such teaching as the above. One leader wrote, "I have carefully read over this Little Volume for Children and have found nothing whatever in it contrary to the doctrines of Holy Faith; but, on the contrary, a great deal to charm, instruct and edify our youthful classes, for whose benefit it has been written."-WILLIAM MEAGHER, Vicar General, Dublin, December 14, 1855.

What far-reaching responsibility does man take upon himself!

## **THE TRUTH ABOUT THREE WORDS FOR HELL**

In the Bible our English word hell has three meanings:

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1. Hell sometimes means the "grave." The Hebrew word widely used for "grave" is sheol. In Psalm 16:10 we have it rendered "hell," referring to the grave. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou subtler thine Holy One to see corruption." In Acts 2:27 this scripture is quoted by Peter. In this verse the Greek word for "hen" is hades. Its meaning is "grave," the same as sheol in the Hebrew. As you know, the New Testament was originally written in Greek. In Acts 2:31, Peter definitely says that Psalm 16:10, the verse we speak of, refers to Christ's resurrection. Christ was not left in "hell," that is, not in the grave, but was raised from the dead. The word hades is used eleven times in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 15:55 it is translated "grave." Otherwise it is translated "hell," signifying the grave or state in the grave.

2. Hell also signifies a "place of burning." In the New Testament the word is "Gehenna," or the "Valley of Hinnom," described as "a deep, narrow glen south of Jerusalem, where, after the introduction of the fire gods of Ahaz, the idolatrous Jews offered their children to Molech." In this Valley of Hinnom, the bodies of dead animals and the refuse of the city were cast. Fires burned continuously, and worms infested the carcasses of animals. What the fire did not destroy the worms consumed. It thus was a type of complete annihilation. Gehenna, the place of burning, is used twelve times, being translated "hell"

3. The third meaning of the word hell is found in 2 Peter 2:4. "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The Greek word here is tartaros, not Gehenna or hades. The text above pictures it as a place of darkness, a fit representation of the darkness that enshrouded Satan and his angels when they were separated from God and heaven.

### **WHERE DO ALL MEN GO AT DEATH?**

All men go to the grave at death, that is, to hades or sheol. Said Job, "I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living." Job 30:23. This house of death is the grave. "If I wait, the grave is mine house." Job 17:13.

This hell is an impartial one. "There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked." Ecclesiastes 9:2. "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave [sheol]?" Psalm 89:48. The rich and poor, the high and low, the righteous and the wicked-all meet in that abode.

Into the grave have gone the vilest characters who have ever lived, and its portals have opened to receive the loveliest and sweetest mortals who ever graced the earth. Of these latter Isaac Watts sang:

"Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb;  
Take this new treasure to thy trust  
And give these sacred relics room,  
To slumber in thy silent dust."

Yes, death is an enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26), and the grave is not a comforting consolation, but we thank God that "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Revelation 14:13. And we may also rejoice that the wicked slumber in silence rather than scream in torture and agony. There is no pain in the grave.

### **WHEN WILL THE RIGHTEOUS DEAD COME OUT OF HADES?**

The righteous dead will come out of their graves at the sound of the "last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." I Corinthians 15:52. This is at the second coming of Christ when "the Lord himself shall descend. . . with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

Christ's promise of His glorious return to gather His chosen ones unto Himself (John 14:1-3) will someday be fulfilled. At the sound of the "trump of God" the saints who have slept in silence, unconscious of the passing of time, will suddenly be awakened. Some have slumbered for thousands of years; others have had only a brief rest in the grave. To all, the time will seem the same—just as a moment, or as the "twinkling of an eye." They will come forth, their faces glowing with joy, health, and immortality, and go to their heavenly home.

### **WHEN WILL THE WICKED DEAD COME OUT OF HADES?**

There is to be, as Paul states, "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Acts 24:15.1.

The wicked, or unjust, do not rise from their graves until one thousand years after the resurrection of the righteous. "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5.

### **WHERE WILL THE WICKED BE CAST?**

When the wicked are resurrected, they, together with the devil, death, and the grave, will be cast into the lake of fire (verses 10-15). This is the "Gehenna," the burning hell.

Peter declares that the Lord knows how to "reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2:9. Also that the earth itself is "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment" (2 Peter 3:7), and that "the elements shall melt with fervent heat" 2 Peter 3:10.

According to John the revelator fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours the wicked (including the devil, death, and the grave) in a "lake of fire." This is called the "second death." Revelation 20:9.14.

Since the wicked perish in this burning Gehenna, and the earth itself becomes a

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molten lake of fire, we understand more clearly the Bible statement that the wicked will be recompensed in the earth (Proverbs 11:31), and also that "they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath." Job 21:30. Jesus Himself said that "the tares are the children of the wicked one," and "as therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world" Matthew 13:38, 40.

This gives us ample evidence to believe that the fiery hell is yet future, and at this present moment not a single, solitary sinner is burning in hell. Thank God for that.

### **ALL OF MAN CAST INTO THIS FIRE**

Nine times Jesus warns of the "burning" hell, the "Gehenna" hell.

In Matthew 10:28 He said, "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Again He counseled, "It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire," or "having two eyes to be cast into hell fire." Matthew 18:8, 9.

This makes it clear that the whole man, soul and body, is cast into hell fire. Since the body goes into the grave at death, and since there is no fire in the grave, again we see that the burning hell is yet future; If God takes "no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezekiel 33:11), and has reserved them unto the day of judgment to be punished, why should we wish to rush them off to hell as soon as they die? Why are some so bent on believing that God has literally billions of wicked souls roasting in a fiery coffin of hell?

### **HOW LONG WILL THE GEHENNA HELL BURN?**

The Gehenna hell will burn until "both soul and body" are destroyed. "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body." Matthew 10:28.

"The day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. . . . For they shall be ashes." Malachi 4:1-3.

This hell will burn until the wicked are devoured [Revelation 20:9]. This is the "second death"-not everlasting, burning life (verse 14).

It is perfectly plain that the wicked are going to be completely destroyed. This will be the second death. At the first death the wicked go into the grave. The second death marks the end of the sinner, the end of death, and the end of the grave. God is forever through with sin, sinners, death, and the grave.

When the work of burning and complete destruction is over, the fire does not necessarily keep burning for all time. The expression "for ever and ever" in Revelation 14:11 and Revelation 20:10 means "continuous, with no cessation," and may signify a long time or a shorter time. These are two texts that must be understood in the light of

the abundant testimony of the Bible, to mean that the wicked will be annihilated. Eternal life endures forever. Eternal death (the second death) lasts forever. Those who suffer the second death will be destroyed by eternal fire. Jesus declared, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." Matthew 25:46. Notice, it does not say "punishing," but "punishment," and has reference to the result rather than to the method.

If you will read Exodus 21:2,6, you will find that "for ever" may mean only as long as man lives. Jonah said that he was shut , If in the great fish and "the earth with her bars was about me forever." Jonah 2:6. Yet he was in this strange abode only three days.

### **WHAT IS THIS KIND OF FIRE CALLED?**

The fire of this future hell is called "everlasting," or eternal. These shall go away into everlasting punishment" Matthew 25:46,

Sodom and Gomorrah are examples of how this kind of fire works. We read Jude 7: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah ...are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire,"

How did this eternal, or everlasting, fire affect these cities? Please note, "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, . . . making them an ensample unto those that after mould live ungodly." 2 Peter 2:6,

What more could be said! Both Jude and Peter set forth the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah as an example of destruction by "eternal" fire. The result was "ashes." Are the fires of these cities still burning? No.

The fire of hell is also spoken of as being unquenchable. "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," Mark 9:44.

Because of continued Sabbath desecration by the Jews, God threatened the destruction of Jerusalem by a fire that "shall not be quenched" Jeremiah 17:27, The record of the destruction is found in Jeremiah 52:12, 13.

Jerusalem is not still burning today. "Unquenchable" fire is fire that cannot be put out until it has consumed everything. It burns everything up and then burns out. In the same way shall the wicked be destroyed.

The "worm [that] dieth not," is a figure taken from the refuse dump in the Valley of Hinnom before mentioned. What the fire did not destroy the worms devoured, It is a symbol of complete destruction.

The wicked "shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 16. "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be," Psalm 37:10. When hell has burned out there will be less left of sinners

than there is of Sodom and Gomorrah today. Their ashes will become a part of the very ground upon which the righteous tread (Malachi 4:3),

### **GOD'S BETTER WAY**

God never intended that any man should ever suffer in hell. It was "prepared for the devil and his angels," Matthew 25:41. If we are ever cast into that place of final destruction, it will be because we did not cast ourselves upon the mercy and grace of God or because we held back the full surrender of our hearts to Him.

God never purposed for men to believe that He operates brimstone concentration camp, under the direction of the devil. The dead, good and bad, rest in silent slumber. There is no Consciousness, no pain. Resurrection day is coming. Those who sleep in Christ will be raised to reign with Him. The wicked will be raised for the execution of final penalty. Then sin and sinners will be no more.

"No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. One reminder alone remains: our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. Says the prophet, 'He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of His power.'

Through the eternal ages the wound of Calvary will show forth His praise, and declare His power." The Great Controversy, p. 674.

A woman who was sharply denouncing the Bible said, "I'm going to heaven whether God wants me there or not." The simple truth is that God will not close the door of heaven to any soul who could be happy there. All who reach hell would be dissatisfied in heaven. That is why we must prepare for heaven now.

In a foxhole, by a hidden light, a soldier wrote, "The shells are exploding so near they shake my paper as I write. . . . Sometimes I wonder if my world will ever again be filled with peace and quiet, with laughter and love. If only for a little while, I want to go home."

In the human breast God has planted a deep desire for the heavenly home. The warfare of earth will one day be past, and Christ will come again. When darkness overshadowed the cruel cross, and the outlook was black, the suffering Saviour took time to say to a repentant thief, "Thou shalt be with me in paradise."

"Through the gates to the city, in a robe of spotless white,  
He will lead me where no tears shall ever fall;  
In the glad song of ages I shall mingle with delight;  
But I long to meet my Saviour first of all."  
Fanny J. Crosby