



HELL, JUDGMENT & The LAKE of FIRE

By Dr. James Rasbeary

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**“Hell is the most awful
reality in the universe.”**

Dr. James Rasbeary

Chapter One

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT



(Rev 20:11-15) "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. {12} And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. {13} And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. {14} And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Our text records the saddest and most somber scene in all the Word of God. The mind can scarcely imagine countless multitudes of people standing in the presence of a holy and just God, where they are

judged according to their works. Yet each and every one of them will be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, separated forever from God and heaven, where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. The mind recoils from this startling scene – yet it is the revelation of God concerning what we call the GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT.

The Bible teaches a definite separation of the *saved* and the *unsaved* concerning the resurrection, judgment, and eternity:

1. There will be two separate resurrections.

There will be a *resurrection of life* for the saved, and a *resurrection of damnation* for the lost. The second resurrection is that of the unsaved, and will occur at the Great White Throne Judgment.

2. There are two separate destinations in eternity for the saved and unsaved: heaven or hell/the lake of fire.

3. There will be two separate judgments for the saved and unsaved.

The judgment of the unsaved is referred to as the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). Not one saved person will be judged there. This judgment is entirely for the unsaved. As a child of God, I will never be

judged for my sins because Jesus Christ was judged and punished in my place.

The Great White Throne Judgment is not to determine who is allowed to enter into heaven. Every person at the Great White Throne Judgment will be cast into the lake of fire forever. There are no second chances to be saved after death. This terrible judgment should melt the heart of Christians and compel us to greater effort to win lost souls to Jesus Christ!

I. THE SECOND RESURRECTION.

The Great White Throne Judgment is immediately following the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, and the rebellion of Gog and Magog under the leadership of Satan. The lost people of the Millennium will be destroyed by fire (Rev. 20:9) and Satan will be cast into his eternal home, the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

Immediately, a “great white throne” appears, and everything else disappears. The earth fled away. The heaven (outer space) disappeared. They are utterly destroyed by fire.

- **(2 Pet 3:10-13) "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,**

the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. {11} Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, {12} Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? {13} Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The Bible does teach a "Big Bang" – but it happens at the end of time, not the beginning. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise." All the elements of the created universe will melt with fervent heat, and the earth will be burned up. The starry heavens will also be dissolved. No one but God could do this! God can light a match and melt the universe!

The great white throne is seen. Who is sitting on this Throne? The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, as the Judge of all the earth:

- **(John 5:22-23) "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: {23} That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."**

- **(John 5:27-29) "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. {28} Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, {29} And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."**
- **(Acts 17:31) "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."**

The world must stand before the Jesus Christ, their Creator, and the One Who would gladly have been their Redeemer. They must stand before the One Whose precious, saving name they have used as a term of profanity. They must stand before they One that they mocked and blasphemed. They must stand before the One that they rejected.

Our text verses are found in Revelation chapter twenty. However, this is not the first time that this Throne has appeared in the Book of Revelation. The same Throne was seen earlier in Revelation chapter 4, when John was given his first glimpse of heaven.

- (Rev 4:2-4) And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. (3) And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. (4) And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Both passages describe the same Person on the same Throne. However, some things are very different. In chapter four, the Lord Jesus Christ, surrounded by the *saved* (pictured by the twenty-four elders), was described as **“like a jasper and a sardine stone”** which are **red** and **white**, respectively. The red color pictures the blood of Christ and God’s mercy. The white pictures God’s perfect holiness and purity. The **emerald rainbow** forming a complete circle around the throne is a picture of God’s promise of eternal life. The saved are seated in the presence of Jesus Christ because of the blood of Jesus Christ and the eternal promise of God concerning everlasting life.

However, at the final Judgment the only color seen is **white**. The red is gone because the blood of Christ has no efficacy for those who have not received Jesus as Saviour. Though Christ died for all men and all men

can be saved by the blood, each person must take advantage of that propitiation or atonement by his personal faith in Jesus Christ. There is no mercy at the Great White Throne Judgment:

- **Hebrews 10:28-31** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: (29) Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? (30) For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. (31) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The green rainbow is also gone from the scene in Revelation 20. The rainbow was a reminder of God's promises to the saved. However, these lost souls do not have a single promise from God to claim. They have "*no hope*" (Eph. 2:12).

- **(Rev 20:12-13)** "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books,

according to their works. {13} And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

These billions of people are called "the dead." This does not mean that they are "zombies," but refers to their spiritual condition before God. They are spiritually "**dead in trespasses and sins**" (Eph 2:1). Death *never* refers to annihilation. A dead person does not cease to exist. These people standing before God have never ceased to exist. They were alive physically, but dead spiritually. When they died physically while unsaved, they began to die eternally. Death simply took them out of the physical realm into eternity.

The Bible is clear: **(Rom 6:23) "For the wages of sin is death..."** The wages of sin are plural because there are two deaths in the Bible. God told Adam - **(Gen 2:17) "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."** "Thou shalt surely die" in Hebrew gives the sense of "dying thou shalt die," implying a double-death. These two deaths could be described as *eventual death* (physical) and *eternal death* (the lake of fire).

This is exactly the condition of a lost sinner. He is born spiritually dead and physically dying. Every baby

born is born dying. All of us are dying right now. It may take a hundred years, but we are all dying.

If a person is not “born again” (John 3:7), and dies physically while dead spiritually, he will suffer the “second death” which is eternal death in hell and the lake of fire. When a sinner is born again, he is no longer spiritually dead. He is “quickened” (Eph. 2:1) or made alive again. He is still dying physically, but he is no longer dead spiritually. He is spiritually alive. Should he die physically, he will be immediately with the Lord in heaven (2 Cor. 5:6-8; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).

A sinner does not have to die for his sins. On the cross, Jesus Christ ***“died for our sins”*** (1 Cor. 15:3). The wages of sin was paid by Jesus Christ on the cross – and paid in full! He not only died physically, but He died spiritually. He was separated from God and cried out, ***“My God (the Father), my God (the Holy Spirit), why hast thou forsaken me?”*** He also suffered the equivalent of an eternity in hell as God poured out His wrath on Him (Mt. 26:39 with Rev. 14:10 and 16:19). This does not mean that Jesus died and went to hell, as some teach. Before He died physically, He had already suffered the wrath of God, and could say, ***“It is finished” (John 19:30)***. As one old preacher explained that on the cross, “Jesus dipped His soul in hell.” He suffered the equivalent of my eternity in hell. Only an eternal Saviour could do this.

All forms of death are seen in the graphic prophecy of Isaiah 53:

1. Physical death and suffering - **(Isa 53:5) "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."**
2. Spiritual death and separation from God - **(Isa 53:6) "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."**
3. Death under the wrath of God - **(Isa 53:10-11) "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. {11} He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."**

However, the people at the Great White Throne Judgment were not partakers of His salvation. Though Christ died for them all, it was in vain.

The dead are spiritually brought out of hell, while their bodies are resurrected from the sea and the

grave to stand before God. The fact that they are **“delivered up” “to stand before God”** implies that they are resurrected in new bodies. However, these are not glorified bodies such as the saved have. The saved are resurrected in bodies like that of our Lord (1 John 3:2).

Very little information is given about the physical bodies of the unsaved at the second resurrection. Concerning the resurrected saved, we find:

- **(1 Cor 15:42-44) "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: {43} It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: {44} It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."**

The resurrected saved are resurrected in bodies that are incorruptible, glorious, and spiritual. In addition, the saved are said to bear the image of the heavenly. **(1 Cor 15:49) "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."** The saved are permanently delivered from the corruption of their sinful natures.

We can then safely assume that the resurrected unsaved will have corrupt, dishonorable, carnal bodies which still bear the image of the “earthy.” In other words, the unsaved will still have the same sinful

natures that they were born with. They will still have the same sinful desires and lusts. The drunkard will spend eternity lusting over a drop of alcohol. The addict will spend eternity in withdrawal. The second resurrection does not change the nature of the sinner, except that his new body will be indestructible. He will continue to suffer throughout all eternity. His body will be tormented but not destroyed (Luke 16:24; Rev. 19:20; 20:10).

II. THE SECOND JUDGMENT.

The dead must stand before God and be judged. God's divine library will be opened, and they will be judged according to the things found in those books. **(Rev 20:12) "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."**

What books will the unsaved be judged from? Let me give you some thoughts concerning ***God's Divine Library***:

1. The book of witness.

- **(Rom 1:18-20) "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; {19} Because that**

which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. {20} For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse..."

God has left witnesses to Himself in this world. (Acts 14:17). Creation is a tremendous witness of the existence of God, as well as many of His attributes. In fact, God's revelation of Himself to this world is so complete that man is left "without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).

2. The book of conscience.

- **(Rom 2:14-15) "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: {15} Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"**

Man has a built-in alarm called a conscience, which gives him an instinctive knowledge of right and wrong. When a man goes against his conscience, he is sinning and knows it.

3. The book of opportunity.

When people have the opportunity to get saved and reject Christ, God will hold that opportunity against them at the Judgment:

- **(Mat 10:14-15) "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. {15} Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city."**
- **(Mat 11:21-24) "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. {22} But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. {23} And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. {24} But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."**
- **(Mat 12:37) "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."**

Every sermon, witness, tract, book, or opportunity to be saved has been recorded. Every refusal to receive Christ is recorded. Those who have had the most opportunity to be saved, and refused, will receive the worst judgment. Why? Because from God's viewpoint, the worst sin that man can commit is to reject His beloved Son. He views this as treading His Son under foot and despising His shed blood as an unholy thing (see Hebrews 10:26-30).

The sinner's own words have been recorded to be used against him. *"I'm too busy."* *"I'm not interested."* *"I have my own religion."* *"I don't believe the Bible."* All of these statements and many more will condemn many millions who turned down the gospel invitation (Luke 14:18-24).

4. The book of response.

➤ **(Rom 2:8-9) "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, {9} Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;"**

How did they respond to the truth? Were they contentious? Rebellious? Those who reject the truth to **"obey unrighteousness"** have earned for

themselves **“indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.”**

5. The book of offenses.

- **(Rom 2:6) "Who will render to every man according to his deeds..."**
- **(Rom 2:16) "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."**
- **(Mat 16:27) "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."**

Every sinful thought, action, imagination, deed, or word will be brought to the light for judgment. Every secret sin that never saw the light of day will be brought out for judgment. Every sin that man “got away with” is going to be dredged out for judgment.

6. The Book of God.

- **(Rom 3:19-20) "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. {20} Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."**

Man will be judged by the Word of God. The Book that has been banned, burned, banished, and blasted by this world will one day be used to judge this world. The Bible's final verdict will be GUILTY. There will be no arguing or appeal at the Judgment. **"Every mouth" will "be stopped."**

7. The Lamb's Book of Life.

It is the final Book which will end the case. **(Rev 20:12) "...and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."**

➤ **(Rev 21:27) "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."**

How does one get his name in the Lamb's Book of Life? By being washed in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14)! By getting saved (Rev. 21:24, 27)! The Book of Life is the difference between heaven and hell. ***"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."***

I was guilty on all accounts in all those books – except one. My name is in the Book of Life because I am washed in the blood of the Lamb. I was just as sinful and guilty as anyone, but my

name is in the Book of Life. That is the difference. People do not go to hell because they are sinners. They go to hell because their name is not in the Book of Life. The only difference between a saved sinner and a lost sinner is JESUS CHRIST.

III. THE SECOND DEATH.

- **(Rev 20:14) "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."**

Death is cast into the lake of fire. **(1 Cor 15:26) "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."** Death will no longer be a threat to the saved. Never again will we bury a loved one. Never again will the fear of death grip a child of God's heart. **(Rev 21:4) "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."**

Hell is cast into the lake of fire. Hell is no longer needed, because it has been emptied of lost souls, which are now in resurrected bodies. It is cast into the lake of fire, adding its fire and torments to that which is already there.

"This is the second death." The first death separated the body and soul *for a season*. The second death will separate the sinner from God *forever*. Never again will the lost soul see the face of God.

Never again will he see the light of divine presence (Ps. 49:19). He is utterly cut off and forgotten as though he never existed.

- **Isaiah 65:17** For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

If your mother is saved and you are not, in heaven she will forget that you were even born. God will wipe the memory from her mind, lest it bring her one moment's unhappiness in heaven. While you are burning forever, she will be rejoicing in heaven as though you had never been born.

The second death is stated to be a "lake of fire." As lakes have different depths, I believe that there may be different degrees of suffering in eternity. However, it is eternal torment.

- **(Rev 14:10-11)** "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: {11} And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his

image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."


- (Rev 20:10) "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

How can Christians read this and not weep? Immediately after this Judgment, we find tears in heaven. (Rev 21:4) "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

God will wipe the tears from our eyes, and the memories from our minds, but not until after we have witnessed the awful destiny of those who are without Christ. It is time that Christians "**awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame**" (1 Cor 15:34).

Chapter Two

HELL, JUDGMENT & THE LAKE OF FIRE



Those who have been gloriously saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ should not forget that while we are on our way to heaven, hundreds of millions of people on this earth are sliding down towards an eternity of fiery punishment, to be eternally lost. Hell is real. The lake of fire is real. Death is final.

Revelation 20 will not take place for at least 1007 years from now. After the Rapture will be the seven-year Tribulation period, followed by the millennial reign of Christ on the earth. During that 1000-year reign, Satan will be bound up and shut up in the bottomless pit, which is a part of hell. **(Isa 14:15) "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."** For 1000 years, Satan will be burning in hell with his fallen angels and the unsaved dead. This pit is called "*his prison*" in verse seven. For 1000 years, Satan will be in prison, unable to cause any trouble on

this earth while the Lord Jesus Christ reigns over the whole world from Jerusalem.

At the end of the 1000 years, Satan will be loosed out of prison, will gather a multitude of people together in one final rebellion, and will again be defeated. The people that rebelled against God will be killed by fire from heaven. Satan will be taken and cast into the lake of fire, which is the final and ultimate destination of every fallen angel and every lost sinner. Then comes the Great White Throne Judgment, which is the final judgment of every lost person.

It is important to understand that the places called hell and the lake of fire are **not** the same. Right now, hell is not the lake of fire – but one day, hell will be cast into the lake of fire and become a part of it.

Hell is the temporary prison of lost souls, where they await the final judgment. At the end of the world, hell will be emptied. Every lost soul will be brought out of hell and will stand before God to be judged. After that final judgment, every lost soul will be cast into the lake of fire. That will be their eternal abode, in what Jesus called **“everlasting punishment.”**

I. HELL.

First, we need to understand that hell is a real place. In Luke 16, the Lord Jesus told us a literal story

about a literal man in a literal hell. This was not a parable. It was a *revelation*. The Bible is perfectly clear that hell exists, that it is full of fire, and that people really do go there when they die. Denying the reality of hell does not change the temperature there one degree. Hell is the most awful reality in the universe.

We should understand that hell was not created for people, but for the devil and his fallen angels.

- **(Mat 25:41) "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels..."**

Hell is a prepared place for unprepared people. It was created and prepared for the punishment of the devil and those angels that chose to follow Satan instead of God. And Satan knows his destiny. He knows that he is destined for an eternity in everlasting punishment in hell and the lake of fire. He knows that there is nothing he can do to change it – so his only goal is to take as many people with him as possible.

The Bible calls hell a “prison” twice:

- **(1 Pet 3:19) "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison..."**
- **(Rev 20:7) "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison..."**

Angels in this fiery prison are bound in chains. This prison is in total darkness.

- **(2 Pet 2:4)** "For if 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..."
- **(Jude 1:6)** "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

I believe that the Bible is clear that hell is in the center of the earth. Heaven is always up; hell is always down. We know that the earth is filled with boiling fire and brimstone, as can be seen every time a volcano explodes and pours lava out on the earth. Hell is in the depths of the earth, in the lowest parts:

- **(Job 11:8)** "It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?"
- **(Prov 15:24)** "The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath."
- **(Amos 9:2)** "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down..."

The Bible is also clear that hell is a place of fire and terrible punishment. Despite what many religious leaders and false theologians are now declaring, the Word of God describes hell as having real fire. The first mention of hell in the Bible says that it is on fire. **(Deu 32:22) "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell..."** Jesus referred to the **"...danger of hell fire" (Mat 5:22)**. He also said that hell has a fire that **"never shall be quenched:"**

- **(Mark 9:43-48) "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: {44} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. {45} And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: {46} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. {47} And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: {48} Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."**

Jesus described it as everlasting fire and everlasting punishment: **(Mat 25:41, 46) "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from**

me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels... And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

Still, theologians and skeptics disagree. I ask, "Who should I believe? Men who have never seen eternity – or the testimony of a man in hell itself?" We do have a the recorded words of a man in hell. This man stated plainly that he was being tormented in fire:

- **(Luke 16:23-24) "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. {24} And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."**

Yes, hell has real fire. Remember that it was created for the punishment of the devil, not for men. Yet, that is where men will go if they die unsaved.

The Bible is also clear that death sends the lost sinner *immediately* to hell. Consider the rich man and Lazarus again: **(Luke 16:22-23) "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; {23} And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."**

Before they put the rich man's body in the grave, his soul was already in hell. While the local rabbi was reading a wonderful eulogy over the casket, the rich man was burning and crying out for a drop of water!

There are only two possible destinations in eternity: heaven or hell. There is no purgatory in the Bible. There is no limbo or soul-sleep. If you have been saved, you will be immediately with the Lord in heaven when you die. If you are lost, you will immediately be in hell.

Hell is also a place of eternal death, where the lost sinner dies and dies and dies but never ceases to exist. He is never annihilated. Dear friend, once a person is conceived, he will never cease to exist. He or she is an eternal creature. Those in hell never cease to exist. They die eternally.

What about the Lord's unusual statement concerning *"where their worm dieth not?"* Worms speak of corruption and decay. Bodies in the ground are eaten by worms as they corrupt (Job. 19:26). In the passage quoted earlier, Mark 9:43-48, hell was illustrated by the Jerusalem garbage dump, where trash and executed prisoners would be brought to be burned. They would pile the trash and bodies and burn them, but not before the worms began feeding on the dead bodies. However, the difference between hell and the garbage dump is clear – in hell, the fire is never quenched and the worms never die!

Could “*their worm*” refer to an unending corruption, continually **rotting** but never ceasing to exist? The glorified saints will be immortal and incorruptible, but those in hell will not. They will die and die and die and die, suffering eternal death, while their indestructible bodies rot and decay forever and ever! How horrible is the reality of hell!

Let me move on to say that the Bible is clear that there is always room in hell for one more. If you want to go to hell, there is always room:

- **(Prov 27:20) "Hell and destruction are never full..."**
- **(Isa 5:14) "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it."**

Let me say finally that the Bible is clear that once a person is in hell, hope is extinguished forever.

- **(Luke 16:24-26) "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. {25} But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted,**

and thou art tormented. {26} And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

The rich man had a revival in hell, but it was too late. He prayed and asked for mercy. He asked for comfort. But he found out too late that in hell:

- There is no mercy.
- There are no answered prayers.
- There is no comfort.
- There is no relief.
- There is no place of repentance.
- There is no hope!

In this lifetime, there is always hope! God is willing and able to save any sinner anywhere! But once this life is over, hope for the lost sinner is extinguished forever. How horrible is the reality of hell! What fool would choose to reject Christ when such an eternity will be the result?

II. JUDGMENT.

There is an appointment that every lost man will keep. **(Heb 9:27) "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment..."** This

judgment is described in Revelation 20: **(Rev 20:12)** **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."**

These lost sinners will be resurrected to stand before God. Their souls will be brought forth from hell, the temporary prison, to be reunited with resurrected, indestructible bodies, to stand before God in judgment. The Lord Jesus said that they will have souls and bodies. **(Mat 10:28)** **"...but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."**

These lost souls will have to stand before God and give an account for their lives. All of their secrets will be brought to light. All of their sins will be brought to the light. Everything they ever did, said, or desired will be revealed before the searching eye of a thrice-holy God. Lives will be tried by the perfect law of God as revealed in His Word.

"The wages of sin is death," and that includes the **"second death"** of Revelation 20:14. All of us, as sinners, have earned a place in the lake of fire. In fact, the Bible tells us that we are condemned already *(John 3:17-18)*.

What we need as sinners is a pardon. We have already been found guilty. God has already pronounced the verdict. Right now, God has opened a pardon that is free for all if they will simply acknowledge their sins and receive Jesus Christ as Saviour. Then, they will be pardoned and forgiven.

But if you will not acknowledge your sins; if you will not believe the testimony that God has given of His Son; if you will not by faith trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then you are deciding to stay on death row. You are choosing to stay with the condemned. And one day you will wish you had made the right decision.

In the final analysis, the reason that these lost souls are going to be cast into the lake of fire is because their names are not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life: **(Rev 20:15) "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**

Will there be "Christians" in hell?

What a startling thought! How dare I even suggest that there will be people in hell that claimed to be Christians? However, please consider what the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said:

- **(Mat 7:21-23) "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of**

heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. {22} Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? {23} And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

These people are going to stand at the Great White Throne Judgment and be surprised! They thought that they were going to heaven. They thought that they knew the Lord. They preached and worked in His name. They did "*many wonderful works.*" They thought that they were saved, but they were not! They were "Christians in name only." They were *professors*, but not *possessors*.

Perhaps these misguided souls in hell thought that they were in purgatory, paying for their sins. When they are resurrected and stand before God at the Judgment, I have no doubt that many of them will be expecting to enter into heaven, only to see the lake of fire spreading out before them. Then, they will realize that they had been deceived by a false gospel! How terrible that so many millions of souls have been deceived by a Church claiming to be "Christian!"

These beguiled souls will hear the fearful pronouncement of the Lord Jesus Christ, "**I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**"

Matthew 25:41, 46 gives the rest of the sad story: **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels... And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."**

Have you believed a false gospel? Is your Jesus the same as we find in the Word of God? Are you trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, with ALL your heart? Are you trusting in the sufficiency of His death, burial, and resurrection for your salvation?

Or are you trusting in a legalist gospel, a message of works – church membership, baptism, good works, being a good person, persevering, etc? You cannot trust in Jesus Christ with ALL your heart if you are also trusting in something or someone else! If you are trusting Jesus Christ 98% for salvation and baptism for the other 2%, your baptism will send you to hell. Jesus Christ either does ALL of the saving, or NONE of it!

I encourage you to repent of your unrighteousness, self-righteousness, and church-righteousness, and to trust Jesus alone so that He can give you HIS righteousness!

- **(Gal 2:16) "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the**

faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

III. THE LAKE OF FIRE.

The lake of fire is the final, eternal abode of the devil, his fallen angels, and condemned, lost humanity. **(Rev 20:14-15) "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. {15} And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**

Death will be cast into it, becoming part of it, making it a place of eternal death. Hell will be added to it, mixing its torments into that of the lake of fire.

What can we learn about this awful place?

1. This lake burns with fire and brimstone (Rev 19:20).
2. It is a place where the wrath of God is poured out with any mixture of grace or mercy. It is undiluted wrath (Rev 14:10-11).
3. The smoke of their torment will rise forever and ever (Rev. 14:11). There is no rest or relief.
4. It is a place where death is eternal but existence never ceases (Rev 19:20; 20:10). After 1000 years of burning, the beast and false prophet are still there and still suffering.

5. It is a place for wicked sinners as well as plain unbelievers (Rev 21:8). Among the murderers, idolaters, and sorcerers will be those who were simply “fearful” and “unbelieving.” Those who were afraid to get saved. Those who simply chose not to believe in Jesus will suffer the same eternity.

Do you say that this is not fair? Is it fair for you to say no to God’s gracious offer of salvation? Is it fair for you to turn up your nose at the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and say, “I don’t need that.” Is it fair for God to go through the trouble of providing a salvation so that you could reject it? I tell you, dear reader, that God’s judgment is always fair. In the eyes of God, the sin of rejecting His Son is as grievous as any other!

It has been my sad duty to describe to you the terrible destiny of the unsaved. However, it is also my joy to share God’s good news of salvation, pardon, and forgiveness of sins. God loves sinners, and has made a way for us to escape the damnation of hell, so that we might live forever with Him. He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the old cross for our sins. Jesus paid the wages of sin. He died for us. He paid the terrible price of redemption. Three days later, He was resurrected from the dead, a living

Saviour, and He has ascended back to the right hand of God the Father.

Now, any sinner on earth can have pardon, forgiveness, and salvation, if you will simply acknowledge your sins to God and, by faith, receive Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour.

Perhaps you would like to pray something like this from your heart:

“Dear God, I know that I am a sinner. I need to be saved. I know that my good works, church membership, baptism, and religion cannot save me. I ask you, based on the blood of Jesus Christ, to forgive me of my sins. Dear Jesus, please come into my heart. As best I know how, by faith I receive you as my personal Saviour. Amen.”

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16

If you have received Jesus Christ as your Saviour as a result of reading this booklet, or if it was a blessing or encouragement to you, please let us know.

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or,

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