

EXECUTED

TO SUPPRESS

HIS MESSAGE



Volume 5

Eternal Punishing in Hell

D. A. Taylor

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Volume 5: Eternal Punishing in Hell

By

D. A. Taylor

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D. A. Taylor

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Website: <https://www.christsreligion.com>

Author's E-Mail: dataylor@christsreligion.com

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Scripture quotations from the New American Standard Bible (NASB), unless otherwise noted.

Textual emphasis by the author.

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## Introduction

Welcome to Volume 5 of *Executed to Suppress His Message*.

In Volume 1 we saw how money-funded, institutionalized religions suppress the teachings of Jesus Christ, so they can promote their own particular doctrines and beliefs. And now with this volume, we continue to address these suppressed teachings.

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Many Christian churches place great emphasis on fearing God. Here are a few examples of the topics you might hear in sermons:

- God will sit in judgment over each of us;
- Because of His holiness, God must punish sinners;
- God hates sin and cannot fellowship with sinners;
- God carefully remembers every evil deed and word you have spoken;
- Being in the presence of God is fearful and terrifying;
- Without faith it's impossible to please God.

But all of these issues pale into insignificance when compared to Christianity's premier instrument of fear:

*The prospect of being tormented for all eternity in the fires of Hell.*

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1 — The Fiction of Hell

Christianity teaches:

That God condemns all those who have not repented and accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Then after death, the condemned are sent to Hell, where they will be tormented forever without end.

But Jesus Christ taught:

Absolutely nothing about eternal punishing in Hell. Instead, our Lord taught that those who refuse to repent will be punished with an eternal unconscious death.

The scene is a cold and cloudy winter day at the town cemetery, where the family and a few of Jacob Price's friends have gathered together at his memorial service. As Pastor Smith finishes his eulogy, the little group says goodbye and slowly shuffles away from the burial site.

A middle-aged woman quietly walks up to the preacher and says, "Pastor, could I have a word with you?" "Certainly," he replies. Amanda asks, "Pastor, what is going to happen to my father?" Pastor Smith looks at the ground for a few moments and then says, "Amanda, your mother and I have discussed this many times. And you know better than most how your Father was not a very nice man. He was a heavy drinker and a gambler. Your mother confided in how he cheated on her, and how he beat you and your sister. And Amanda, your father just would not change! On several occasions, your mother and I talked to him for hours, trying to help him see the error of his ways and to accept Christ. But as you know, he never did."

Amanda waited for a while and then repeated, "But what is *going to happen* to my father? What will God do to him?" After looking at the ground for a long time, the pastor finally responded: "Amanda, you know your father was a sinner — and a sinner who obstinately refused to repent. No matter what I said to him, he would not acknowledge God and accept Christ's sacrifice for his sins. And as I'm sure you know, the Bible says that because of his actions your father is now in Hell, where he will

spend eternity being punished for his rebellion against God.”

So Jacob Price’s daughter, with tears flowing down her face, slowly turned and walked away from the grave site. While Pastor Smith lowered his head, closed his eyes, and sadly pondered why so many Christians cannot understand the justice of God.

Most Christians Believe in Hell

The scene just described occurs hundreds of times a day, on virtually every day of the year. And most Christians completely agree with Pastor Smith: those who die without repenting and accepting Christ will spend eternity being punished for their sins.

A 2004 Gallup Poll¹¹¹ disclosed that 70% of all Americans believe in Hell. And as one might expect, this belief is highest among regular churchgoers, with 92% stating that God eternally torments unrepentant sinners.

According to traditional Christian theology, Hell is the place or state into which unrepentant sinners pass after their physical life. Basically, the Hell doctrine concludes that all men have sinned; therefore God must punish unsaved sinners in a never-ending, fiery torment. Theologians often refer to this punishment as the “justice of God.”

The Origins of Hell

The earliest Christian writings about Hell are found in 2nd Century literature (so why was nothing written for over 100 years?). And the doctrine has been around so long, that few Christians consider questioning it.

Once the doctrine of Hell got going, the institutionalized church viewed it as a strong incentive for Christians to lead a righteous life. It was the fear of judgment and Hell that led a terrified Martin Luther into his quest for spiritual enlightenment. While Hell was central to the Puritan Jonathan Edwards’ famous sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, and countless other fire and brimstone sermons since that time.

But for many potential Christians, Hell is a major stumbling block to accepting Christ. These people find the claim that God torments and burns people for all eternity so repulsive, they cannot accept that He can be loving, kind and merciful. Furthermore, the doctrine of Hell has caused many a seasoned Christian to walk away from the faith.

Do You *Want* Hell to be a Spiritual Reality?

Allow me to pose several questions about the doctrine of Hell — this belief that most Christians never seem to question:

- 1) As a Christian, do you wish for sinners to be tormented in Hell? Do you long to dwell with a God who tortures sinners for all eternity? And do you think it fair that God would eternally torment those who never even heard about Christ?
- 2) There are pastors who preach that once you are in Heaven, you will be able to see your friends and relatives suffering in Hell. And if indeed this were true, would you be able to enjoy the eternal bliss of Heaven, while watching your parents, grandparents, and deceased children, along with tens-of-billions of other people being tormented in Hell?
- 3) In [John 15:15](#), Jesus called His disciples “friends.” So do you desire fellowship with an infinitely powerful, intimate friend who is capable of eternally tormenting your unbelieving family and friends — and frankly, most of humanity? Would you feel safe and comfortable around such a Being? And would a God who is capable of dishing out such anguish be the kind of Deity you would want to worship, follow and have fellowship with for all eternity?

So I suspect that many Christians are secretly uncomfortable with the Hell doctrine. They're unable to look this teaching “directly in the eye,” because they're *scared to death* of a God who is capable of tormenting them for all eternity!

So God's people try to justify the existence of Hell, by believing that God is so holy and so righteous — and that He has so much hate for sin — that He must judge and punish all unrepentant sinners.

Incredibly, most Christians believe in a God who considers it more

important to punish sinners, than it is to reach out and try to save them!

So the average Christian goes along with the crowd, believing they have no option but to accept the reality that God will eternally torment most of humanity. Taking a pragmatic approach to Hell, they reason it's far better to quietly accept a God who operates a place of eternal torment, than it is to question Hell and risk being sent there.

Here is what you will learn in this volume:

- 1) The Bible — that same Bible you have in your home — does not support the doctrine of punishing sinners with eternal torment;
- 2) The early New Testament Church knew nothing about a place of eternal punishing for human beings;
- 3) Pagans invented the concept of Hell. It then was adopted by the Catholics, who later passed it on to Protestants;
- 4) Ancient Bible translators substituted the English word “hell” for words that had entirely different meanings. And they did this to support their humanly-devised doctrine of eternal punishing.

Question: If I could prove all of the above statements, would it change your opinion about Hell?

Probably not.

Are Christians Afraid of Questioning Hell?

Many years ago, I shared an article about Hell with friends. The subject was how the King James Bible modified various passages to support this doctrine of eternal punishing. One person read the paper and said, “Well, I prefer what pastor so-and-so says on this issue.” While the other readers weren't interested in the subject. For most of these people, the doctrine of Hell was not open for discussion.

So as I prepared to write this volume, I went to Google and typed in the phrase “hell is a lie.” And I used quotes so Google would search for this exact phrase. Google listed 364,000 articles and videos promoting the

idea that Hell is a myth — that it's not a factual Christian doctrine. Yet even with all this information at peoples' fingertips, Christians remain disinterested.

In Year 2012, the motion picture “Hellbound” was released. This movie has hours of testimony by pastors, theologians, and religious authors — experts who carefully document why the traditional teaching of Hell cannot be true. However, few Christians were interested in the movie; while most of those who watched it came away disbelieving its thesis. And now just a few years later, *Hellbound* rests in that large pile of forgotten movies.

After 1,500 years of churches promoting Hell, the doctrine is so deeply ingrained in Christians that most believe it spiritually dangerous to talk about it.

So I won't spend a lot of time discussing incorrect Bible translations, how pagan traditions of eternal punishing got into the church, or how Christian history proves that Hell was something associated with ancient worldly events (these issues are addressed later in Chapters 5 and 6). Instead, I'm going to show how the teachings of Jesus Christ, His apostles, and the prophets are completely incompatible with — and openly contradictory to — any doctrine that mandates eternal punishing for sinners.

The following chapters will cover a great deal of Scripture. So get ready to read over 80 passages that prove the doctrine of Hell cannot be true!



Hell Has Defined God's Nature

The doctrine of Hell has defined the nature of God. Hell tells us about a God who makes no compromise with sin. A God who forces every sinner pay for every last unrepentant sin. And a God who created a universe where the vast majority of humanity — including those who never had the opportunity to hear about Christ — will end up being tormented forever in the Devil's kingdom of eternal punishing.

The God who created Hell is incredibly terrifying and frightful!

And I believe this is why many Christians want pastors between them

and God, so they can keep their distance from this terrifying Deity.

- But what if the doctrine of Hell is not true?
- And what if God does not eternally torment sinners?
- And what if in reality, God is busy *saving* all sinners?

Think About This

If all of the above really were true, would it change your understanding of God?

Frankly, most of us would have to admit that if Hell is not a reality, then we don't even know who God is!

So fasten your seat belt, because you are about to take a trip through Scriptures that will literally redefine the nature of God. These passages will introduce you to a God who is virtually unknown to Christianity. You will meet a Creator who is always loving, always caring, who always forgives every sin (except one) — a tender and merciful God who is working hard to save every human being that has ever lived.

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## 2 — Jesus and Eternal Punishing

The Bible contains many Scriptures that openly contradict the concept of eternal torment in Hell. Unfortunately, most pastors pay little attention to these passages, because their seminary training told them to unquestionably believe in Hell, just as they have trained church members to do the same.

So let's review some of these little-known Scriptures, starting with Matthew 5:44 (KJV):

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.*

According to Jesus Christ, this is how Christians are to behave toward sinners. And then in verse 45, Jesus explains why:

*That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

Jesus asked Christians to love their enemies, to bless people who curse them, and to do good to those who hate them because this is what God the Father does. And when Jesus spoke about those who curse, hate, abuse and persecute others, He was talking about sinners.

### Think About This

According to Jesus Christ, God the Father — the highest spiritual authority that exists — *loves* sinners and wants to do good for them!

So do you believe what Jesus said in the above verses?

That's an important question, because the doctrine of Hell openly contradicts Christ's words. If there really is a place of eternal torment for sinners, this means the Father has turned His back on His Son's words, as He sends these sinners into indescribable eternal torment without offering most of them even the slightest chance to repent of their sins.

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## God's Forgiveness? — Or Eternal Punishing?

Earlier I mentioned how the doctrine of Hell concludes that all human beings have sinned, therefore without repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, all must suffer eternal torment. So even if you grew up and lived in a place where you could not hear about Christ, where you never learned that you are a sinner, where no one ever told you of your need to repent, God *must* consign you to suffer in Hell. And even if you lived a perfect life, but committed only one sin of which you had not repented, you must be punished for all eternity.

Now compare the above paragraph with what Jesus said in Matthew 18:21-22:

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, *Until seventy times seven.*

Jesus said that ordinary people — people just like you and me — are *required* to forgive sinners. Moreover, the Lord said we must forgive those who sin against us a minimum of 490 times!

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So imagine this situation. You have a neighbor who constantly argues with his wife. And quite often, he gets upset — very upset. So he starts drinking. Then he decides to go for a drive. And as he is backing out his driveway, he hits your fence. But later he sobers up, comes over, and apologizes for his actions. So what is your Christian responsibility? You must forgive him.

But then a week later, your neighbor gets into another argument and does the same thing: he drinks too much, gets in his car, and damages your fence. But again, he comes over and apologizes. So you forgive him.

Yet the neighbor's drinking continues. He's getting drunk and damaging your fence every weekend. And he does this week after week, year after year, for an incredible nine years! Over the years this man has damaged your fence 468 times; but because you are a Christian, you have obeyed

Jesus and forgiven him each time. Furthermore, your neighbor still has 22 more times to wreck your fence until he reaches Jesus' "seventy times seven."

### Think About This

According to Jesus Christ, Christians should never stop forgiving someone who genuinely repents.

Yet the doctrine of Hell states that our Most Holy, Righteous, and kind God — the God of "love" we just read about in Matthew Chapter 5 — will roast and torment most of humanity in Hell without giving them even one chance to repent.

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### Sinful Roman Soldiers Were Not Sent to Hell

Now look at Luke 23:33, where we find the story of Jesus being crucified:

When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him ...

After almost beating Jesus to death, several carnally-minded, sinful and unrepentant Roman soldiers brutally nailed their Creator to a tree, so He would wither and die. Take a few seconds and consider what kind of person could do that.

Now continue with verse 34, where we read how Jesus carried out God's hot anger and wrath against these sinful and godless men:

But Jesus was saying, Father, *forgive them*; for they do not know what they are doing.

So where was Christ's anger and desire to punish these unrepentant sinners? And why didn't Jesus warn these soldiers of how they were on the road to eternal punishment in Hell? These men carried out the supreme pinnacle of human rebellion against God, as they laughingly ([Luke 23:36-37](#)) crushed the life out of their Creator. They drove stakes through Jesus' arms and legs. Then they ridiculed the Holy and Majestic Creator of humankind, as they watched Him suffer and die!

You've probably heard sermons outlining God's harsh punishment for

sinner — and how His holiness demands that He execute infinite wrath against sin. But if ever there were people worthy of God's eternal wrath in a tormenting, fiery punishment, it was these Roman soldiers who joyously killed their Creator. This was the time for all the holy angels to cry out in unison, "Man has gone too far!" God's anger should have burned hot enough to melt stones. Furthermore, these soldiers were not the slightest bit repentant; neither did they have any desire to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

*But instead of confirming that these sinners were destined to suffer in Hell, Jesus asked God the Father to forgive them!*

Then there's also the issue of "why" Jesus asked the Father to forgive these men. At the end of verse 34 where Jesus requested forgiveness, His justification was "for they know not what they are doing."

*Yet the doctrine of Hell states that God will punish tens-of-billions of people in a specially-prepared place of eternal torment for far lesser evils than laughingly killing their Creator — simply because they never heard about Christ and His gospel; simply because they "knew not what they were doing."*

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### The Thief on the Cross Was Not Sent to Hell

At the same time Jesus was crucified, there were two thieves executed with Him. Let's read about them in Luke 23:39-43:

One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" And He (Jesus) said to him, "*Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.*"

These men had been sentenced to death for their crimes. The author of the gospel of Luke called them "criminals." The Greek is pronounced

*kakourgos*, which means “one who commits gross misdeeds and serious crimes.” So these men were not small time purse snatchers: they were hardened criminals, perhaps guilty of multiple robberies, assaults, and even murder.

Both men seemed to know who Jesus was. But they had not responded to His gospel. How do we know? Because [Matthew 27:44](#) tells us they yelled insulting words at Jesus as He was being crucified. Therefore, according to traditional Christian doctrine, these men should have gone straight to Hell.

But one of the men cried out to Jesus for help, even though there was no time for repentance, or to hear Christ’s gospel, or to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and be baptized. And how did Jesus respond to this sinner’s cry for help?

Jesus said, “*Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.*”

Now I’m pretty sure you believe that Jesus’ went to Heaven after His death. Yet our Lord and Savior said this unrepentant sinner — this hardened criminal — would find himself in Heaven with Jesus that very day!

### **Think About This**

This convicted criminal went to Heaven — he did not go to Hell.

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At the time Jesus told this individual he was going to Heaven, there were many other people around the world facing death. And with certainty we can know that just like this man, some made last-minute cries out to a God they did not know, follow, respect or worship. Modern Christianity tells us that because these people were sinners — because they had never heard the gospel, repented and accepted Jesus Christ — God had no choice but to send them off to be eternally tormented in Hell.

*Yet how can we reconcile Jesus’ promise to an unrepentant hardened criminal — that he would find himself in Heaven immediately after his death — if God sentenced all these other people to eternal punishment in Hell?*



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The Scriptures we just read remain unsolvable problems for those who promote Hell. Either the Bible is not true — and Jesus didn't say what these Scriptures quote — or we need to re-examine our thinking about the Hell doctrine.

And indeed, there is another way to look at these passages:

- 1) What if Jesus asks us to love our neighbors and endlessly forgive them, *because this is precisely what God the Father does?*
- 2) And what if Jesus told this criminal he would immediately find himself in Heaven *because God does love His enemies, blesses those who curse Him, does good to those who hate Him, and wants to save them?*
- 3) And what if Jesus never mentioned Hell to these sinners, because there is no Hell?

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3 — Questioning Hell

You may have noticed how pastors are unwilling to discuss the subject of Hell. They may preach long Hell-fire sermons designed to scare the daylights out of you, but few are willing to sit down with you and explain the Scriptures we just read. For most pastors, Hell was just another doctrine they learned in seminary — something their professors told them was already proven — one of the “core” doctrines they were cautioned to never question. And should a pastor through his own study generate enough interest and courage to question Hell, he or she will find the full weight of the Christian community bearing down on him.

In Year 2011, Chad Holtz was pastor of a United Methodist church in North Carolina. Pastor Holtz wrote a short post on his Facebook page supporting a book by Rob Bell, an author who is critical of the traditional view of Hell. Two days later the church fired pastor Holtz.

When Holtz questioned the doctrine of Hell, he lost his job.

I suspect that Mr. Holtz’s church reacted this way because the concept of Hell is downright *scary*. The Hell doctrine portrays a cruel God who genuinely desires to torment every sinner in horrible anguish for all eternity. And if it weren’t for the fact that Jesus stepped in and gave His life for us, every human being that has ever lived would be forever tormented in Hell.

Yet even though Jesus volunteered to pay the penalty for our sins, we are told that God established strict rules that prevent most people from being saved. First, a person must be in the right place at the right time, so they can hear the gospel. Then they must choose to believe the gospel and repent of their sins. After this they must be baptized. And finally they must receive the Holy Spirit. And preachers tell us that if even one of these requirements fails to happen just as God prescribes, then it’s off to Hell when the person dies. And because it’s estimated that only a very small percentage of humanity has even heard the name Jesus Christ, this means the majority of all that have lived on planet earth are now being (or will be) tormented in Hell.

So let’s be honest: *a God who operates like this is almost too terrible to imagine!*

What Christian in their right mind would want to “test” his or her relationship with such a wrathful God? Far better to let the pastors and ministers work with God, go along with what they tell you at church, and not risk awakening God’s unimaginable anger and fury by asking questions.

But Christians Are Supposed to Ask Questions

In [I Thessalonians 5:19-21](#), the apostle Paul wrote that Christians should question everything they hear and believe. And the King James translation of this verse states that when it comes to doctrine, Christians must “Prove all things.”

Thus according to Paul, Christians should *never* accept what others preach to them: whether in church or in seminary, God’s people have a duty to personally prove what they hear, then “hold fast to that which is good.”

And the apostle John felt the same way. In I John 4:1, he wrote: “... believe not every spirit, but *try* the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

But now that almost 2,000 years have passed and there are thousands of disagreeing Christian denominations, how many false prophets are there today?

Christ’s apostles had great boldness when it came to searching out and proving God’s truth. And do you know why?

Because the apostles had never heard of a God that could torture sinners for all eternity.

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## 4 — The Bible and Eternal Life

Most Christians assume that God gives every human being an immortal soul. Therefore, people have two options: if they lived a “good” life, they will go to Heaven; but if they lived a “bad” life, they will go to Hell.

But what if this belief in an immortal soul is incorrect — and human beings are not born with eternal life? Would we not have to reevaluate the entire concept of “eternal” punishment in Hell?

In this chapter, you will read many Scriptures proving that human beings do not have an immortal soul. You also will see how the Bible teaches that God only grants eternal life to those who repent and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

*And if unrepentant sinners do not have eternal life, then simple logic tells us they cannot be punished “eternally” in Hell.*

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### Eternal Life: Do You Have it?

Mathew 19:16-17 records a discussion between Jesus and a worshiper:

And someone came to Him and said, “Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?” And He said to him, “Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; *but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.*”

Jesus told this person he *could* have eternal life, *if* he did certain things: this person did not already possess an endless life.

Then in John 3:16 — one of the most famous verses of the Bible — we again read the words of Jesus Christ:

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, *but have eternal life.*

Here the Greek translated “perish” means *to fully destroy*. Therefore, Jesus described how the saved obtain eternal life; while the unsaved will be “fully destroyed.”

And then a few verses later in John 3:36, the apostle John wrote this:

He who believes in the Son *has eternal life*; but he who does not obey the Son *will not see life*, but the wrath of God abides on him.

John repeated exactly what Jesus said: belief in Christ brings eternal life; while unbelief brings destruction and death.

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Jesus made several more statements about whether or not humans have eternal life. So let's review a few passages you will never hear during a Hell sermon:

John 10:27-28 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and *I give eternal life to them*, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

John 6:53-54 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, *unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves*. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

John 6:49-51 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so *that one may eat of it and not die*. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; *if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever*; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, *he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life*, and does not come into judgment, *but has passed out of death into life*.

John 8:51 Truly, truly, I say to you, *if anyone keeps my word he will never see death*.

In the first passage, Jesus stated that mortal human beings do not possess eternal life; instead, it's something God must give to us. In the second and third passages, the Lord said that without accepting His sacrifice, one cannot have eternal life. In the fourth verse, Jesus explained how belief in His message causes one to pass from death to eternal life. And in the last verse, He said we escape death through observing His teachings.

So understand: *there are prerequisites to God granting the gift of eternal life to human beings.*

First, we must repent and accept Christ's sacrifice. Then we must believe the words Jesus brought from God the Father. Finally, we must practice what Jesus commanded.

Therefore, we can summarize whether or not humans are born with eternal life with one statement by Jesus Christ:

John 6:33 For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and ***gives life*** to the world.

### **Think About This**

Human beings are not born with an immortal soul. Instead, never-ending life is God's gift.

And if a person does not accept the sacrifice of Christ, believe His teachings, repent of sin, and practice His commandments, that person will not live forever.

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### **Death: A Separation From God?**

Theologians try to get around Christ's statements by declaring that death is nothing more than a "separation" from God. They claim that sinners do not really stop living after their death; instead, their immortal soul continues on in a place that has no access to God.

So let's see if the Bible agrees with this concept:

Ecclesiastes 9:5 For the living know they will die; *but the dead do not know anything ...*

Psalm 6:5 (KJV) For in death *there is no remembrance of thee ...*

Psalm 115:17 The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor do any *who go down into silence.*

Psalm 145:20 The LORD keeps all who love Him, *But all the wicked He will destroy.*

Isaiah 26:14 *The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise;*

*Therefore You have punished and destroyed them, And You have wiped out all remembrance of them (unless God resurrects them).*

Isaiah 38:18 (KJV) For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

The Old Testament is rather precise about the state of the dead: they know nothing; they have no remembrance of God; they are silent; they have been destroyed; they cannot rise on their own; all remembrance of them has perished; they cannot praise God; neither can they hope for God's truth, while they supposedly suffer in Hell.

### **Think About This**

The Bible teaches that the dead have ceased to exist. They are not merely separated from God; they have been permanently separated from conscious life itself (unless God resurrects them).

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### **The Wages of Sin**

Several thousand years ago, the prophet Jeremiah wrote: "*Every one shall die for his own iniquity*" (Jeremiah 31:30). And then a few years later, the prophet Ezekiel wrote down these words of the Lord:

Ezekiel 18:4 Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. *The soul who sins will die.*

Ezekiel 18:20 The person who sins *will die.*

Then about six-hundred years later, the apostle James wrote the following

James 1:15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, *it brings forth death.*

And the apostle Peter wrote:

II Peter 2:12 (KJV) But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; *and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.*

While the apostle Paul wrote:

For the wages of sin is *death*, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).

Then finally, Jesus explained the end-result of unrepentant sin:

Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? I tell you, no, *but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish*” (Luke 13:1-3).

### **Think About This**

The Old Covenant prophets, New Testament apostles, and our Lord and Savior were quite clear: *sin produces unconscious and permanent death.*

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#### **Eternal Life: An Ancient False Teaching**

Let's go back to that famous verse of John 3:16 and read it in the GNB translation:

For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him *may not die but have eternal life.*

As we have already seen, the penalty for sin is death. And this death is an “eternal” punishment, because the sinner is forever dead (unless God resurrects them). We've also seen how death is without awareness, consciousness or knowledge of God.

Yet since the beginning of creation, self-appointed spiritual authorities have been claiming that humans have eternal life — even when they remain rebellious, unrepentant sinners. This claim started way back in the Garden of Eden:

The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or



touch it, or you will die.” The serpent said to the woman, “*You surely will not die!*” (Genesis 3:2-4).

Notice how the very first lie Satan introduced into human minds was the falsehood that we are born with an immortal soul. And we do know that Satan was lying, because of what happened to Adam and Eve after they sinned:

Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; *for you are dust, and to dust you shall return*” (Genesis 3:17-19).

Then thousands of years later in Jesus’ day, the Devil was busy deceiving 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jews with this same lie. Read what Jesus had to tell these people:

John 5:39-40 You search the Scriptures because *you think that in them you have eternal life*; it is these that testify about Me; *and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.*

John 5:25: Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God *and those who hear will live.*

John 11:25 (KJV) ... he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: *And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*

Much like the Christian leaders of our day, 1<sup>st</sup> Century religious authorities taught that everyone has eternal life — even though Jesus most emphatically declared how there is no never-ending life apart from His salvation.

Then several decades later, the apostle John closed his gospel by reiterating how eternal life comes only through believing in Christ:

John 20:31 but these have been written so that you may believe

that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; *and that believing you may have life in His name.*

And finally, John wrote the following in his first epistle:

This is the promise which He Himself made to us: *eternal life* (1 John 2:25).

In the Greek used by John, the word translated “promise” also means *an announcement*. Thus John reiterated how Jesus came to announce how people might have eternal life — something they do not already possess.

### **Think About This**

Contrary to the lies of the Devil and many misled preachers, Jesus, His apostles, and the prophets all taught that without Christ’s salvation, human beings cannot and will not have eternal life.

And if unrepentant sinners do not possess eternal life, then it’s impossible for such sinners to endure “eternal” punishing in Hell.

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5 — Promoting the Hell Lie

Hopefully, the previous material has convinced you of how a kind and loving God cannot be operating a place of eternal torment and punishment. Nevertheless, those who study the Bible see numerous Scriptures that appear to support the doctrine of Hell. So how do we explain such contradictions?

In Chapter 4, we saw how the Devil created the false doctrine of an eternal soul. But to make his lie effective, Satan had to keep it moving down through history. So here was the Devil's tactic: Satan inspired institutional theologians to make subtle changes to the biblical texts, so it would appear that the Bible supports his lie.

Readers who believe in an inerrant Bible, the text of which equates with the "Word of God," will have difficulties with this concept. Yet it remains a fact that theologians have translated the Bible into more than 2,500 languages. And when there are this many instances of something copied and translated by mortal human beings, there will be errors and differences within the texts, along with some purposeful modifications.

Furthermore, Bible scholars explain how other factors introduced problems within the biblical texts. One source is the process of translation, which creates situations where words and phrases cannot be accurately represented in other languages. Another source was the lack of early (written close to the 1st Century) manuscripts. The world had to wait until year 1881, when two British scholars published the first New Testament based on early manuscripts. This text, produced by Brook Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, made several departures from the traditional King James version. For example, the Westcott-Hort Bible had a shorter New Testament because the older, more accurate manuscripts did not contain the long ending of Mark's gospel (Mark 16:9-20) and the story of the woman caught in adultery.

Then in 1885 when the English Revised Version appeared, the world had its first New Testament translated from truly ancient manuscripts. But this version introduced many more changes to the biblical texts. And since that time, continuing discoveries of ancient manuscripts have corrected several more errant renderings within the older, traditional versions.

Finally, and in addition to all the above issues, we also must acknowledge that Bible translators have their own particular beliefs, which produce unavoidable (and sometimes unconscious) doctrinal bias. For example, those who wrote the King James Bible believed in the doctrine of the Trinity. But because there is little evidence from the biblical texts to support this doctrine, the King James translators fabricated [1 John 5:7](#), an addition that is uniformly rejected by modern biblical scholars.

The King James translators also believed in the ancient doctrine of eternal punishing in Hell. And as we continue through this study, you will see how these translators went to great lengths to support this early Catholic doctrine.

Think About This

God always knew there would be inaccuracies within the Bible. And this is why Jeremiah 23:36 has God condemning some of the prophets with: “you have perverted the words of the living God.” While Isaiah 28:9-10 warn us to study the Scriptures “here a little, and there a little,” rather than basing doctrine on just one verse. As Jesus mandated in [Matthew 18:16](#), every fact should be established by two or three witnesses.

Satan’s Lie Travels Down Through History

Historical documents prove the doctrine of eternal punishing was around long before the Christian Church. Hundreds of years before Jesus walked the earth, pagan religions were using the concept of Hell to keep their worshipers in line. The Greek historian Polybius (200–118 BCE) wrote about this, and described how the concept of eternal fiery punishment had been “contrived” to control pagan worshipers:

Since the multitude is ever fickle, full of lawless desires, irrational passions and violence, there is no other way to keep them in order but by the fear and terror of the invisible world; on which account our ancestors seem to me to have acted judiciously, when they contrived to bring into the popular belief these notions of the gods, and of the infernal regions.

Then about 100 years later, the historian Seneca (4 BCE — 65 CE) termed the concept of eternal punishing a “fable”:

Those things which make the infernal regions terrible, the darkness, the prison, the river of flaming fire, the judgment seat, etc., *are all a fable*, with which the poets amuse themselves, and by them agitate us with vain terrors.

Think About This

The humanly-derived doctrine of eternal punishment in fiery torment existed hundreds of years before Jesus walked the earth.

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### Christians Adopt Hell

In earlier chapters, we saw how eternal punishing in Hell is not supported by the teachings of Jesus, His apostles, or the Old Testament. Yet beginning in the 2nd Century, we find Catholic theologians embracing and promoting this doctrine.

Ancient documents also show how the nature of Hell evolved over time. Up until the end of the 2nd Century, punishment in Hell was nothing more than burning in fire. But as the years progressed, the descriptions of Hell began to include fantastic and incredible atrocities. Notice how the nature of Hell changes over time:

150 CE — Clement refers only to eternal punishment:

If we do the will of Christ, we shall obtain rest; but if not, if we neglect his commandments, nothing will rescue us from *eternal punishment* (Second Clement 5:5).

155 CE — Polycarp describes a burning Hell with eternal fire:

Fixing their minds on the grace of Christ, (the martyrs) despised worldly tortures and purchased eternal life with but a single hour. To them, the fire of their cruel torturers was cold. They kept before their eyes their escape from *the eternal and unquenchable fire* (Martyrdom of Polycarp 2:3).

212 CE — Hippolytus adds an unquenchable and unending fire, a fiery

worm that wastes the body, a continual bursting with unceasing pain, and no rest from sleep:

Standing before (Christ's) judgment, all of them, men, angels, and demons, crying out in one voice, shall say: "Just is your judgment!" And the righteousness of that cry will be apparent in the recompense made to each. To those who have done well, everlasting enjoyment shall be given; while to the lovers of evil shall be given eternal punishment. *The unquenchable and unending fire awaits these latter, and a certain fiery worm which does not die and which does not waste the body but continually bursts forth from the body with unceasing pain. No sleep will give them rest; no night will soothe them; no death will deliver them from punishment; no appeal of interceding friends will profit them* (Against the Greeks 3).

252 CE — Cyprian of Carthage describes an ever-burning punishment and devouring living flames, as tormented souls have their bodies preserved for suffering in unlimited agonies, useless weeping, and ineffectual prayer:

*An ever-burning Gehenna and the punishment of being devoured by living flames will consume the condemned; nor will there be any way in which the tormented can ever have respite or be at an end. Souls along with their bodies will be preserved for suffering in unlimited agonies ... The grief at punishment will then be without the fruit of repentance; weeping will be useless, and prayer ineffectual.* Too late will they believe in eternal punishment, who would not believe in eternal life (To Demetrian 24).

### **Think About This**

Hundreds of years of evolving Christian doctrine provide some of the best evidence that Hell is not a matter of biblical revelation. Instead, the Catholics adopted this doctrine from the pagans, then added their own bizarre fantasies.

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6 — Theologians Promote Hell

The next efforts to promote Hell were made by Bible translators who modified the biblical texts so that Hell would appear to be legitimate doctrine. For example, the King James Bible has 31 occurrences of the English word “Hell.” Yet all but one of these occurrences were translated from Hebrew and Greek words that have nothing to do with a place of eternal punishing.

In the Old Testament, Hell is always translated from the Hebrew *sheh-ole'*, which means *underworld*. More than half the occurrences of *sheh-ole'* are translated into the English words “grave” or “pit.” The Bible uses this word too often to quote all the passages here, but several are worthy of note:

Isaiah 14:15 (KJV) Yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell [*sheh-ole'*], *to the sides of the pit*.

Isaiah equated Hell with a pit or hole in the ground. And notice what Bible commentator Albert Barnes wrote about this verse:

To the sides of the pit — The word ‘pit,’ here, is evidently synonymous with “Hell” or “hades,” represented as a deep, dark region under ground. The dead were often buried in caves, and the descent was often dark and dreary, to the vaults where they reposed.

We see similar usage in Ezekiel 31:16 (KJV):

I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to Hell [*sheh-ole'*] with them *that descend into the pit* ...

In both of these passages where translators used the English word Hell, the Hebrew *sheh-ole'* equates to a pit, hole, or cave: the locations in which dead bodies were placed.

And here’s something else that’s interesting. In 15th Century England, it was common for those who stored potatoes underground to say they had “put their potatoes in hell.”

New Testament Words Translated “Hell”

The King James New Testament has three Greek words that are translated into the English “hell.” The first is *hades*, which means *the realm of the dead*. This word is derived from the name of a Greek god, which was said to rule the underground places or lower regions of the earth. And here again, the Bible provides excellent examples of what this word really means:

Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, *that his soul was not left in Hell [hades], neither his flesh did see corruption*. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses (Act 2:30-32 — KJV).

The author of Acts quoted the prophet David, who foretold how Christ’s soul (Greek: *breath of life*) would not be left in “Hell” (*hades*). And without any doubt, David was writing about Christ’s physical resurrection from the grave.

The apostle Paul also knew what *hades* meant. Notice how he used the word in I Corinthians 15:55 (KJV):

O death, where is thy sting? O grave [hades], where is thy victory?

Passages Where Translators Substituted Hell for *Hades*

The following King James Bible passages translate the Greek word *hades* into the English word “hell.” To make these verses more accurate, I have inserted the word “grave.” Observe how the meaning of each verse changes:

Matthew 11:23 (KJV) And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to *the grave*: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

Matthew 16:18 (KJV) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of *the grave* shall not prevail against it.

Luke 10:15 (KJV) And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to *the grave*.

Luke 16:23 (KJV) — see the end of Chapter 7 for a discussion of this verse.

Revelation 1:18 (KJV) I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of *the grave* and of death.

Revelation 6:8 (KJV) And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and *the grave* followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Revelation 20:13 (KJV) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and *the grave* delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

Revelation 20:14 (KJV) And death and *the grave* were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

When translated with the correct meaning of *hades*, all of these verses make perfect sense. Furthermore, the corrected translations do not even hint at a place of eternal torment and punishment (Luke 16:23 is an exception addressed at the end of this chapter).

If We Can't Confuse Them, Let's Scare Them

The King James translators apparently considered their scriptural modifications insufficient support for their Hell doctrine, because they went on to translate a second Greek word into the English "Hell." These modified Scriptures scare the daylights out of Christians, causing them to believe that God would like nothing better than to "fry" most of humanity in eternal Hell fire:

Matthew 10:28 (KJV) And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body *in Hell*.

Mark 9:43-44 (KJV) 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: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Mark 9:45-46 (KJV) 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: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

With these statements, Jesus described the punishments God would mete out to the rebellious Jews of His day — in other words, those who rejected Him during His earthly ministry. Yet one would never know this by reading the King James Bible!

In all of these passages, “hell” is translated from the Greek γέεννα, which is pronounced “Gehenna”. This word is a proper noun, which means it’s the name of a person, place, or thing. And in early Greek manuscripts, the word always refers to the Valley of Hinnom, a deep narrow ravine southeast of Jerusalem.

Anciently, Hinnom was the place where the Israelites worshiped the pagan gods Moloch and Baal. Here they sacrificed their children by burning them alive, a practice the Old Testament calls “passing through the fire” (See [II Kings 16:3](#), & [II Kings 23:10](#); [II Chronicles 28:3](#), and [Jeremiah 7:31](#)).

Some Bible commentators claim that after returning to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity, the Jews used the Valley of Hinnom as a city dump for general refuse. Jerusalem was situated on a hill with entrance gates on all sides. So the city designers positioned one gate over the Hinnom Valley, while another was placed over the Kidron Valley. This supposedly allowed residents to discharge their refuse into these two unoccupied areas. And from time to time, both locations were used for public executions.

Thus commentators surmise that both valleys were vile and extremely toxic. The air was polluted from the odors of putrefying garbage, dead animal carcasses, and decaying human flesh. So the Jews kept fires burning continually, throughout what were essentially heaps of rotting garbage, which is why both valleys became associated with the term

“unquenchable fire.”

Therefore in the above-quoted verses, Jesus warned those who might reject His message how they were at risk of punishment *in the fires* of the Valley of Hinnom. Of course, those who heard Jesus surely thought His assertion absurd. However in 70 CE when the Jews rebelled against the Romans, it was in this very valley that the Romans dumped and burned the bodies of most of the Jewish casualties.

The Jewish historian Josephus estimated that 1.1 million Jews died during the 70 CE war¹¹². Josephus went on to describe how 115,880 corpses passed through just one of these city gates into the valley below. And before the war ended, over 600,000 human bodies would be burned in the Hinnom and Kidron valleys¹¹³.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote a chilling prophecy about what would occur during this war:

“Therefore, behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when it will no longer be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of the Slaughter; for they will bury in Topheth because there is no other place. The dead bodies of this people will be food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth; and no one will frighten them away. Then I will make to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the land will become a ruin” (Jeremiah 7:32-34).

Thus with the Matthew 10 and Mark 9 passages quoted above, the Lord was not discussing our modern theological version of Hell. Instead, Jesus warned those who refused to repent how they would be punished with an eternally-lasting death — a death that would culminate with their bodies being cast into the fires of the Valley of Hinnom.

Now that we know the truth about Gehenna (the Valley of Hinnom), let’s move on to some of Jesus’ teachings that were not modified by Bible translators. Notice how these passages take on an entirely different meaning when we know the history and purpose of Gehenna, that proper noun incorrectly rendered “hell” by the King James translators:

If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, *and cast them into the fire and they are burned* (John 15:6).

So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age (the Old Testament era). “The Son of Man will send forth His angels [Greek: ἄγγελος — used in the Bible to refer to angels, human beings, and even messengers of Satan — in this case the Roman armies], and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 13:40-42).

So it will be at the end of the age (the Old Testament era); the angels [again the Greek is ἄγγελος] will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, *and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Matthew 13:49-50).

Notice how none of these verses support “eternal” punishing by fire. Yes, people were burned in the Valley of Hinnom — but their bodies were entirely burned up.

Therefore in the John 15:6 passage quoted above, Jesus used a Greek word that implies *consumed*. And in Matthew 13:40, the Lord used a word that means *burned down to the ground*. While in Matthew 13:50, the Greek translated into the English “furnace” means a *smelting furnace* (a device used to fire pottery).

Additional Translator Modifications

The King James translators weren't content with changing the most prominent occurrences of γέεννα (Gehenna); instead, they changed every passage they could find. What follows are all the other passages where the translators substituted the English word “Hell” for the original Greek word γέεννα. I have modified these verses by substituting the correct translation of this proper noun (in italics).

As you read through these verses, remember how Jesus warned the

unrepentant Jews of a soon-coming punishment in this Valley. Then ask yourself: Was the Lord talking about a never-ending eternal Hell for unrepentant sinners? Or was He describing a soon-coming punishment for rebellious Jews?

– The Jews were angry at Jesus without cause:

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the *Valley of Hinnom* fire (Matthew 5:22 — KJV).

– Jesus pleaded with the Jews to clean up their act and repent:

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of the *Valley of Hinnom* than yourselves (Matthew 23:15 — KJV).

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of the *Valley of Hinnom*? (Matthew 23:33 — KJV).

– Jesus warned His disciples about a future punishment for those who refused to repent and follow Him:

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into the *Valley of Hinnom*. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into the *Valley of Hinnom* (Matthew 5:29-30 — KJV).

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in the *Valley of Hinnom* (Matthew 10:28 — KJV).

And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the *Valley of Hinnom* fire (Matthew 18:9 — KJV).

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 the *Valley of Hinnom*, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:43-44 — KJV).

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 the *Valley of Hinnom*, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:45-46 — KJV).

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 the *Valley of Hinnom*, fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:47-48 — KJV).

And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into the *Valley of Hinnom*; yea, I say unto you, Fear him (Luke 12:4-5 — KJV).

The above passages provide a great deal of information about the Valley of Hinnom:

- When discussing this valley, Jesus makes no mention of *eternal* punishing;
- In five of these passages, the Lord states that fires would be burning in the Valley of Hinnom;
- When Matthew 23:33 refers to the damnation of the Valley of Hinnom, the Greek literally means *judgment*;
- And finally in Matthew 10:28, Jesus warned how the Valley of Hinnom judgment would kill both the body and the soul (Greek: *life*).

Therefore, rather than describing the traditional doctrine of Hell, these passages explain how the 1st Century Jews would be judged by God, killed by the Roman armies, and then their bodies would be cast into the fires of the Valley of Hinnom.

Finally, let's look at how the apostle James compared the evil of the

human tongue to the fires of the Valley of Hinnom. And here again, the translators substituted the English word “Hell” for what James actually wrote:

James 3:6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by Hell [Greek: *Valley of Hinnom*].

All of the above passages directly refer to the Valley of Hinnom, a deep ravine southeast of Jerusalem, where Jesus foretold how the Jews would be punished for their rebellion against God. And throughout all of the above Scriptures, there is not a single reference to a place of eternal punishing for sinners.

Think About This

You just read through fourteen separate passages where the King James translators changed the proper name of a Jerusalem valley into the English word “Hell.”

Are all of these mistranslated verses merely coincidences?

In his book *The Bible Hell*, Dr. J. W. Hanson summarized the case against Gehenna being translated into the English word Hell:

- 1) Gehenna was a well-known locality near Jerusalem, and ought no more to be translated Hell, than should Sodom or Gomorrah. See Josh. 15:8; 2 Kings 17:10; 2 Chron. 28:3; Jer. 7:31,32; 19:2.
- 2) Gehenna is never employed in the Old Testament to mean anything else than the place with which every Jew was familiar.
- 3) No Jewish writer, such as Josephus, or Philo, ever used it as the name of a place of future punishment, as they would have done had such then been its meaning.
- 4) Paul says he ‘shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God,’ and yet, though he was the great preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles he never told them that Gehenna is a place of after-death punishment. Dr. Thayer (author of Thayer’s Lexicon and also on the

translation committee to the American Standard Bible) significantly remarks: 'The Savior and James are the only persons in all the New Testament who use the word. John the Baptist, who preached to the most wicked of men, did not use it once. Paul, wrote 14 epistles, and yet never once mentions it. Peter does not name it, nor Jude; and John, who wrote the gospel, three epistles, and the Book of Revelation, never employs it in a single instance (the Greek words of "lake of fire" in Revelation is not Gehenna). Now if Gehenna or Hell really reveals the terrible fact of endless woe, how can we account for this strange silence? How is it possible, if they knew its meaning, and believed it a part of Christ's teaching, that they should not have used it a hundred or a thousand times, instead of never using it at all; especially when we consider the infinite interests involved? The Book of Acts contains the record of the apostolic preaching, and the history of the first planting of the church among the Jews and Gentiles, and embraces a period of thirty years from the ascension of Christ. In all this history, in all this preaching of the apostles of Jesus, there is no mention of Gehenna. In thirty years of missionary effort, these men of God, addressing people of all characters and nations, never, under any circumstances, threaten them with the torments of Gehenna, or allude to it in the most distant manner! In the face of such a fact as this, can any man believe that Gehenna signifies endless punishment, and that this is a part of divine revelation, a part of the Gospel message to the world? These considerations show how impossible it is to establish the doctrine in review on the word Gehenna. All the facts are against the supposition that the term was used by Christ or his disciples in the sense of endless punishment. There is not the least hint of any such meaning attached to it, nor the slightest preparatory notice that any such new revelation was to be looked for in this old familiar word.

Think About This

Within the King James Bible, every verse containing the word "Hell" (with one exception) refers either to the grave (*sheh-ole'* or *hades*), or to the Valley of Hinnom, Jerusalem's city dump. Ancient translators substituted "Hell" for these Hebrew and Greek words, so they could manufacture support for their artificial doctrine of eternal punishing (the single

exception, II Peter 2:4, will be addressed later).

The Smoke of Eternal Torment

Once the translators “established” their doctrine of Hell by modifying Scripture, theologians began to find other passages that seemed to support eternal punishing. Let’s look at some of these.

Revelation 14:9-11 (KJV):

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 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: 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.

If the above passage discusses eternal punishing in Hell, then this would be a gruesomely horrible scene: *Jesus and all the holy angels spending eternity, calmly watching sinners being tormented in fire.*

So even if you have the most basic of relationships with your loving Creator, you know this interpretation cannot be true. But if we can get past the common assumption that this passage refers to Hell, we can let the Bible explain when and where this fiery event takes place.

Let’s go back to the beginning of the chapter with Revelation 14:1 (KJV):

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion ...

Of course, the Lamb is Jesus Christ. And in this prophecy, Jesus is again standing on the earth — which proves that Revelation 14 is describing the time of Christ’s Second Coming. Thus this chapter has nothing to do with eternal punishing in Hell, but rather an event that occurs on the earth.

Another consideration is the statement “the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.” Smoke rises when material items burn.

But because physical materials cannot burn forever, it's illogical to think that smoke will rise in perpetuity. So how do we explain this statement?

Sometimes the Bible uses the concepts *eternal* and *forever* to express something that "runs to completion." [Jude 1:7](#) and [Exodus 21:6](#) (KJV) provide examples. In these passages, the words *eternal* and *forever* refer to situations that ceased, once God accomplished His objective.

Revelation 14 is a similar situation. Once those who worshiped the Beast were destroyed (burnt up), the smoke of burning had to cease. Notice how the prophet Malachi described this Revelation 14 judgment:

"For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch" (Malachi 4:1 — KJV).

The original biblical writings had no reference to an ongoing, eternal punishment in fire. Through subtle changes to the English wording, Bible translators made it appear that Scripture supports their artificial doctrine of Hell.

Think About This

Christ's prediction that the Israelites of His day would be burned in fire might seem gruesome and unfair — until we remember that the Lord was preaching to the same race of people that practiced pagan sacrifices in the Valley of Hinnom, *where they worshiped pagan gods by burning their children alive.*

Misused Scriptures

Institutionalized Christianity has promoted the doctrine of Hell through a large and well-organized conspiracy. Not only have Scriptures been modified, but preachers routinely take passages out of context so they can misrepresent God's truth to honest Christians.

So let's review some of these passages.

The claim: Matthew 25:46 (KJV) proves the existence of eternal punishment in Hell.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

But this verse says nothing about the nature of the punishment; instead, it defines how long the punishment lasts. And notice how Jesus *contrasted* this punishment with eternal life. Thus the punishment is everlasting and irrevocable. But those punished are not alive — they are eternally dead.

The claim: Matthew 13:42 (KJV) proves that people suffer in “Hell-fire” (also see verse 50):

And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Indeed, Jesus did say that some of the wicked would be burned in fire. But this passage never suggests this “wailing and gnashing of teeth” lasts forever. Instead, it describes the method by which unrepentant 1st Century Jews were put to death in the Valley of Hinnom.

The claim: After His crucifixion, God sent Jesus to Hell where He visited condemned sinners. This claim is based upon combining two verses:

I Peter 3:18-19 (KJV) For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: *By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison* (which is assumed to be Hell).

Psalm 16:10 (KJV) For thou wilt not leave my soul *in Hell*; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

The first verse is true: Christ did visit spirits in prison. But [Peter 3:20](#) (which preachers conveniently leave out), tells us this event occurred in the days of Noah.

Also notice how the second verse predicts what would happen after Christ’s death, an event that would not occur until thousands of years after Noah died. In this passage Hell is translated from the Hebrew *sheh-ole’*, which refers to graves or caves. And indeed, three days after His execution, God resurrected Christ’s body so it was not left in *sheh-ole’*.

Finally, observe how Peter wrote that Jesus visited *spirits*, not dead

people. And this is important, because in II Peter 2:4 (KJV) the apostle reveals that there is a special place of punishing for evil spirits:

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 ...

Here the Greek translated into the English Hell is pronounced *Tartaros*, and means *the abode of the wicked dead*. This word is only used once in the Bible, and it specifically refers to a place of restraint and punishment for unrepentant fallen angels.

More Arguments Against Hell

The prophet Amos predicted the 70 CE destruction of Jerusalem. And notice how he foresaw sinners trying to “dig into Hell” to get away from God’s wrath:

I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered. *Though they dig into Hell* [Hebrew: *sheh-ole*], thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down (Amos 9:1-2 — KJV).

Frankly, it’s hard to imagine why anyone would want to dig into the modern fiery Hell preached about today — especially considering how it’s supposed to have never-ending depths of hot ashes! But to the prophet Amos, “Hell” was just another pit or hole in the ground.

Then in Revelation 20:13, we have an interesting prophecy describing how people are in Hell, but then these same people are delivered *from* Hell for judgment:

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.

So if God judged these sinners and sent them to Hell, then how (and *why?*) are they later delivered from Hell to be judged again? The

explanation is simple: the Greek translated into the English “hell” is our old friend *hades*, which refers to a grave or subterranean cave. Thus it was the grave that gave up its dead, not the mythical Hell of institutionalized Christianity.

But What about God’s Judgment?

The Book of Revelation describes what is sometimes called the “Great White Throne Judgment.” And though the Scriptures related to this subject are somewhat complicated, they conform with everything else we have studied.

Revelation 20:11-14 (KJV):

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. 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.* 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.* And death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

This prophecy describes a time when God resurrects many dead people. And here the Greek translated “Hell” is *hades*, which means the grave. Revelation goes on to describe how these people are judged. But note how God judges these people “according to their works.”

Works?

Does not God grant salvation and eternal life as a free gift? And aren’t we saved by the gift of Christ’s sacrifice, instead of our own human works and accomplishments?

So hold on to that thought.

The prophecy also mentions a “second death” for those whose names are not written in the Book of Life. Yet it does not state these names are

written or erased during this judgment. Instead, the Bible shows that names are written into the Book of Life during various times throughout history ([Exodus 32:32](#), [Daniel 12:1](#), [Luke 10:20](#), [Revelation 3:5](#) & [Revelation 17:8](#)).

So let's tie all these facts together and figure out what is going on here. First, we need to add something from Matthew 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*.

Here Jesus describes how God evaluates (or judges) a person's works to determine their spiritual reward.

But is this not an exact parallel to what we just read in Revelation 20?

Therefore, the White Throne Judgment does not determine whether or not a person is saved. Instead, it determines the saved person's reward, while it assigns eternal punishment (death) to those who obstinately refuse God's offer of salvation.

To learn what happens to sinners who ultimately repent, we must look to some surprising statements made by Jesus Christ.

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## 7 — God's Judgment

Let's begin with John 5:22:

For not even the Father judges anyone, *but He has given all judgment to the Son.*

I suspect many Christians will find this passage astonishing: *God the Father does not judge anyone!*

So we need to set aside the image of the Father sitting on a huge throne, surrounded by angels, fire and lightning, as He slowly and solemnly passes judgment on every human being. Instead, the Father has assigned all judgment to the One who created humanity ([Colossians 1:16](#)), then came to earth to experience the trials and hardships of human life.

And knowing this fact, we should pay special attention to what Jesus said about judging:

Ye judge after the flesh; *I judge no man* (*John 8:15 — KJV*).

So even though God the Father gave Jesus the sole and absolute power to judge humanity, once Jesus received this power, He excused Himself from determining the eternal destiny of human beings!

### Think About This

The supposedly judgmental and vengeful Christian God — the same God institutionalized religion claims will banish most of humanity to eternal torment in Hell — has in the persons of both God the Father and Jesus Christ refused to judge any human being!

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Now I suspect that some readers will find the above statements hard to swallow. Some might suggest that I'm proof-texting, which is the practice of taking Scriptures out of context to suit your own purpose. And frankly, after thousands of years of hearing about a judgmental and vengeful God, it's a huge mind-shift to consider a God that does not judge human beings.

So we need to verify what Jesus said in John 8:15. We can begin by taking a look at Luke 12:13-14. In this passage, one of Christ's disciples asked Jesus to judge between him and his brother. Notice how Jesus responded:

And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, *Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?*

And now we have a second occasion, where Jesus refuses to judge human beings.

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Nevertheless, Scripture clearly states that people will be judged. But if God the Father and Jesus Christ do not personally perform the judging, then how is it accomplished? Jesus explains in John 12:47-48:

If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, *I do not judge him*; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; ***the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.***

*The teachings Jesus shared during His ministry — those same teachings that are recorded within the four gospels of the Bible — are what judges humanity.*

And now we have three statements, where Jesus refuses to personally judge human beings.

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### Judgment for Humanity

So which of our Lord's teachings will judge humanity? Among other things, Jesus commanded people to love their neighbors, and even their enemies:

But I say to you, *love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Matthew 5:44-45).



And here are a few more of our Lord's statements that indicate how human beings will be judged:

Wherefore I say unto you, *all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men* (Matthew 12:31 — KJV).

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me* (John 12:32 — KJV).

And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: *for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world* (John 12:47 — KJV).

### **Think About This**

God knows He placed human beings into an evil world — a world led and inspired by evil spirits over which human beings have little or no control. Therefore, the “justice” of God is to offer salvation to everyone.

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#### **An Explanation of Luke 16:19-31**

Because it's the most complicated subject in this chapter, I've saved Luke 16 for last. Surely there have been thousands of sermons preached about Hell. And many have referenced this story, which seems to describe a sinner's torment, as he is being punished in Hell (in this passage, the word Hell is translated from the Greek *hades*, which means *the grave*).

Nevertheless, many biblical scholars refuse to share this opinion. Here are two examples of what they say:

- “This parable is not theology. It is a vivid story, not a Baedeker's guide to the next world (Karl Baedeker was one of the first individuals to produce travel guides). Such stories as this were current in Jesus' day. They are found in rabbinical sources, and even in Egyptian papyri.” (Interpreter's Bible, Volume VIII (New York: Abingdon Press) p. 29010).
- “In this parable, Jesus was using a familiar folk-tale and adapting it to a new purpose by adding an unfamiliar twist to the end of it.” This

scholar also comments, “the story of the wicked rich man and the pious poor man, whose fortunes were reversed in the afterlife, seems to have come originally from Egypt, and was popular among Jewish teachers ... It was not the intention of Jesus to propagate a strict doctrine of rewards and punishments ... or to give a topographical guide to the afterworld.” (G. B. Caird, in The Gospel of St. Luke (Penguin Books).

Another commentator points out how it’s instructive to carefully review the specifics of this tale, to determine if the narrative is even rational. Here is what he wrote:

- a) If souls indeed are immaterial, with the material body being left in the grave, then how was Lazarus physically “carried” by the angels?
- b) Do souls have eyes, a bosom, the tip of finger and a thirsty tongue?
- c) There was a great gulf fixed between Abraham and the rich man; yet they could both see and converse with each other. Does this mean Heaven is a place where those enjoying bliss and those agonizing in eternal torment can carry on conversations? Is this what a loving God would do to His children? Does God reward the righteous by confining them to a place where they would have to watch sinners suffer eternal agony and listen to the shrieks of the tortured damned?
- d) The tale says that Lazarus went to Abraham’s bosom. But when Jesus spoke the words quoted in Luke, Abraham was unquestionably dead and without his reward (See Heb. 11:8, 13, 39-40).

And here are a few more comments from biblical scholars, explaining why they decided that Jesus based His parable on a common Jewish fable:

- 1) Jesus used the word “father” for Abraham, despite His own command to call no man father. However, “Our father Abraham” is a common phrase in the Mishnah (Aboth 3:12; 5:2,3,6,19; 6:10; Taanith 2:4,5);
- 2) Surviving Jewish texts of the period show that Luke 16:19-30 was drawn from, and in parody of, popular First Century teachings concerning a division in the underworld between the fires of Hades and the paradise where Abraham and other patriarchs dwelt;

3) Regarding martyrdom, ancient Jews wrote: “After our death in this fashion Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will receive us and all our forefathers will praise us” (4 Maccabees 13:17 in JOSH. Charlesworth, *The OT Pseudepigrapha*, Doubleday, 1983);

4) Early Jewish works describe the heavenly realm as being separated from the fires by a river. In one apocryphal work this river could be crossed only in an angelic boat: “You have escaped from the abyss and Hades, you will now cross over the crossing place ... then he ran to all the righteous ones, namely Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Enoch, Elijah and David” (Apocalypse of Zephaniah 9:2. Charlesworth, *op. cit.*). The same 1st Century Jewish work also shows the popular belief concerning the role of Abraham as intercessor for those in torment in the fiery part of Hades: “As they looked at all the torments they called out, praying before the Lord Almighty saying, ‘We pray you on behalf of those who are in all these torments so you might have mercy on all of them.’ And when I saw them, I said to the angel who spoke with me, ‘Who are they?’ He said ‘Those who beseech the Lord are Abraham and Isaac and Jacob’” (Apoc. Zeph. 11:1~2);

5) In another Jewish work Abraham causes some of the dead to return from Hades to life: “Then Abraham arose and fell upon the earth, and [the Angel of] Death with him, and God sent a spirit of life into the dead and they were made alive again” (Testament of Abraham A 18:11).

Then finally in John 3:13, Jesus said, “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man.” So when Jesus spoke this parable, no human being was yet in Heaven — and this included Abraham.

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Therefore Luke 16 cannot be a literal story about eternal torment in Hell. All evidence points to Jesus responding to the Jews with one of their own religious fables, as a prelude to the message He gave at the end of His presentation:

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If

they hear not Moses and the prophets, *neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead* (Luke 16:29-31).

Our Lord used an ancient Jewish fable to foretell how the Jew's would remain blind to their sins and unable to recognize their Savior — even after they watched Him miraculously rise from the dead.

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8 — Conclusion

I want you to read what a retired Episcopal bishop says about the doctrine of Hell:

“I don’t think Hell exists. I happen to believe in life after death, but I don’t think it’s got a thing to do with reward and punishment. Religion is always in the control business, and that’s something people don’t really understand. It’s in a guilt-producing control business. And if you have Heaven as a place where you’re rewarded for your goodness, and Hell is a place where you’re punished for your evil, then you sort of have control of the population. And so they create this fiery place which has quite literally scared the Hell out of a lot of people, throughout Christian history. And it’s part of a control tactic.” — Bishop John Shelby Spong, Year 2016 ([watch the complete interview](#)).

Winston Churchill said, “A lie gets halfway around the world, before the truth has a chance to get its pants on.” Satan told one lie to Adam and Eve — that human beings cannot die because they have eternal life — and this fabrication has found its way into the mind of almost every Christian.

Yet here is truth: if we choose to remain unrepentant sinners, our punishment will be an eternal death without consciousness and any chance of a resurrection. As [Romans 6:23](#) reminds us: *the wages of sin is death*.

The Greek historian Polybius noted how pagan religions used the concept of fiery eternal punishing to keep worshipers in line — and institutionalized Christianity was quick to pick up on this fact. What better way to encourage Christians to attend church and look up to the clergy, than to promote a distant and judgmental God, one who would like nothing better than to torture most of humanity for all eternity? Furthermore, what sane Christian would turn down the opportunity to have the professional ministry insulate them from such a terrible and demanding Deity?

Think About This

Institutional Christianity's doctrine of Hell is a marvelous tool for promoting church attendance, growing the stature of Christian institutions, and increasing offerings and tithes.

The Real Hell

It's been said the best lies contain an element of truth. And indeed, the doctrine of Hell does contain a seed of truth. For you see, there really is an eternally burning Hell — but it's not the place where God sends evil men and women. As we've already read in II Peter 2:4 (KJV), it's the place where God imprisons wicked spirits:

For if God spared not *the angels that sinned*, but cast them down to Hell [Greek: Tartaroo], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment ...

Now add what Jesus said in Matthew 25:41 (KJV):

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*.

Here Jesus was speaking to His disciples, warning how those who rejected His 1st Century calling would be destroyed in the fires of a future Roman war. Yet there's a dual aspect to this verse: *God prepared "fire" for the Devil and His angels — not for sinning human beings*.

So consider the irony: the Devil tricked the entire Christian world into believing that God created a place of fiery punishment for humanity — when in reality, God prepared everlasting fire to punish Satan and the demons.

Humanity's Enemy: God's Enemy

In Revelation 12:9-10 (KJV), one of the holy angels had something to say about Satan:

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the

Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: *for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

Most Christians understand how Satan works hard at accusing Christians. Yet the Devil has been just as busy falsely accusing God of creating an eternal place of torment for human beings. Notice what was foremost in Jesus' mind about the Devil:

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. *Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies* (John 8:44).

Jesus has not forgotten the Devil's lies to Adam and Eve — and the damage they have done to His gospel (the “Good” News).

God is not a vengeful monster who condemns human sinners to suffer the painful agony of eternal torment. Instead, God takes the most merciful approach possible for angry and unrepentant sinners: they will rest at peace in eternal death.

The doctrine of Hell is the premier creation of the Father of Lies — don't believe this Satanic doctrine!

[Return to Home Page](#)

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## 9 — Footnotes

[111 http://www.gallup.com/poll/11770/eternal-destinations-americans-believe-heaven-hell.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/poll/11770/eternal-destinations-americans-believe-heaven-hell.aspx)

[112 http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/war-6.htm](http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/war-6.htm)

Book 6, Chapter 9, paragraph 3

[113 http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8604-jerusalem#916](http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8604-jerusalem#916)

See “Destruction of the City (70)”

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10 — Scripture References

[John 15:15](#) “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”

[Luke 23:36-37](#) The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up to Him, offering Him sour wine, and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself!”

[Matthew 27:44](#) The robbers who had been crucified with Him were also insulting Him with the same words.

[I Thessalonians 5:19-21](#) Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good.

[I John 5:7](#) “For there are three that testify” (NASB) — compare with errant KJV: For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”

[Matthew 18:16](#) But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.

[II Kings 16:3](#) But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and even made his son pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out from before the sons of Israel.

[II Kings 23:10](#) He also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire for Molech.

[II Chronicles 28:3](#) Moreover, he burned incense in the valley of Ben-hinnom and burned his sons in fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out before the sons of Israel.

[Jeremiah 7:31](#) They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, and it did not come into My mind.

[Jude 1:7](#) Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange

flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

[Exodus 21:6](#) Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.

[I Peter 3:20](#) who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

[Exodus 32:32](#) But now, if You will, forgive their sin — and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!

[Daniel 12:1](#) Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.

[Luke 10:20](#) Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.

[Revelation 3:5](#) He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

[Revelation 17:8](#) The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

[Colossians 1:16](#) For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

[Romans 6:23](#) For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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# Table of Contents

Other Book Volumes

How to Use This Book

Introduction

1 — The Fiction of Hell

2 — Jesus and Eternal Punishing

3 — Questioning Hell

4 — The Bible and Eternal Life

5 — Promoting the Hell Lie

6 — Theologians Promote Hell

7 — God's Judgment

8 — Conclusion

9 — Footnotes

10 — Scripture References