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# The Scriptural Doctrine of Eternal Punishment

M. Max Morgan

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THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF  
ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

by

M. Max Morgan

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the

Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

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APPROVAL SHEET

This Thesis has been approved by the following faculty committee:

First reader: H. W. Byrnes Approved May 4, 1954

Second reader: Kenneth P. Wesche Approved May 4, 1954

Prof. of Thesis Form H. W. Byrnes Approved May 4, 1954

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Problem

Statement of the Problem. Many questions have been planted in the minds of good Christian people by the myriad of cults which have spread abroad their doctrines. At least four of these cults, Spiritism,<sup>1</sup> Adventism,<sup>2</sup> Jehovah's Witnesses,<sup>3</sup> and Modernism<sup>4</sup> are faulty on their teaching of eternal punishment. The problem here presented was: What is the Bible teaching on the future punishment of the wicked?

Objectives. It was the purpose of this study to determine clearly and accurately what the Scriptures teach concerning the future punishment of the wicked. With this general objective in mind, the work was guided by the following specific objectives.

- (1) To set forth the Scriptural teaching of eternal punishment.
- (2) To determine the teaching concerning the place of eternal punishment.
- (3) To determine the nature of eternal punishment as taught in the Scriptures.
- (4) To determine the teaching concerning those who shall abide in the place of eternal punishment.
- (5) To set forth some reasons for eternal punishment.

Justification of the Study. The author has been approached repeatedly by workers representing the Watchtower Bible and Tract



Society. These people are members of the cult currently called Jehovah's Witnesses, formerly called Russellites after their founder, Charles Taze Russell. The members of this cult and other cults pose a menace for many people today and threaten the faith of unborn generations.<sup>5</sup> Many members of evangelical churches need to know the sound Scriptural teaching concerning eternal punishment so that they can ably refute the false cults.

#### B. Limitations and Method of Procedure

Limitations. This was primarily a New Testament study, because most of the teaching on eternal punishment is in the New Testament, only veiled teaching being found in the Old Testament.

Method of Procedure. Because this was a Scriptural study, the first step was to locate the Scriptural passages that treated this subject by the use of Cruden's Complete Concordance, Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament was used to obtain correct definitions of Greek words.

The theological works consulted on this subject have been listed in the bibliography. The study was primarily one of the Scriptures themselves with reference being made to various scholars for aid in interpretation. All through the study help was given from faculty members of Western Evangelical Seminary through personal interviews. The librarian gave much assistance in the location of material.

The American Standard Version, 1901, of the Bible was used and was quoted in every instance throughout the thesis.

## C. Definitions of Terms

Eternal or everlasting. Thayer defined *αἰώνιος, αἰών*, as without end, never to cease.<sup>6</sup> Wiley said, the Greek words *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* literally and properly denote endless duration.<sup>7</sup>

Sheol. "The word sometimes means indefinitely, the grave, a place or state of the dead; and others, definitely, a place or state of the dead into which the element of misery and punishment enters."<sup>8</sup>

Hades. The word, Hades, like Sheol, as defined in Peloubet's Bible Dictionary sometimes means merely the grave as in Acts 2:31, but in other instances it means punishment as in Luke 16:23.<sup>9</sup> It is to be noted according to Witmer that Sheol and Hades do not refer to the final place to which the wicked will be committed.<sup>10</sup>

Gehenna. "Gehenna is compounded from the two Hebrew words Ge and Hinnom, and means, "The valley of Hinnom." In the New Testament it is called Gehenna (*Γέεννα*). The word refers to the torture and punishment of the future world."<sup>11</sup>

Destruction (*ὅλεθρον*). Generally this word conveys the idea of perishing with the included idea of misery. Particularly, it means the destruction which consists in the loss of eternal life.<sup>12</sup>

Death (*θάνατος*). Thayer has defined this word in three ways: (1) The death of the body, i.e., that separation of the soul from the body by which the life on earth is ended; (2) The loss of that life which alone is worthy of the name, i.e., the misery of soul arising from sin, which begins on earth but lasts and increases after the death of the body; (3) The miserable state of the wicked dead in



hell.<sup>13</sup>

#### D. Organization of the Thesis

The main body of this thesis was begun with a discussion of the Scriptural fact of eternal punishment. In the Second Chapter, immortality, the intermediate state, the place of eternal punishment, the duration of eternal punishment and the suffering of eternal punishment were discussed. Some objections to eternal punishment were answered.

In Chapter Three the place of final retribution was shown to be apart from Hades, Sheol, Tartarus, and the Abyss.

The nature of the punishment in Hell was treated in Chapter Four. The treatment was divided into two main divisions, separation and torment. Chapter Five covered those who will inhabit the place of final separation, basing some of the conclusions upon the truth taught in the parables of Jesus.

Some reasons for the fact of eternal punishment were set forth in Chapter Six. There was nothing found written that dealt directly with this subject, but the writer used some theological studies on the attributes of God and applied them as reasons. The thesis was closed with a summary and conclusions in Chapter Seven.



## CHAPTER II

### THE FACT OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

It has been the author's conviction that eternal punishment is a fact and that it is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Convictions and opinions are not enough evidence. It has been the purpose of the writer to carefully examine the Scriptures and to determine as objectively as possible, the teaching found therein on this vital subject. This subject has been the center of theological conflicts at various times and is a matter of vital concern for all men. If there is such a thing as eternal punishment, then all men are in grave danger. If there is no such thing, then all men have the right to be delivered from the fear of it.

#### A. Scriptural Proofs of Future Punishment

The objective in this chapter was fourfold: first, to determine the teaching of unconditional immortality; second, to determine the teaching of future punishment; third, to set forth the teaching concerning the duration of future punishment; and fourth, to consider some objections.

Unconditional Immortality. Because those of the annihilation school of thought have spread abroad their doctrine of annihilation, it was evident that before anything concrete could be established concerning punishment after death the question of unconditional immortality would have to be determined. <sup>14</sup> The fundamental doctrine of the annihilationists is this:

The death with which God threatened sin, and which actually became the doom of the sinful race was absolute extinction of being. Only believers in Christ are delivered from this doom; and immortality is the "eternal life" which was promised to his followers. 15

It is obvious from the above statement that with the annihilationists the immortality of the soul is made conditional and not universally true of all men whether righteous or unrighteous. If this theory is true, then it logically follows that eternal punishment of the unrighteous is automatically ruled out.

Since the author has been concerned primarily with the future of the wicked he has considered primarily those verses of Scripture that treat the future state of the wicked more than those which speak of the future of the righteous.

The angel, in speaking to the Prophet Daniel, spoke of the last days, saying, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt" (Dan. 12:2). Jesus said to His disciples:

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 warn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: *τὴν γέενναν* yea, I say unto you, Fear him. (Luke 12:4-5)

And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt. 10:28)

According to Thayer, the word, destroy, in the English, which has been translated from the Greek word, *ἀπολέσας*, carries the meaning of giving over or devoting to eternal misery. 16

The following passage spoken by Jesus carries much information



pertinent to this study of unconditional immortality.

Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in they lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one go to 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, if one rise from the dead. (Luke 16:19-31)

The following observations were made from the passage of scripture dealing with the rich man and Lazarus: (1) Both the rich man and Lazarus lived on the earth. (2) Both men suffered physical death. (3) Both existed after physical death. (4) Lazarus

was comforted, while the rich man was tormented. (5) They were in separate places. (6) The rich man remembered Lazarus. (7) The rich man remembered his earthly life and his five brethren.

Three of the above observations could not have been true if both Lazarus and the rich man had not been in a state of conscious existence following physical death. The whole conversation of the rich man and Abraham prove that this was the one and same rich man that had lived upon the earth and fared sumptuously every day, and that he continued to exist in a place of torment following his physical death. This passage teaches the fact of unconditional immortality.

Jesus said that it is better that some part of the body be removed rather than enter into damnation whole.

And if thine eye cause thee to stumble,  
cast it out: it is good for thee to enter  
into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather  
than having two eyes to be cast into hell;  
where their worm dieth not, and the fire is  
not quenched. (Mark 9:47-48)

Dr. Adam Clarke said that the worm in Mark 9:48 is the bitter reflection that they might have been saved but would not.<sup>17</sup> This implies that there must be a person existing in order that there be bitter reflection. Therefore, immortality is indicated and, in this case, was not for the righteous, but for the wicked.

The third angel in the Apocalypse gave another passage worthy of examination on this subject.

And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or



upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; 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 goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name.  
(Rev. 14:9-11)

The words, for ever and ever, (Rev. 14:11) are translated from the Greek words, *εἰς αἰῶνας αἰώνων*, which translated more literally would be unto ages of ages. The passage cited speaks of "the smoke of their torment" as ascending upward for ever and ever. The possessive pronoun, their, proves that some being with conscious existence is suffering the torment and the words, for ever and ever, speak of endless duration. These two facts prove that evil souls are immortal as well as the righteous who receive everlasting life.

The angel said to Daniel that men would be awakened, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt. Only a conscious soul can experience life or contempt, and only an immortal soul can experience everlasting life or everlasting contempt.

In the light of the passages quoted and the words examined, the wicked are not annihilated, but are immortal.

The Intermediate State. With the fact of unconditional immortality established, the question of concern becomes that of the intermediate state, the period immediately following death and preceding the final judgment. That there is an interval between death and the day of judgment is accepted by all who accept the Bible as the Word of God.<sup>18</sup> There are some differences of opinion, however,

as to the state of the dead who are awaiting the day of judgment. The question that confronted the writer was the state of the dead immediately after death. In order to set forth the teaching of the Scriptures, it was necessary to examine the meaning and usage of the Hebrew word Sheol, and the Greek word Hades, and the Greek word Paradise.

The Hebrew word Sheol corresponds to the Greek word Hades and speaks of one and the same place, the invisible world of departed spirits.<sup>19</sup> In Acts 2:27, Hades was used to translate the Hebrew word Sheol as it was used in Psalm 16:10:

For thou wilt not leave my soul to  
Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thy holy  
one to see corruption. (Psalm 16:10)

Because thou wilt not leave my soul  
unto Hades, Neither wilt thou give thy Holy  
One to see corruption. (Acts 2:27)

The meaning of the word Sheol is rather indefinite. It was used to signify the grave, or the place or state of the dead who were righteous. Jacob said of himself when he received word that Joseph was dead: "...For I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning..." (Gen. 37:35) Also the word Sheol has been used as being the place or the state of the dead into which the element of misery and punishment enter.<sup>20</sup> David spoke of this meaning when he said:

For Great is thy lovingkindness  
toward me; and thou hast delivered my  
soul from the lowest Sheol.  
(Psalm 86:13)

In commenting on this verse Dr. Adam Clarke said, "This must mean more than the grave; a hell below hell -- a place of perdition for the soul, as the grave is a place of corruption for the body."<sup>21</sup>



According to Wiley, both words Sheol and Hades mean a place of the departed spirits of both good and evil with the evil being in torment and the righteous in a state of paradise. Sheol, therefore, has been conceived as a place of the departed spirits which is divided into two departments - - paradise, a place of bliss, and Gehenna, a place of misery and torment.<sup>22</sup> The place of bliss was referred to by Jesus as Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). Thayer has given the meaning of the term, Abraham's bosom, as being a partaker of the same blessedness as Abraham in paradise.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, Jesus ascribed to Hades the element of punishment when he said that the rich man was in torment (Luke 16:23).

Paradise (παράδεισος) occurs only three times in the New Testament and in all cases referred to the blessed life of the righteous beyond physical death. Jesus said to the penitent thief, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Paul referred to paradise as being connected with the third heaven (II Cor. 12:4).<sup>24</sup> St. John in The Revelation 2:7, used the word, paradise, as being the place where the tree of life is, "in the Garden of God."<sup>25</sup>

Paul spoke of the state immediately following death as that of being absent from the body and being at home with the Lord (II Cor. 5:8). There is no reference here to the final judgment or an interval between physical death and being present with the Lord.

Such terms, which represent places of torment or punishment and bliss, must of necessity speak of the presence of conscious

beings. There can be no bliss or torment where there are no conscious beings. Therefore, sufficient evidence has been given to conclude that upon physical death the departed spirits enter immediately into their respective states and places of punishment or bliss as their character dictates. Punishment begins even in the intermediate state.

Future Punishment Consists in Suffering. Those who cling to the annihilationist view have maintained that the force of divine punishment is aimed at the final extinction of the wicked rather than the positive punishment of the sinning soul.<sup>26</sup> Future punishment consists in anguish and suffering of the wicked soul. Immortality of the wicked has already been established and therefore is sufficient to refute the argument that the souls of the wicked are annihilated, but more evidence has been gathered purposing primarily to show that future punishment consists in suffering and therefore, cannot mean annihilation.

Jesus taught that there were degrees of punishment. In speaking to his disciples concerning the judgment that would come upon the houses or cities that would not receive them or their words Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Matt. 10:15). Again, in upbraiding the cities wherein he had done most of His mighty works, He said:

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it



shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. (Matt. 11:21-24)

And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes... (Luke 12:47-48)

The Scriptures cited establish the fact that Jesus taught that there are degrees of punishment.<sup>27</sup> This being true, it is illogical to defend the doctrine of annihilation. Annihilation makes all punishment equal regardless of the enormity of sin. This has been shown not to be the teaching of the Scriptures. The following Scriptures have been examined that have thrown additional light upon the punishment of the wicked.

Though many of the Scriptural terms and phrases used to describe future punishment are metaphorical, yet they represent a dreadful reality, and were designed to convey the idea of the worst torments and the most terrible anguish possible.<sup>28</sup> Men have been told by Jesus that to call a brother a fool places one in danger of "the hell of fire" (Matt. 5:22). The rich man cried out unto Abraham to send Lazarus to put his finger in water and touch it to his tongue because he was "in anguish in this flame" (Luke 16:24). Isaiah has asked, "who among us can dwell with devouring fire? who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14). Jesus said,

" . . . it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire" (Matt. 18:8). Speaking of the last judgment, Jesus said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous shall go into eternal life" (Matt. 25:46). Paul wrote of the wicked at the coming of Jesus as those "who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thes. 1:9). "And angels that kept not their own habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). The third angel in Revelation said with a great voice that those who had worshipped the beast were to 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 goeth up for ever and ever;  
and they have no rest day and night. . .  
(Rev. 14:10-11)

Jesus closed the parable of the net and fishes with these words,

"So shall it be in the end of the  
world: the angels shall come forth, and  
sever the wicked from among the righteous,  
and shall cast them into the furnace of  
fire: there shall be the weeping and the  
gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:49-50).

Jude declared that Sodom and Gomorrah "are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 7). The unprofitable servant was cast "out into the outer darkness" (Matt. 25:30). Finally, Jesus said that hell was a place "where



their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48).

Because the nature of eternal punishment was treated in a later chapter, the terms used from the Scriptures already quoted and others that present the idea of suffering were enumerated. Surely such terms as: "weeping and gnashing of teeth," "outer darkness," "eternal fire," "hell of fire," "furnace of fire," "smoke of their torment," "tormented in this flame," "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," and "no rest day nor night," carry sufficient force for the unbiased reader to be convinced that the Lord and His inspired writers meant to make the terrible fact clear that the punishment of the wicked is positive suffering.

#### B. The Duration of Future Punishment

Word Study. Binney and Steele said that the strongest possible terms were used to express the endless duration of future punishment.<sup>29</sup> The principal words employed to express the duration of the doom of sin were *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*.<sup>30</sup> These were the words by which the Scriptures expressed the eternal things of God. "Now unto the King eternal (*τῶν αἰώνων*), immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever (*αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*)" (I Tim. 1:17). And again, "To Him be the dominion for ever and ever" (*αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*) (I Peter 5:11). Few would want to limit the meaning of these words as applied to the things of God. All would say that these words certainly speak of the eternity of God. The same terms were used when speaking of the duration

of future punishment. Additional references in which the words

*αἰών* or *αἰώνιος* are used to speak of the eternity of God are:

For that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed for ever. (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*) (Romans 1:25)

Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*) (Romans 9:5)

For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen. (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*) (Romans 11:36)

The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, he who is blessed forevermore (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*) knoweth that I lie not. (II Corinthians 11:31)

To whom be the glory for ever and ever (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*) (Unto the ages of the ages) (Galatians 1:5)

Now unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen. (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*) (Phil. 4:20)

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*) (I Timothy 1:17)

The eternity of Jesus is likewise determined from the use of the same Greek terms. It is written, "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever" (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*) (Luke 1:33). And again, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever" (*εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*) (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus Himself, in speaking to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos, said, "I am the first and the last, and the Living one: and I was dead, and behold, I am



alive for evermore. . ." (τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ) (Rev. 1:17-18).

Again it must be stated that the same terms used to declare the fact of the eternity of God and the eternal existence of His Son, Jesus Christ, are the same terms used to describe the duration of future punishment. Additional references using αἰών or αἰώνιος as used in speaking of the eternity of Jesus are:

. . .Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος ) (Hebrews 1:8)

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen. (εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος , unto the day of eternity) (II Peter 3:18)

. . .unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων) (Revelation 5:13)

The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ) (Revelation 11:15)

I am the first and the last, and Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for ever more, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων) (Revelation 1:17-18)

These same words are used to declare the eternity of the Holy Spirit. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, (Πνεύματος αἰωνίου ) offered himself, without blemish unto God" (Heb. 9:14).

The Author of the Holy Scriptures uses again the strongest terms possible in speaking of the duration of the future state of

blessedness for those who die in the Lord. Jesus said that the righteous shall go into eternal life, (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) (Matt. 25:46). Those who have left fathers and mothers and homes for His Name's sake shall be repaid in this life and inherit eternal life, (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) (Matt. 19:29). In these two, and many other passages, the righteous are promised the life (ζωὴν) of the ages (αἰώνων).

But he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) (Mark 10:30)

...that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) (John 3:15-16)

But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life. (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) (John 4:14)

If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever. (ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) (John 6:51,58)

And I give unto them eternal life (ζωὴν αἰώνιον); and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) (John 10:28)

And whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) (John 11:26)

To them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life. (ζωὴν αἰώνιον) (Romans 2:7)



And the world passeth away,  
and the lust thereof: but he that do-  
eth the will of God abideth for ever.  
(*μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* )  
(I John 2:17)

The above quoted passages all contain the word, *αἰώνιον* or some form of the root word, *αἰών* . In each reference cited the meaning is that of endlessness or of eternity. No one would want to limit the meaning of these words as used to promise everlasting life to the righteous. The solemn truth follows that future punishment is expressed in the use of the same words. 31

All that has been said, concerning the use of the Greek words that speak of eternity, was said to prepare the mind of the reader to consider soberly their use in the Holy Scriptures which speak of future punishment. For emphasis several Scriptural references were quoted inserting the Greek words that pertain to the endless duration of future punishment.

Jesus said, "it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. (*τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον* )" (Matt. 18:8). It is evident here that Jesus is comparing limited handicap with unlimited punishment. When He spoke of the day when He would come in His glory with all the angels with Him, He spoke, saying unto the wicked, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire (*τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον* ) which is prepared for the devil and his angels:" (Matt. 25:41) In another place He spoke of the disposition of the wicked thus, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment" (*κόλασιν αἰώνιον*) (Matt. 25:46). One who has blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, "...hath never forgiveness,

(οὐκ ἔχει ἀφεσιν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ) but is guilty of an eternal sin (αἰωνίου ) (Mark 3:29).

Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, spoke of the fate of the unrighteous at the coming of Jesus in these words:

And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction (ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον) from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might. (II Thes. 1:7-9)

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the "eternal judgment (κρίματος αἰωνίου)" (Heb. 6:2). Jude refers to the "punishment of eternal fire (πυρὸς αἰωνίου)" (Jude 7). The book of the Revelation says, "and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; (εἰς αἰῶνας αἰώνων)" (Rev. 14:11).

If language means anything at all, the Bible surely and without any doubt teaches the doctrine of eternal punishment. If the same words used to express the eternity of God, the eternity of Jesus Christ, and the eternity of the Holy Spirit, are used to express the duration of future punishment; common sense demands that punishment be eternal. The future state of the righteous and the wicked were described by Jesus in one breath by the use of the same word to express the duration of that state. He said, "And these shall go away into eternal (αἰώνιον ) punishment: but the righteous into eternal (αἰώνιον ) life" (Matt. 25:46). Wiley stated that it would be inconsistent to



feel that Jesus did not mean eternal in both cases.<sup>32</sup>

Some Objections Considered. Some of the objections that have been made by the annihilationists to the endless duration of future punishment have been considered here. These objections have been based on a few words which, on the surface, seem to give forth the idea of destruction and total extinction.<sup>33</sup> These words were examined in their usage to determine as nearly as possible the meaning intended in the context in which they appear.

According to Thayer, the word perish (ἀπόλλυμαι) in the most common usage, means to destroy, to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to, ruin. It is used in this manner in Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34, 17:27-29; Jude 5. It has been used in the sense of to kill in Matthew 2:13, 12:14; Mark 9:22, 11:18; and John 10:10. Contextually this word has been used in the sense of to declare that one must be put to death Matthew 27:20. Metaphorically speaking it has been used in the sense of denoting or to give over to eternal misery, "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy (ἀπολέσαι) both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). Also, "One only is the lawgiver and judge, even he who is able to save and to destroy (ἀπολέσαι): but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor" (James 4:12).<sup>34</sup>

Tropically speaking perish (ἀπόλλυμαι) has been used to express the idea of: "incurring the loss of true or eternal life: to be delivered up to eternal misery": "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish (ἀπόληται)..." (John 3:16).

"...and I guarded them and not one of them perished (ἀπώλετο), but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled" (John 17:12). Paul spoke of the future of those who know not the law: "For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish (ἀπολοῦνται) without the law" (Romans 2:12). 35

Paul used the word, perish, in passages where he contrasted those who have eternal life with those who are to be consigned to eternal misery: "For the word of the cross is to them that perish (ἀπολλυμένοις) literally, (are perishing) foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18). "For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved and in them that perish (ἀπολλυμένοις) (II Cor. 2:15). "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish (ἀπολλυμένοις, are perishing). Paul spoke of the work of the lawless one that is to be revealed as coming according to the works of Satan, "...with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish (ἀπολλυμένοις): because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thes. 2:10).

It seems evident that the meaning of the word, perish, varies according to the usage, and therefore in some instances does not mean extinction, but rather existence in a state of misery. 36

Destruction or perdition, (ἀπώλεια). The word destruction in the Greek is from the root word ἀπόλλυμι from which the English word perish is taken. According to Thayer's Lexicon, the passing meaning of the word is, a perishing, a ruin, a destruction. Generally it means the idea of perishing with the included idea of



misery. Particularly it means, the destruction which consists in the loss of eternal life, eternal misery, perdition, the lot of those excluded from the kingdom of God.<sup>37</sup> "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition (*ἀπώλειαν*) (Rev. 17:8). The Apostle Paul said that the end of the enemies of the cross of Christ is "perdition" (*ἀπώλεια*). This term, perdition, has been used as opposite to the saving of the soul in Hebrews 10:39. The term, "destruction" is used to designate ruin as compared to life in Matthew 7:13-14. "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction (*ἀπώλειαν*). Thayer has said that "*ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας*" is a man doomed to eternal misery, (II Thes. 2:3 of Antichrist and of Judas in John 17:12)."<sup>38</sup> The meaning of the words, destruction, and perdition, therefore do not mean extinction or annihilation.<sup>39</sup>

Dr. Torrey has said,

When anything is said to perish (the verb from which the noun commonly translated "destruction" and "perdition" is derived) it is not meant that it ceased to be but that it is ruined, that it no longer subserved the use for which it was designed.<sup>40</sup>

The word, death, has been relied upon by some annihilationists, according to Martin and Klamm, to prove that non-existence is the end of the unrepentant.<sup>41</sup> The Bible speaks of death in the sense of separation.<sup>42</sup> "But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth," (I Tim. 5:6), and again, "and you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). These two quotations have borne out Dr. O. A. Torrey's definition of death when

he said:

The word, 'death' is applied to sinners while still existing, but existing in a wrong way--while they have life in the sense of existence, but not true life, real life, in the sense of right existence. <sup>43</sup>

Revelation 21:8, supports Dr. Torrey's definition.

But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

The death spoken of here is the death which is the final outcome of a life of sin and unbelief and is defined in this verse as a portion in the place of torment. <sup>44</sup>

#### C. Summary

Man is unconditionally immortal and is never annihilated. Immediately following physical death man enters into the intermediate state to be punished or comforted. The punishment has been shown to be positive suffering. The final disposition of the wicked is consignment to punishment that is of endless duration.

Some objections to the teachings of eternal punishment were considered and found not valid.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE PLACE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

##### A. Name

This chapter has dealt with the teaching regarding the place of final doom or eternal punishment. Brief mention was made of Hades, Tartarus, and the abyss in order that confusion in the use of these terms be avoided as much as possible. No attempt has been made to defend any particular philosophy but an effort was made to present the plain teaching of the Word of God.

Hades (*á'hs*). A. T. Robertson has defined Hades in this way, "Hades is technically the unseen world, the Hebrew Sheol, the land of the departed, that is death."<sup>45</sup> Jesus employed this term in the sense of being a place of torment. "And the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16:22-23). Peter employed the term in a different sense in his sermon on the day of Pentecost when he said, "he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption" (Acts 2:31). Christ was not in torment as was the rich man, but he was in Hades. Hades, therefore, is a comprehensive word which means the place of all dead in which the righteous had a portion termed by the Jews as "Abraham's bosom," and the wicked had a portion which was a place of torment. <sup>46</sup>

In his dialogue with Abraham, the rich man spoke of his brethren still living on the earth (Luke 16:28). The fact that his brethren

were still alive on the earth indicates that the final judgment of God had not yet taken place and that the rich man had yet to be reunited with his resurrected body and be finally judged. This evidence plus the statement in the Revelation, ". . . death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death even the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14), has shown that the rich man was in an intermediate state in the intermediate place called Hades. If this be true, and it is, then Hades is not to be confused with the final abode of the wicked.

Tartarus (*τάρταρος*): This word has been used only once in the Bible and it is employed concerning the fate of the angels that sinned.

For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell (*τάρταρος*), and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. (II Peter 2:4)

Thayer said that Tartarus answers to the Gehenna of the Jews.<sup>47</sup> It is doubtful that Thayer meant the identical place, but rather the resemblance to Gehenna was in the nature of punishment. It was seen that there is no mention made in the passage quoted of man being cast into Tartarus. This being the case, it is evident that Tartarus is not the final abode of the wicked.

Abyss (*αβύσσου*). This word has been defined by Thayer as bottomless or the immeasurable depth.<sup>48</sup> The primary concern with this term was its relationship to the place of final torment.

St. Luke has made the following use of the term: "And they entreated him that he would not command them to depart into the abyss"



(Luke 8:31). These words were spoken by the demons that had been cast out of the man of the Gerasenes. St. Paul employed the word in speaking of Christ, "Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)" (Romans 10:7). St. John in the book of the Revelation, spoke of the abyss thus:

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth: and there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss. And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there went up a smoke out of the pit, as a smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. (Rev. 9:1-2)

They (locusts, v.3) have over them as king the angel of the abyss: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue he hath the name Apollyon. (Rev. 9:11)

And when they (the two witnesses, v.3) shall have finished their testimony, the beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. (Rev. 11:7)

The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition... (Rev. 17:8)

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time. (Rev. 20:1-3)

Once, in the Scriptures that have been cited, the term abyss seems to be employed to designate a receptacle of the dead in that

Paul refers to Christ as having been in the abyss (Rom. 10:7). In all of the other Scriptures that were noted, the meaning seems to be that of a place of imprisonment or torment for wicked powers. Webster's dictionary has given this definition, "The infernal region, including the abode of the dead, corresponding to Sheol; the place of punishment of the wicked - the deep place - abode, a prison of the evil powers."<sup>49</sup> Thayer defined the abyss thus, "Both as a common receptacle of the dead and especially as the abode of demons."<sup>50</sup> All the passages quoted have spoken of the abyss in a time before the final judgment. Wordsworth said that, "The abyss is not the lake of fire into which Satan will not be cast until the end of the world. It is the present abode of wicked spirits."<sup>51</sup> Hence the abyss is not the place of eternal punishment.

Hell (γέεννα) Eternal fire, Lake of Fire. Γέεννα means the "valley of Hinnom, "originally the name of the deep valley south of Jerusalem, later a name given to the place of torment. The full form of the name, "The Valley of the son of Hinnom" appears in II Kings 23:10.<sup>52</sup> In this valley idolatrous Jews once offered their children to Molech.<sup>53</sup> The fire burned continually in this valley of Hinnom. The Greek word, γέεννα, has been consistently translated in the American Standard Version, 1901, into the English word, Hell. In the American Standard Version, 1901, Hell appears only when the final torment is presented.

The place of eternal punishment must be the place where all wicked beings are cast following the final judgment. Passages that contain Hell, eternal fire, the Lake of Fire, and furnace of fire



have been examined to determine the place of eternal punishment.

Jesus said:

And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell.  
(Matt. 5:29)

It was noted that Jesus taught that the whole body is to be cast into Hell. In another passage He said, "but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

Additional Scriptures carrying the same sense are: Mark 9:47;

Mark 9:48; Matthew 18:9.

Since Hell is a place into which both soul and body are cast, and since the wicked do not receive their resurrected bodies until just before the final judgment, it is the place of eternal punishment.

The place of final doom must speak of endless duration. Jesus said, ". . .it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire (τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον ) (Matt. 18:8). As He spoke of the judgment, Jesus said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire (τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον ) which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

The fact that Jesus said the fire was eternal (Matt. 18:8), and that he spoke of the wicked being consigned to it at the judgment, and that it is the fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41), has led to the conclusion that eternal fire is the

place of eternal punishment and therefore synonymous with hell.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the net the time setting is the end of the world.

As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 13:40-42)

So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the righteous; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. (Matt. 13:49-50)

Jesus spoke specifically of the time as being the end of the world (*aiōras* -age) and of the event as being the separation of the righteous from the wicked. These times and the events speak of the final disposition of the wicked. The place of their consignment was said to be the furnace of fire. The furnace of fire, therefore, is another name given to the place of eternal punishment.

The last name, considered as being the place of eternal fire, was the Lake of Fire. This term is confined to the Book of the Revelation.

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

And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:15)



But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death. (Rev. 21:8)

And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:14)

Following the period of one thousand years during which the Devil is to be chained in the abyss, he shall be loosed for a short time. Directly following the short time of the Devil's release, he is to be cast into the Lake of Fire and tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:10). This is his final doom.

Wicked men, those whose names were not found written in the book of life, have also their part in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:15). This confinement to the Lake of Fire follows the great white throne judgment before which the dead great and small will stand. The sea was emptied of her dead and Hades gave up the dead that were in it and those whose names were not found in the book of life were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the place of final and eternal punishment for wicked man (Rev. 20:14). Death, the gate to Hades, and Hades, the intermediate place from which the soul is delivered up to be united with the resurrected body and then judged, are both cast into the Lake of Fire because there will be no more death nor no more need of Hades. Dr. Adam Clarke has given a fine definition of the second death which is the Lake of Fire:

The first death consisted in the separation of the soul from the body for a season: the second death in the separation of body and soul from God for ever. The first death is that from which there

may be a resurrection: the second death is that from which there can be no recovery. By the first the body is destroyed during time; by the second, body and soul are destroyed through eternity. 54

### B. Summary

Hades is not the place of final and eternal punishment. Neither is Tartarus to be considered as the place of endless punishment. Hades has been shown to have an end by being cast into the lake of fire and Tartarus was spoken of as being the place where the angels that sinned are held to be reserved unto the judgment.

The abyss was shown to be in one instance a place of the dead, but more specifically to be the abode of wicked spirits. The devil was cast into the abyss and held for the period of a thousand years to be loosed at the close of the thousand year period for a short time. This loosing from the abyss and the final casting into the lake of fire has shown that the abyss does not serve as the place of final eternal doom.

Hell (<sup>1</sup>ΥΕΕVVA), eternal fire, Lake of Fire, and furnace of fire were all shown to refer to the one and the same final abode of all wicked beings. This place is called the second death, the place of final and eternal separation from God where both soul and body suffer excruciating punishment that shall never have an end.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE NATURE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

No fantastic or unreasonable pictures of the torments of Hell were described in this chapter, but the Scriptural teaching concerning the nature of eternal punishment was presented as clearly as possible; although words are weak instruments by which to describe the anguish of an eternally lost soul. It was evident in a short while that to cover the subject in an exhaustive manner would be impossible.

#### A. Eternal Separation

The first or basic principle in the doctrine of eternal punishment is that of separation. God and evil are two entities which are absolutely and eternally incompatible. God and Satan can never be compatible as long as Satan keeps his present nature, and there have been no signs of his being improved. These factors make eternal punishment necessarily a separation.

Separation from the Righteous. The first consequence that immediately follows the judgment is separation. Jesus said, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:46). Weeping and gnashing of teeth will be the portion of the wicked when they see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and themselves cast out (Luke 13:28). In the parable of the net, "...the angels shall come and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire.." (Matt. 13:49-50). The wheat and the

tares will be separated (Matt. 13:42-43), also the sheep and the goats (Matt. 25:32). The verses that have been cited speak of the absolute separation of the good from the evil. This means that the wicked will ever be cast away from those who in life had been the salt of the earth, the leaven for good, the light of the world, and the witnesses of Jesus Christ. Never more will the wicked be privileged to see the smile of the righteous or hear the good word of grace from one of God's saints. What a terrible fate to be cast away forever from all the redeemed of the Lord who have made life worth living to be forever with those who are haters of God, rejectors of Christ, and who have no desire for good. Loved ones will be separated forever and ever, The wicked will forever be denied the presence of those who know joy and gladness in the presence of the Lord, and will be forever in the presence of the utterly evil, the desperately depraved, and the Devil himself (Rev. 20:10-15).

Separation From the Lord. "Depart from me, ye cursed," said Jesus, "into the eternal fire which is prepared for the Devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). "And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). This Lake of Fire is the second death--the eternal separation from the presence of God. Paul said that all who obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus, "Shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thes. 1:9).

All that is good, all that is true, all that is real light and knowledge, every good and perfect gift is from above coming down from the Father of lights (James 1:17). Every benign blessing is



from the face of God. Yea, even the hope that is in the human breast is a gift from God. It was a terrifying thing to David during his life to realize that he had sinned against God. He prayed, "...cast me not away from thy presence" (Psalm 51:11). David was experiencing the wrath of God because of his sin. In this life disfavor with God is exceedingly unpleasant, but it is nothing compared to being cast away forever from the presence of the Lord. As Watts has said, the wicked will realize only too late that, "happiness dwells in His presence, and rivers of pleasure flow at His right hand." <sup>55</sup> This happiness they shall never experience, this pleasure they shall never know. God is gone from them forever and ever. Once His blood was offered to them for pardon, now He stands beyond their reach. He is gone forever with all His love and blessing never to relieve their torment nor answer their anguished cries. <sup>56</sup> He only is Saviour, there is no other---no hope in anyone but Him and the wicked shall be cut off from His presence forever. Life here on earth, sinful as the earth may be, is blessed by the grace and mercy of God; the world of the damned will have nothing of God; grace nor mercy.

In God is the source of our hope and to be separated from God would rob the wicked of all hope. Those who are separated from God are truly without hope and without God. The picture caused the writer's soul to draw back from viewing it.

#### B. Torment

Jesus has given the two main aspects of the torment of Hell, namely, the inner torment of the soul and the outer torment of the

resurrected body. He said it was better to lose an eye than be cast into Hell, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48). This aspect of eternal punishment was presented under the two divisions already suggested. 57

Bodily Suffering. Jesus said that if an eye or a hand causes a man to stumble, that eye or hand was to be removed because He said, "...it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell" (Matt. 5:29-30). Again He said, "...but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Luke 12:5). The nature of the resurrected body of the wicked is such that it is capable of experiencing suffering without being subject to death. Jesus said, "...the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48). There is no need of fire if there is not a body of such a nature that it is tormented therein, and there is no need of the fire being unquenchable if the body of the damned could die. It is reasonable to see that since both the body and the soul of a sinner were engaged in the rebellion against God, that both the soul and the resurrected body should be punished—the body punished by fire and the spirit by remorse.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares Jesus explained to His disciples the meaning of the symbols that he used. The Son of man was the sower of the good seed, the field was the world, the good seed was the righteous, the tares were the sons of the evil one, and the sower of the tares was the Devil. The harvest was the end of the world, and the reapers were the angels. Every symbol was explained except the fire and it was left in its original usage (Matt. 13:37-42). The fire, then, was not used in this



parable as a symbol, but was used in its common meaning, i.e., material fire.

The fire of punishment was spoken of as fire and brimstone and as giving off smoke (Rev. 14:11) and Jesus said that this fire was prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). It was also called a Lake of Fire into which those were cast who had not their names in the book of life (Rev. 20:15). The Scriptures cited indicate that the fire of Hell is of the nature of material fire because Jesus did not use it as a symbol, because it was represented as giving off smoke and that it was prepared and waiting--already burning--before the Devil and the wicked were cast into it. Since it was prepared before the Devil and the wicked were cast into it, it is not dependent upon those in it for its material upon which to feed. If the fire does not feed upon the wicked, it torments only and does not consume. It was something on the order of the fire that burned in the bush but the bush was not consumed (Exodus 3:2).

It cannot be said with absolute assurance that the fire of Hell is a material fire, nevertheless, it is reasonable to believe that it is not improbable that God will use some sort of material fire to punish rebellious sinners who will have bodies that are immortal. This conclusion is in agreement with Thomas Aquinas who said, "...that, as both body and soul are to be punished, the fire of Hell will be a material fire, but not necessarily of the exact nature of material fire." 58

Since Hell is represented as being a place of outer darkness it was conjectured that the fire would be of nature that it has the

property of heat without giving off light. Lest there be a failure to present the meaning intended by the Scriptures, the idea of punishment by fire was summarized as carrying with it a sense of most intense pain and anguish with which God will afflict the bodies of those guilty creatures who have rebelled against His majesty, rejected His mercy, and exposed themselves to His great wrath.

The fire in which the wicked burn is not quenched (Mark 9:48). The unbearable anguish and pain of the fire of Hell would be dreadful enough even if it lasted only a moment, but Jesus said that the fire is not quenched. After an age of excruciating suffering there is no relief in sight--no hope of a better day--but instead, the dread of the punishment that is stored up for ever and ever. No wonder Jesus said there would, "...be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12).

Outer Darkness. Jesus used this term in Matthew 8:12, 22:13, and 25:30 in the sense of being the fate of the ungodly. This darkness is compared to the brightness of light in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are to sit down in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 8:12). It is compared to the brightness of the wedding feast (Matt. 22:13). The purpose of Jesus was to show, in these Scriptures, the depth of darkness to which the doomed shall be banished. Aquinas described the darkness of Hell as:

The darkness of Hell is physical darkness, only so much light being admitted as will allow the lost to see and apprehend the punishment of the place. 59

It has been seen that Hell is a place void of all spiritual light because God is not there, but the inference from the Scriptures



is that the darkness is that which can be experienced physically. Perhaps it is like unto the darkness of the plague that came upon Egypt, "...even darkness which may be felt" (Exodus 10:21). The darkness of Egypt was "thick" insomuch that, "they saw not one another, neither rose any one from his place for three days:..." (Exodus 10:22-23). Such darkness is unbearable to creatures that were made to dwell in light.

Soul Torment. "Where their worm dieth not" (Mark 9:48).

Thomas Aquinas defines the undying worm as, "remorse of conscience."<sup>60</sup> The first thing that the text has suggested to the writer is that remorse and terrible anguish of conscience in this life are far from pleasant as David declared:

When I kept silence, my bones  
wasted away through my groaning all the  
day long. For day and night thy hand  
was heavy upon me: my moisture was changed  
as with the drought of summer.  
(Psalm 32:3-4) <sup>61</sup>

Add to this misery the fact that all hope is gone and the picture becomes infinitely worse. Isaac Watts has expressed the inner torment thus:

The sinner is constrained to  
cry out, 'It is I, it is I who have  
brought all this upon myself. Life  
and death were set before me in the  
world where once I dwelt, but I refus-  
ed the blessing of eternal life, and  
the offers of saving grace. I turned  
my back upon the ways of holiness  
which led to life, and renounced the  
tenders of divine mercy: I chose the  
paths of sin, and folly, and madness,  
though I knew they led to everlasting  
misery and death. Wretch that I was,  
to choose those sins and these sorrows,  
though I knew they were necessarily joined

together! I am sent into these regions of misery which I chose for myself, against all the kind admonitions and warnings of God and Christ, of his gospel and his ministers of grace! O these cursed eyes of mine, that led me into the snares of guilt and folly! these cursed hands that practiced iniquity with greediness! these cursed lips of mine, which dishonored my Maker! O these cursed appetites and passions, and this obstinate will, which have wrought my ruin! this cursed body and soul that have procured their own everlasting wretchedness!' These thoughts will be like the gnawing worm within, which will prey upon the spirit forever. The fretting smart arising from this vexatious worm must be painful in the highest extreme, when we know it is 'a worm which will never die,' which will forever hang at our hearts, and sting our vitals in the most tender and sensible parts of them without intermission, as well as without end. 62

The second misery of the soul that has been suggested was that of enmity and malice against God. Paul said, "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be" (Romans 8:7). Every wicked man is by nature at enmity with God, and in a state of rebellion. When this condition is aggravated under the punishment of God it will give rise to malice and the intense desire to wreck vengeance against its maker. In the world of the damned there will be no restraint upon the evil soul and its hatred against God will know no bounds. The wild and mad rage of the lost soul against the Blessed God will only add to the misery of the soul because it will be continually frustrated and never in the slightest degree be satisfied. The wicked soul shall never be free of the maddening hopeless rage in his heart. Never will the soul in torment ever



experience the relief that repentance brings. Never can their heart know the blessing of being broken and contrite, but must continually be hardened and suffer misery because of its hardness. Never will the Spirit of God soften and warm the wretched heart. Never will tears of godly sorrow flow in repentance. The heart of the wicked is doomed to hardness and inexpressible torment. Isaac Watts said, "What an amazing scene of complicated misery and rebellion." <sup>63</sup> The spirit is guilty, but it cannot repent. The spirit is rebellious, but it cannot submit. The soul is hardened and cannot bend or yield to its Maker. Hell is eternal, punishment is everlasting and no kindly meltings of the soul toward God are ever known there. The hardest of sinners here on earth may now and then have a relenting moment, and perhaps now and then a softening may come and bring a tear into his eyes and form a good wish or two in his soul; but when done with the day of grace, eternal hardness grips the mind. Such hardness of heart will never be softened. <sup>64</sup>

There is no reason to believe that the evil conditions of the hearts of wicked men will be in any way bettered or improved upon death or consignment to Hell. In fact, when the wicked heart is freed from the influence of prevenient grace it is free to plunge to the depths of its evil desires. The desires not being satisfied will only increase the torment.

The last thing mentioned is the fact that the wicked are faced with perpetual expectation and dread of continuous and everlasting punishments without end.

### C. Summary

This chapter has shown that the nature of eternal punishment is that of eternal separation from the righteous. The wicked shall not dwell with the righteous, but shall be forever divided as the sheep from the goats. The separation will cause "the weeping and gnashing of teeth." The doomed shall dwell forever in the presence of the utterly evil, the desperately depraved, and the Devil himself.

The wicked shall be banished forever from the presence of God and His Christ. "Depart from me ye cursed," said Jesus, "into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). The lake of fire is the second death--the eternal separation from the presence of God. Grace is gone, mercy is gone and with them hope has also vanished. The wicked shall forever be without hope and without God.

In addition to the eternal separation from the saints and from God, the wicked shall suffer torment, both bodily and spiritually. The fire of Hell is of such a nature that it torments with excruciating pain, and the bodies are so made that they suffer the torment but are never consumed or never die.

The spiritual suffering, "the worm that dieth not" (Mark 9:48), was explained as the inner torment of the rebellious soul which is constantly hating God, constantly desiring revenge only to be frustrated and thwarted. Each rebellious and hateful thought only brings added torment to the wretched soul because the thoughts must be contained within the soul to produce hopeless rage. The heart will never know any release from its hardness, never a relenting



moment, never a softening thought.

Such bodily and spiritual torment was found to be suffered in the "outer darkness" --such darkness that is beyond our comprehension. The darkness of Egypt perhaps is a sample of the awful darkness of eternal doom.

## CHAPTER V

### THE RECIPIENTS OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

The purpose in this chapter was to determine and to present the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the recipients of eternal punishment. The material has been presented in three divisions: The Devil and his angels, the Beast and the False Prophet, and wicked men.

#### A. The Devil And His Angels

Jesus said that there was a fire prepared for the Devil and his angels which was eternal (Matt. 25:41). John wrote in the book of the Revelation that, "...the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (Rev. 20:10). St. John, writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit saw the Devil cast into the Lake of Fire and brimstone which Jesus had spoken of as the eternal fire which was prepared for the Devil and his angels. The Devil has been and is the arch enemy of God and the enemy of the souls of men. He is the source of all opposition to the holy purposes of Almighty God. He has wrought death, destruction, deception, and eternal ruin in the human race. God could do nothing less than punish and torment the Devil and all his angels in the worst possible Hell for ever and ever. The Scriptures declare this to be his just due.

#### B. The Beast and the False Prophet

The Devil is spoken of as having a common place of torment



along with the Beast and the False Prophet.

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

Dr. A. C. Gaebelein said that the Devil finds others in the place of torment. The Beast is the emperor of the Roman Empire, the little horn of Daniel 7; and the False Prophet is the anti-christ.<sup>65</sup> The Beast or the first beast, the one out of the sea having ten horns is the world political leader or power.<sup>66</sup> The False Prophet or antichrist, the second beast, has two horns and is the world spiritual leader.<sup>67</sup>

The study of the identity of the Beast and the False Prophet was considered necessary here only to show that these two are to be final residents in the lake of fire that burneth for ever and ever.

#### C. Wicked Men

Rather than making a general classification, the teachings of Scripture covering the different classes of unbelievers have been given here.

Faithless Jews. Jesus had just heard the words of the centurion which expressed great faith in Jesus' power to heal the centurion's servant. And when He heard those words He marvelled at his faith and compared the faith of the centurion with that of Israel and declared the centurion's greater. Then He addressed those within His hearing:

And I say unto you, that many

shall come from the east and the west,  
and shall sit down with Abraham, and  
Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of  
heaven: but the sons of the kingdom  
shall be cast forth into the outer  
darkness: there shall be the weeping  
and the gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:11-12).

The important teaching here is that only those having faith shall enter the kingdom of heaven regardless of their ancestry, and those lacking faith, even though they be of the children of Israel, shall be cast into outer darkness.

The Tares -- The Sons of the Evil One. This term was used in the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:24-30). It is important here that the meaning of the word, tare, be understood. It was defined by Thayer as, "a kind of darnel, bastard wheat, resembling wheat except that the grains are black." <sup>68</sup> The general interpretation of this parable is that the tares represent those in the visible church who bear a resemblance to the good, but whose hearts are not right with God. <sup>69</sup> These tares or bastard wheat were said to be the children of the evil one and are to be gathered by the angels at the end of the world and cast into the fire and burned. The cultured religious professor who knows not the power of God is to be a sufferer in eternal Hell (Matt. 13:39-40).

Those Without a Wedding Garment. In the parable of the marriage feast it is possible that Jesus alluded to the passage found in Zephaniah:

...Jehovah hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath consecrated his guests. And it shall come to pass in the day of Jehovah's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's sons, and all such as are clothed with foreign apparel (Zeph. 1:7-8).



The feast was to prepare for the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-8-9), the enjoyment of the blessedness of heaven. The wedding garments were provided by the one sending out the invitations and therefore, it was inexcusable that any should appear without the proper attire. Dr. Adam Clarke believed that the garment represents holiness of heart and life and without holiness no man shall see the Lord.<sup>70</sup> It was considered a great insult for a guest to appear at a wedding improperly clothed because the garments were provided for those invited. There is no excuse, then, for a person to present himself before God as a Christian without the necessary grace. Righteousness has been provided by God and to appear before Him without it is a great insult to Him. The soul doing this is cast into outer darkness away from the great marriage supper of the Lamb and there shall he remain forever.

The Backslidden. According to the interpretation of Dr. Adam Clarke, the five foolish virgins once had their hearts illuminated and warmed by faith and had backslidden from the salvation of God.<sup>71</sup> This interpretation is based on the statement of the foolish virgins: "Our lamps are going out" (Matt. 25:8). If the lamps had never been lit they could not be in the process of going out, so the interpretation that holds for the foolish virgins never having been Christians will not stand here. These foolish ones had not obtained the extra supply of oil, that is the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and did not have sufficient grace to last the period of waiting. These were backslidden and declared to be unknown by the Lord.

In another instance Jesus likened Himself unto a vine and His followers He called the branches, and said that His Father was

the husbandman (John 15:1). Then He said, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away...." (John 15:2). Jesus is the vine and a branch that is in Him is of necessity a member of the body of Christ by faith. These branches that are in Him are not mere professors of saving faith but are those who have saving faith and are members of His body, the true Church. Clarke said that because these branches are unfruitful, do not bear fruit but rather give way to iniquity and make shipwreck of faith and are become unprofitable, the Father taketh those branches away.<sup>72</sup> Those that are cast away no longer abide in Christ but are cast forth as a fruitless branch that withers and is gathered and cast into the fire (John 15:4-5-6). This parable teaches that the unfruitful are removed from the true Church and will be burned.

The Slothful. This group of people are exemplified in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30). All of those who received the talents were called servants. The master who gave the talents is the Lord Himself and the servants are children of God. Each received according to his ability. The servant to whom the master gave five talents went immediately and gained five talents more. The one who received two talents gained two more. The third servant took the one talent that was given him and buried it. When the master returned, he rewarded them according to their works. The slothful servant was called wicked and slothful and deprived of his talent and cast into the outer darkness.

Notice has been taken that no flagrant iniquity was charged against this man. He was a saint, as compared with murderers, adulterers, and the like, and may have been expecting to get to



heaven only to find himself cast out into outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. How many such persons are there like this one who are in the church today who have buried their talent and will hear themselves called wicked and slothful at the coming of the Lord? <sup>73</sup>

General Unbelievers. Besides the specific ones that have been classed as being lost, there is the general classification of unbelievers. Jesus said to His disciples that they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation, and said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Therefore, every soul who has heard the gospel and does not believe shall be condemned. He shall be condemned because he rejected the only means for the salvation of his soul. <sup>74</sup> "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The Book of the Revelation gives the list of unhappy souls who shall find themselves cast into the Lake of Fire that burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8).

(1) The fearful. Those who, because of fear of losing their lives or their worldly possessions either refused to believe the gospel or after they saw the cost or perhaps were persecuted, fell away from the faith. <sup>75</sup> (2) The unbelieving. Those who refused to believe to the saving of the soul. <sup>76</sup> (3) The abominable. Those who are loathsome in character. <sup>77</sup> (4) The murderers. Those who have taken the life of another man and who hate a brother in their heart. <sup>78</sup> (5) The fornicators. One who has indulged in

unlawful sexual intercourse. <sup>79</sup> (6) The sorcerers. Those who pretend to do the supernatural with the aid of evil spirits. <sup>80</sup>

(7) The idolaters. "Those who offer any kind of worship or religious reverence to anything but God. All image worshippers are idolaters in every sense of the word." <sup>81</sup> (8) All liars. Those who tell not the truth when they know the truth or tell the truth with an intent to deceive or to tell only a partial truth that leads another to a false conclusion. <sup>82</sup>

All of these, the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, the fornicator, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars have their part "in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). All of those who for any reason are not found written in the book of life, are to be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15).

#### D. Summary

The Holy Scriptures reveal that the Devil and his angels shall suffer the punishment of the Lake of Fire and brimstone, and that eternally, as the countless ages drag by, they shall suffer. Moment by moment, "day and night," they shall suffer with no rest nor any hope of rest. They will be constantly tormented under the mighty punishing hand of Almighty God.

The Beast and the False Prophet whom the Devil used in his diabolical schemes to ruin the souls of man, shall also suffer the awful torment of everlasting fire and damnation. No doubt they will hate the Devil who used them and despise themselves and have utter



contempt for those whom they deceived, yet will be forced to spend the everlasting ages in such wretched company.

Wicked men of all descriptions shall take up their terrifying abode in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. The good moral man, well cultured and refined, who never applied for a wedding garment will find himself in eternal Hell with the castoffs of all the centuries. The one who once knew the light of salvation shall dwell in outer darkness because he fell away under test or failed to bear fruit. Those who never have known the experience of the new birth shall find themselves in the Lake of Fire to be tormented for ever and ever. The liar and deceiver of his fellow man shall also be consigned to the dark regions of the damned.

As the lids of the great book of life are opened, every person whose name does not appear therein shall be cast away from the Lord forever into the Lake of Fire which is the second death from which none shall ever return.

## CHAPTER VI

### REASONS FOR ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

In this chapter some reasons for the fact of eternal punishment were considered. Nothing was found in theological works consulted that directly bears upon this subject, however there are several Scriptural facts and theological reasons which have shed light upon it. The nature of Satan, the intrinsic nature of sin, the justice of God, the holiness of God, and Calvary were all considered as reasons for eternal punishment.

#### A. The Devil and His Angels

Jesus taught that the fire was prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). The Devil has been the arch enemy of God since before the creation of man and has continually opposed and attempted to ruin every purpose of God (John 8:44). He was the cause of the awful fall of man which ruined the race and brought physical death, spiritual death, and eternal death to God's crowning creation (Gen. 3). The world has been torn by war, misery, and death from the beginning of nations because of the rule of the Devil in the sin-darkened hearts of men. Behind every lost soul is the son of perdition. Every sin and wickedness that has ever been committed can be laid at his door. His purpose is to snare and deceive every soul that he possibly can and lure them to eternal destruction (I Peter 5:8). His unchanging nature demands that there be such a place as the Lake of Fire. What else could God have prepared which has suitable punishment for such a personality other than eternal



torment? To annihilate the Devil is not consistent with reason. One who has perpetrated such evil and who is so intrinsically evil fully deserves the worst possible punishment that the omnipotent God could design. Let the smoke of his torment go up for ever and ever. Let the punishing hand of the Holy God lay heavily upon him. Let him writhe in anguish and pain, foam with rage and despair, and let it be so for ever and ever to the glory of the one blessed and Holy God and to Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

The original purpose of eternal punishment was to torment for ever and ever the Devil and his angels. This purpose is a blessing to man. The fact that evil shall not triumph but shall come to utter and eternal ruin should make every soul shout with joy the praises of God who has designed this plan. This one great fact that eternal punishment was prepared for the Devil and his angels and not for man removes any foundation for a claim that eternal punishment is not just. Any man who is consigned to Hell goes there as an intruder because it was prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41), and it is the will of God that all men be saved (I Tim. 2:4).

#### B. Intrinsic Nature of Original Sin

St. Paul has described the depraved condition of man as being a law or an established order toward evil that is in the very fiber of man's being. He said, "I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present " (Romans 7:21), and again, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see

a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members" (Romans 7:22-23).

Paul spoke also of this depraved condition as the carnal mind, or mind of the flesh and described it thus: "...because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be" (Romans 8:7). This evil nature or defilement of the soul is evil and that continually. The Methodist Discipline describes this nature in this manner:

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered in the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually. 83

The evil nature cannot be reformed or cultured and made to conform to the law of God. It is of the image of the Devil. Rebellion, unbelief, and evil desires are its constants. The norm of this darkened condition is evil and that continually.

At the trial and crucifixion of Jesus the sinful nature of man displayed itself in its true character. He was betrayed by deceit, He was spat upon, buffeted, and denied. A murderer was preferred before Him and evil hearts cried for His blood. He was unjustly scourged and delivered to a band of heathen soldiers who placed a plaited crown of thorns upon the brow that should have worn a crown of the finest gold. Those darkened souls mockingly called Him the king of the Jews. He who had offered living water to all who would come and drink received the offer of wine mingled



with gall. While He hung on the cross men reviled Him and wagged their heads and derided Him. Sinful man intended to rid themselves of the Son of God by destroying Him (Matt. 26). Surely, a bent in the heart that has desired such a thing is of the nature of the Devil and must suffer his same fate.

A man having died in sin, and inclined to sin will always continue in a state of sin (Rev. 22:10-11), and will therefore always be deserving punishment.

Provision has been made by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the cleansing of the heart from this evil condition, "...the blood of Jesus his son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). Cleansing from this condition has been provided and only cleansing will prepare the soul for its abode in heaven. This dark bent of the soul must be taken away because it will not conform to the will of God. If man does not permit God to cleanse from the heart this evil condition, then eternal punishment will be his lot. Original sin, or depravity, is diametrically opposed to the will of God and therefore deserves and will receive eternal punishment.

#### C. The Justice of God

The Jehovah's Witnesses call the doctrine of eternal punishment a "God dishonoring religious doctrine," and base their conclusion on four reasons. (1) Because it is wholly unscriptural; (2) Because it is unreasonable; (3) Because it is contrary to God's love; and (4) Because it is repugnant to justice.<sup>84</sup> The reason which declares eternal punishment to be contrary to God's love was dealt with in the section on Calvary. The concern here

has been the fourth reason, that of eternal punishment being repugnant to justice.

According to Dr. Miley, the aim of justice is the prevention or restraint of sin, protection of rights, the defense of innocence against wrong, the vindication of the government and the honor of the divine ruler.<sup>85</sup> In order for God to be just in His punishment of sin then His laws must be within the power of fulfillment. Jesus came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17), and through faith in Him we are given the power to fulfill the law. If the law is within the power of men to keep it by the help of God, then the law is just, and since the law is aimed at restraining sin it is just to punish those who willfully disobey it.

The Bible declares God to be righteous and just, "Great and Marvelous are thy works, O Lord God, the almighty: righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages" (Rev. 15:3). "The ordinances of Jehovah are true, and righteous altogether" (Psalm 19:9). If God is righteous and just, and He is, then any reasoning that declares eternal punishment to be repugnant to justice is contrary to God and constitutes an attack against the integrity and holiness of God.

Dr. Hodge has given this defense of eternal punishment as being consistent with the justice of God:

We are incompetent judges of the penalty which sin deserves. We have no adequate apprehension of its inherent guilt, of the dignity of the person against whom it is committed, or of the extent of the evil which it is suited to produce. The proper end of punishment is retribution and prevention. What is necessary for that end, God only knows: and therefore, the



penalty which He imposes on sin is the only just measure of its ill desert. <sup>86</sup>

The Apostle, Peter, said,

Because Christ also hath suffered for sin once, the righteous for the unrighteous that he might bring us to God: being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit. (I Peter 3:18)

The thought emphasized here is that the Righteous has suffered for the unrighteous. If it is unjust for God to punish sinners eternally, then it was unjust for Him to lay upon His own Son the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6).

#### D. The Holiness of God

Torrey defined holy as being free from all defilement; pure. <sup>87</sup>

"And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). "But like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, ye shall be holy; for I am Holy (I Peter 1:15-16).

The holiness of God manifests itself in that it demands separation between God and sinful man and only the blood of Jesus is sufficient to make reconciliation (Eph. 2:13). All approach to God is on the ground of the blood. The atonement has its deepest demand in the holiness of God. Any doctrine of the atonement which teaches that the death of Jesus is to furnish a motive for repentance, or for governmental expediency, falls short of the purpose. The first reason for the shedding of blood is that God is holy and sin must be covered before God will fellowship with the sinner. <sup>88</sup> If a man dies unrepentant, he is forever cut off from God, because the Holy God can never fellowship with sin.

The holiness of God manifests itself in the punishment of sinners. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18). God does not punish the sinner merely because that sinner's good makes it necessary. God hates sin. He could not love righteousness and not at the same time hate sin. Any view of eternal punishment which leaves out the thought of its being an expression of God's holy hatred of sin is not only unbiblical, but shallow and dishonoring to God. God is holy, infinitely holy, and infinitely hates sin.<sup>89</sup> God is perfectly just in His holy hatred of sin since that love has been manifested on Calvary.

#### E. Calvary

Jesus said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mark 14:24). And again, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

In the light of these and other Scriptures the rejection of the offering of Calvary is iniquity of enormous proportions. Jesus was Deity offered for the sins of man. Rejection of this infinite offering deserves infinite and eternal loss. Only eternal punishment in Hell could be worthy of those who willfully refuse to believe on Christ and choose rather the Lake of Fire prepared for the Devil and his angels.

#### F. Summary

Eternal punishment in Hell was not prepared for man but was



prepared for the Devil and his angels. God has not willed that any man should ever be cast into Hell, but rather He has willed that all men be saved (I Tim. 2:4). This fact places the responsibility solely on man. The nature of the Devil is reason enough for such a place as Hell and only such a place is proper for those who will to serve him. Men cannot accuse God of being unjust for punishing sinners eternally when they enter Hell of their own choice.

The intrinsic nature of sin makes it necessary that there be a place of eternal punishment. Men are immortal and therefore, if they die in their sinful condition, they must of necessity remain so. Sin and God are absolutely incompatible. Sin is rebellion and hatred against God, and if it were possible sinful man would rid the world of God, as was evidenced in the cry, "crucify Him" beneath Pilate's window. The sinful nature of man is of the image of the Devil himself and if unchanged, deserves to suffer with him for ever and ever.

The fact that God is just and righteous and that He has already declared eternal punishment to be a reality, makes eternal punishment the outreaching of His justice. Every soul shall receive according to his work. The righteous shall be rewarded and the unrighteous shall be punished. Eternal punishment is consistent with the justice of God as Calvary is consistent with His love.

God is Holy and will not fellowship with sin. God's holiness is the ground for God's hatred of sin and His love for righteousness. God hates sin and His wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Eternal punishment

is an expression of God's holy hatred of sin.

The cross of Jesus Christ forever stands as the emblem of God's infinite love for man. Willful rejection of this unspeakable gift deserves the punishment of Hell.



## CHAPTER VII

### GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A summary of each chapter of the thesis plus the conclusions that were reached were presented in this chapter.

#### A. Summary

In Chapter One the problem was stated, the objectives were named, and reasons were given to justify the study. The limitations of the study and the method of procedure were stated followed by the definitions of important words. Chapter One was closed by giving the organization of the thesis.

The findings of Chapter Two showed that man is unconditionally immortal and is never annihilated. Immediately following physical death man enters into the intermediate state to be punished or comforted. The punishment has been shown to be positive suffering and is of endless duration.

In dealing with the place of eternal punishment in Chapter Three it was shown that Hades is not the place of final and eternal punishment because Hades itself has an end and that of being cast into the Lake of Fire. Neither was Tartarus to be considered as the place of eternal doom because it was spoken of as being the place where the angels that sinned were to be reserved unto the judgment. The abyss was shown in one instance to be a place of the dead, but more specifically the abode of wicked spirits. It was mentioned as the place where the Devil was cast and held for a period of one thousand years then to be loosed at the close of that time for a

short period. The final step is that he is cast into the Lake of Fire, which indicates that the abyss does not serve as the place of eternal punishment. Hell, eternal fire, Lake of Fire, and the furnace of fire all refer to the one and same final abode of all wicked beings. This place is called the second death; the place of final and eternal separation from God where both soul and body suffer excruciating punishment that shall never have an end.

The nature of eternal punishment as dealt with in Chapter Four was found to be that of eternal separation. Not only separation from the righteous or the 'saints' but eternal separation from the presence of God and His Christ. Grace, mercy, and hope are gone from the wicked who suffer the second death. There is a physical torment as well as spiritual suffering. The fire of Hell is of such a nature that it torments with unbearable pain the bodies of the wicked, which are so made up that they suffer the torment but are never consumed or never die. The spiritual suffering, "the worm that dieth not" (Mark 9:48), was explained as the inner torment of the rebellious soul which is constantly hating God, constantly desiring revenge only to be frustrated and thwarted. This bodily and spiritual torment was found to be suffered in the "outer darkness" by the fire which consumes not, neither gives off light.

The Beast and the False Prophet whom the Devil used in his diabolical scheme to ruin the souls of men, shall also suffer eternal torment, as was found in the study of those who will suffer eternal punishment in Chapter Five. Not only these but wicked men of all descriptions shall take up their abode in the lake that



burneth with fire and brimstone. The wicked men include the faithless Jews; the tares, or the sons of the evil one; those without a wedding garment; the backslidden; the slothful; and the general unbelievers. This latter group has been further divided into the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars.

As the lids of the great book of life are opened every name that does not appear therein shall be cast away from the Lord forever into the lake of fire which is the second death from which none shall ever return.

The reasons for eternal punishment were considered in Chapter Six and the findings showed that eternal punishment in Hell was not prepared for man but was prepared for the Devil and his angels. Since God has willed that all men be saved and that none should perish the responsibility rests solely on man. Sin and God are absolutely incompatible and its intrinsic nature makes it necessary that there be a place of eternal punishment. Men are immortal and, therefore, if they die in their sinful condition they must of necessity remain sinful. The sinful nature of man is of the image of the Devil himself and, if unchanged, deserves to suffer with him for ever and ever.

Eternal punishment was found to be consistent with the justice of God as Calvary is consistent with His love. God, in His holiness, cannot and will not fellowship with sin. His holiness is the ground of the hatred He has for sin, and eternal punishment is an expression of His holy hatred for sin. Willful rejection

of the unspeakable gift of God's only begotten Son deserves the punishment of Hell.

#### B. Conclusions

This study has shown that the Bible teaches that:

1. Man is unconditionally immortal.
2. The wicked dead suffer torment immediately after death in the intermediate state.
3. Future punishment consists in positive suffering.
4. The duration of future punishment is endless.
5. Hell (*yéevra*), eternal fire, and lake of fire mean one and the same place and is the place of final doom.
6. The wicked dead are separated from God and from the righteous dead.
7. The wicked dead suffer bodily torment as well as torment of soul.
8. The recipients of eternal punishment are: the Devil and his angels, the Beast and the False Prophet, and all wicked men.
9. The nature of the Devil is a valid reason for the existence of eternal punishment.
10. The nature of original sin is a valid reason for eternal punishment.
11. The justice of God demands eternal punishment.
12. The holiness of God demands eternal punishment.
13. The rejection of God's love as manifested on Calvary is a valid reason for eternal punishment.



On the basis of the evidence the author has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventh Day Adventists are unscriptural in their doctrine of annihilation.
2. The fact of eternal punishment is taught in the Scriptures and should be preached much more than it is being preached.

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