

NEARING THE END OF THE AGE OF GRACE

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“Hell is For Real”

By Pastor Mike Taylor



Romans 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I got into a discussion with a friend of mine who seems to be confused about the doctrine of sinners and their destination of an ever burning hell. In talking with this person, I was aware that he didn't believe a loving God would ever send any one

to an eternal torment known to us as hell, or Gehenna. Is he right? Is a loving God unwilling to send anyone to a terrible place in the bible, called in 53 different passages, hell—or a place burning with fire and brimstone? Is the concept of an eternal hell a figment of some minister's imagination or a denomination's attempt to force people to the altar for fear of being cast into hellfire?

First, let me quote a minister that doesn't believe in an eternal hell and that God is a God of Love,

“For centuries, many ministers have been preaching "hellfire and brimstone" sermons and promoting a religion of fear by teaching that the unsaved face an eternity of torture. The common teaching is that incorrigibly wicked people will be tormented forever in some fiery, macabre manner in a terrifying place called hell. This horrible fate usually conjures up in people's minds visions of an ever-burning hellfire where sinners are continually roasted on spits, and a devil with horns and a tail runs around sticking his captives with a pitchfork.”

It is hard to convince some folks that God is not only a God of love, but also the God of judgment. He is a God of justice, a God of consuming fire, and a God who will not allow sin into His presence. Are we talking about the same God? Do you mean the same God that told the Israelites when they entered Canaan to not spare man, woman, or child from the sword, but to slay them all? Do you mean that God? If it's the same God of the Bible, what did He say about it?

When Jesus spoke of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus being separated by a huge gulf and the rich man being in torment, was He just telling a story? Was He stretching the truth, just to make a point? Let's look at the passage. This is Jesus speaking. Luke chapter 16:

16:19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

16:20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

16:21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

16:24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Since our Lord was sinless and only told what is true, it would make sense that He would not tell a falsehood, just to make a point. Jesus spoke of things spiritual that were being played out in the natural realm. Do we think that He was just joking and He didn't mean it as He spoke it, and exactly as we take it?

Some denomination and well meaning Christians believe that hell is a synonym of the grave. They go to great lengths to prove that Hades, the grave, and hell are all the same thing. Then why does so many Old Testament and New Testament writers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit make so much about the wages of sin and the eternal destruction of the soul in hell? Let's take a journey to look at some of the scriptures that point to the fallacy of not believing that the penalty for not having Jesus Christ cover your sins with His own shed blood is an eternal home in hell's unquenchable fire.

King David spoke of it in Psalms 9:16 The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands 9:17 *The wicked shall be turned into hell*, and all the nations that forget God.

Proverbs 23:13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

23:14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt *deliver his soul from hell*.

If you punish your child, you will not save him from the grave. We all will die, but what is spoken of here is delivering yourselves from something beyond the grave. We call it Hell!

Isaiah 5:14 *Therefore hell hath enlarged herself*, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

5:15 And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled: Isaiah spoke of a place where man will be brought down and will be humbled. We all die, so it's not speaking of only the grave, but something beyond the grave.

Isaiah, when he spoke of the final destination of Lucifer because of his sin against God, he wrote these words:

14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

14:13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

14:15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

14:16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

14:17 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

Understand that hell and the Lake of Fire was designed for Lucifer and his demon angels that fell because of rebellion. It was never designed for mankind that was made in the image of God. Satan had to attempt to thwart God's judgment on himself. If he could get man to fall, then it possibly could thwart God's perfect creation and maybe judgment on Lucifer himself; but God knew that to redeem what had been stolen by Satan, a perfect sacrifice had to be slain, and Jesus was slain from the foundation of the world. So God sent His only Son into the

world to redeem mankind, as the kinsman redeemer. But it would cost Him His life, because sinful man is worthy of death. So Jesus paid the penalty for all who believe on His name and follow His example.

Satan wants you to disbelieve in a place called hell. Satan wants to deceive you, and blind you to this Biblical truth. Satan knows it is his final destination and he will not go down without taking anyone and everyone he can, with him. He has tried for many thousands of years to thwart the judgment of God and make Him somehow, a liar and to make void his sentencing to a devil's hell.

Jesus spoke of it further in Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

If you search your concordance for the word hell, verses before this one in your bible, does give you a feeling that hell in some scriptures, not all, depicts the grave and some point to beyond the grave, but this is where the Lord of Creation identifies what hell means. There is no fire in the grave, but of a place beyond the grave where the wicked and the sinner may end up. Hence it spoke of it plainly in Lazarus and the rich man through the gospels, and I won't quote each and every one of them for the sake of brevity, Jesus makes an analogy of removing the sinful and offending part from you so that you will not be cast into hell. If it be the grave, then all parts of the departed end in the grave. Jesus speaks of something more.

Then there is the time when Jesus in His righteous anger railed against the Jewish authorities for the iniquity in dealing with the people: In Matthew again,

23:31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

23:32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

23:33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

How much more plain can Jesus be? Did He not give enough clues to the final destination of all who are not redeemed by His own shed blood?

The kicker for me is found in Revelation chapter 14, that speaks of the reward of those who take the mark of the beast.

14:9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

14:10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

14:11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Now tell me reader, if this hell fire is a parable, and hell is only the grave and there is not eternal torment for the sinner and the wicked, then why is the smoke of the torment rising before the Lamb and His holy angels, forever, and ever, and ever...sounds like eternity to me and proof that there is a final fiery judgment on sinful mankind!!

When I pointed this simple fact found in your bible out to my friend, he had not an explanation. No quick comeback and no answer to the Words of our Lord, written by John the Apostle. I fear for people who don't believe the simple words of your bible. One denomination actually believes that "all will be saved after the Great White Throne judgment." This scenario believes that all will stand before the Ancient of Days, and be judged, but sentence will not be carried out until they have a "full chance" at believing in the name of Jesus Christ and finding forgiveness. Now I can't speak for God, as God is sovereign, all powerful and all merciful. All that have not had a

chance at hearing, God can do what He wills with them, but to all who have heard the gospel and think they have a “second chance” at redemption play the Russian roulette of the fool.

Paul makes a point in Hebrews that we should take seriously this side of eternity!

Hebrews 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.

9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

You who are reading this, I don't mean to scare you to the altar because you fear an ever burning fire called Hell !! But I wish to convey the harsh reality that all who are not found with their name written in the Book of Life at the Great White Throne judgment will receive their just reward, and it's all because of their own will, not Gods. I propose Holy Spirit conviction come upon you, and you make a plea for changing your life, repenting of your former life, and living for God for the rest of it. Don't come to the Lord for the wrong reason. Fear is the beginning of wisdom, but a true repentant and humble heart is what God desires.

Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

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

20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

20:15 And whosoever *was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

But Jesus stands in the gap. He has paid the ultimate price for your sins, His life and shed all of His blood to wash you perfectly clean and make you acceptable before God the Father in Heaven.

In the closing verses of the final book of our bible, Jesus makes this final plea:

22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Jesus makes an open invitation to all who will come and sit at His feet and believe in the only Begotten Son of the Father, Jesus the Christ (Messiah). He wishes for all to be joined unto Him and live forever, but He will not usurp your own will. He will not force you. He said, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open unto me, I will come unto him and sup with him, and he with Me. “Revelation 3:20: He desires that all come to repentance and to accept His free offer of grace. All you have to do, is believe in the One whom God has sent. Then become a new creature in Jesus Christ and follow the Lord in baptism as a first sign of obedience. Then live unto obedience the things He wrote in His Word.

II Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, *not willing that any should perish*, but that all should come to repentance.

3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

The Lord is coming soon, as a thief in the night...meaning suddenly and without warning. He wishes you to be with Him and not suffer what is coming. Chances are you will be counted with the sinner, as salvation will be hard to obtain, and be easily lost because of tribulation and the demonic forces working overtime for the destruction of your soul. Don't give Satan a chance to take you with him. Make that decision for Jesus Christ right now, while there is still time. But time is growing short. Because my friend, Hell is for real!!

This is Pastor Mike Taylor wishing you well and God's love in your life. If there is anything I can counsel you on from our bible, then drop me a line to realteam1999@sbcglobal.net. If you need prayer, or just a listening ear, I'm here waiting to assist you.

God bless you, till we meet at Jesus' feet.