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# **Hell and Eternal Torment**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Hell, and Eternal Torment.

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### Topics.

- Hell, and eternal torment.
- Facts concerning eternal torment in hell.
- The lake of fire and the great white throne judgment.

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### HELL, AND ETERNAL TORMENT

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The teaching that those who are judged unworthy of eternal life go to a place of fiery flames called hell where they are not only cruelly and brutally tortured by evil eternal creatures called demons, but their bodies are also burned by fiery flames so that they suffer the worst of all agonies for all eternity is a gross misunderstanding of Scripture. The traditional Christian doctrine of hell teaches; those who did not turn to Christ in repentance and faith will be cast into a place called hell, where they will be cruelly and brutally punished with different levels of enormously painful torture. It is reasoned, those in the secular world who have lived a good, kind, and compassionate life helping others, will suffer a lesser level of fiery flaming pain throughout eternity than murderers, rapist, child abusers, the violent and those filled with malice etc. This erroneous and unbiblical doctrine raises the following two problems:

1. Pain is pain, it matters not if one arm is being burnt, or two arms, or if a foot is forced into burning coals or a finger, which means those who have lived honestly, and done good, and shown kindness to others will suffer the same pain as the worst of all sinners.
2. It means that those who had a heart toward the God of creation, but never had the privilege of hearing Christ's Gospel of grace or even hearing of Jesus Himself, and had they done so would have gladly embraced it, suffer the same cruel brutal torture as murderers, rapist, child abusers, the violent and those filled with malice etc.

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The Bible teaching is not eternal torment, but eternal death (i.e., utter annihilation, and extinction), this is the goodness, kindness, and mercy of God, we are all given the choice to choose, eternal life or eternal death. The doctrine of Hell is a gross misrepresentation of God's character, since it portrays God as an extremely sadistic God, especially when it is considered that even those in the secular world would not inflict such brutal and cruel torture on a human for their entire life (especially upon people who have lived a law-abiding life, and done good to others), let alone for all eternity. Added to this John tells us that God is love

- **1 John 4:8:** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.
- **1 John 4:16:** we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight that the truth that God is not a God of torture (especially eternal torture), but that He is a God of love and being a God of love, He is also a God of justice and for this reason He has given mankind the following two choices:

1. Choose God and receive eternal life and everlasting glory.
2. Deny God and eternal death waits (i.e., total-destruction, annihilation, and extinction).

This is the only two choices the Bible teaches from Genesis to Revelation. The horrific doctrine of hell was most likely perpetuated in the early years of the church by religious leaders to scare the naïve into the church, and has been adopted and perpetuated by their followers, and religious institutions and organisations from generation to generation through tradition.

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## FACTS CONCERNING ETERNAL TORMENT IN HELL

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This study is not an in-depth study on eternal torment in hell, but a brief overview, however the following facts should be mentioned. The word hell in the New Testament comes from the Greek word hades, and simply means, 'grave,' and in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word Sheol, which also means 'grave.' Admittedly there are verses that use the words, 'torment and tormented,' however, some are in parables and used to highlight a principle, some are in the language of personification and used to highlight the foolishness and vanity of pride, while others are in the book of Revelation, which is very symbolic.

When each verse is put into their context, it is seen that they do not teach that the dead outside of God's Kingdom survive death as conscious eternal beings who dwell in a lake of eternal flaming fire (a symbol of eternal death), and suffer the most extreme agony and pain of the flames burning their flesh, and are cruelly tortured by eternal spirit creatures called demons for all eternity (as some believe), but rather present a symbolic picture of the futility of pride, the foolishness of being selfish, and a graphic picture of eternal death (i.e., total annihilation, and utter extinction).

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## THE LAKE OF FIRE AND THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

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Many after reading this document will agree God is love, but then add, He is also a God of justice, which of course is also very true. The following verses show that the ultimate and final justice of God will be manifested at the end of the Lord Jesus Christ millennial reign on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords:

- **Revelation 20:11-15:** Then I (John) saw a *Great White Throne* and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. <sup>12</sup>And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and *books were opened*. And another book was opened, which is the *Book of Life*. And the dead were judged *according to their works* by the things which were *written in the books*. <sup>13</sup>The *sea* gave up the *dead* who were in it, and *death* and *hades* delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one *according to his works*. <sup>14</sup>Then *death* and *hades* were cast into the *Lake of Fire*. This is the *Second Death*. <sup>15</sup>And anyone not found written in the *Book of Life* was cast into the *Lake of Fire*.

Prior to these verses those redeemed in Christ are raised in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5-6) to reign with Christ during his millennial reign on earth. The second death (i.e., the lake of fire) has no power over those who share in this first resurrection, and the rest of the dead do not come to life until Christ's millennial reign on earth is ended (Rev. 20:4-6). At the end of Christ's millennial reign God descends to earth on a Great White Throne, and the sea, death, and hades give up the dead to stand before the throne of God. Whoever's name is not found written in the Book of Life are immediately cast into the Lake of Fire, but, when a name is found in the Book of Life, other heavenly books are opened, and they are judged according to what is written in these books according to what they have

done. Those counted unworthy are thrown into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total extinction), this event is called the second death (Rev. 20:11-15). Though it does not say that some are counted worthy at the Great White Throne judgment, the fact it says, some are counted unworthy, implies some are counted worthy (Rev. 20:12-13). It is at this Great White Throne judgment we see God's Justice manifested to all mankind.

**Traditional Christian thinking:** clearly much of this is contrary to traditional Christian teaching, however, most in the Christian faith only focus on the first resurrection which clearly proclaims only those in Christ will be resurrected, it is also equally true, whoever attains to the first resurrection will be greatly blessed throughout all eternity, because the redeemed in Christ, are the Bride of Christ, and he can only have one bride. But what is said of the first resurrection cannot be applied to those who are raised at the Great White Throne judgment, especially since many who will be standing before God, will not have had the privilege of hearing the Good News of the Gospel, will have a belief in God, because of the language of creation. Scripture tells us everywhere God's creation is worshipping God, and nature itself praises its maker, and declares to all mankind His existence, His power, and His glory, as the following verses show:

- **Psalm 19:1-4:** The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. <sup>2</sup> Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. <sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. <sup>4</sup> Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

These verses show that nature declares the glory of God, there is no doubt God recognizes there are many people with very charitable hearts who have a belief in Him through the language of creation, and who live a wholesome life, treating other humans with respect and doing-good, who in their hearts are neither against God nor enemies of God (consider all those who have never heard the glorious Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ), who do good, and sacrifice themselves for others. It appears that their names have not been blotted out of the Book of Life, and their life and lifestyle is recorded in these other heavenly books that are opened, and they do receive some place in eternity. Perhaps this is those Jesus was referring to when he said:

- **Matthew 10:42:** Whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

**NOTE:** since much of this is controversial to traditional Christian thinking it should be mentioned, it is not important to understand eternity to be saved to eternal life. Jesus will not cast out those who have been faithful to him simply because they did not fully understand eternity. It is interesting to note, after Christ's resurrection most New Testament writers simply state that those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ will be resurrected to eternal life (or eternal glory), this is because it is not understanding eternity that is important to salvation, but believing that we will be resurrected to it, and having faith in Christ and in God's grace.

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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For further information see the following two titles:

- Hell, or the Grave (Final destination of Humans).
- The Lake of Fire.
- All titles are in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## FOOTNOTE

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What I have presented here in this document should not be taken to be dogmatic, inflexible or the final word on the matter, since I am fully aware, though we may have a wide understanding of eternity, our mortal minds are limited to comprehending the finer details, and when it comes to revelation and eternity, there is no harm in leaving space for a certain amount of mystery.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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