

# Hell, the Lake of Fire, and Eternal Judgment

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- I. Eternal judgment is one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ (Heb 6:2)
- II. The judgment of the wicked is *eternal*.
  1. Jesus called it eternal damnation (**Mar 3:29**).
  2. Eternal - 3. a. Infinite in future duration; that always will exist; everlasting, endless. The New Testament expressions eternal life, death, punishment, etc. are here referred to sense 3, this being the sense in which the adj. in such contexts is ordinarily taken.
- III. The judgment of the wicked is everlasting.
  1. Everlasting - 1. a. Lasting for ever; infinite in future duration; endless; = eternal A. 3.
  2. The eternal judgment of the wicked is called:
    - A. Everlasting punishment (**Mat 25:46**).
    - B. Everlasting fire (**Mat 25:41; Mat 18:8**).
    - C. Everlasting destruction (**2Th 1:9**).
    - D. Everlasting chains (**Jud 1:6**).
- IV. The judgment to come is a frightening thought (**Act 24:25**).
  1. The terror of the Lord that will be experienced at the judgment seat of Christ ought to be motivation for us to persuade men (**2Co 5:10-11**).
  2. We should behold the severity of God, as well as His goodness (**Rom 11:22**).
  3. The judgment to come is described as wrath, indignation, tribulation, and anguish (**Rom 2:5-9**).
    - A. Wrath *n.* - 1. Vehement or violent anger; intense exasperation or resentment; deep indignation: d. Righteous indignation on the part of the Deity.
    - B. Indignation *n.* - 1. The action of counting or treating (a person or thing) as unworthy of regard or notice; disdain, contempt; contemptuous behaviour or treatment. (last usage in 1530 AD) 2. Anger at what is regarded as unworthy or wrongful; wrath excited by a sense of wrong to oneself or, especially, to others, or by meanness, injustice, wickedness, or misconduct; righteous or dignified anger; the wrath of a superior.
    - C. Tribulation *n.* - 1. A condition of great affliction, oppression, or misery; 'persecution; distress; vexation; disturbance of life'
    - D. Anguish *n.* - 1. Excruciating or oppressive bodily pain or suffering, such as the sufferer writhes under. 2. Severe mental suffering, excruciating or oppressive grief or distress.
  4. Eternal judgment happens upon death (**Heb 9:27**).
- V. Hell
  1. Hell is below the surface of the earth, presumably in the center of it (**Mat 11:23; 2Pe 2:4; Isa 14:9; Deu 32:22; Job 11:8; Pro 7:27; Pro 9:18**).
  2. Hell is a place of torment where the soul of the wicked goes (**Psa 9:17**) immediately upon death (**Luk 16:22-28**).
  3. Torment *v.* - 1. *trans.* To put to torment or torture; to inflict torture upon.
  4. Hell is a place of pain and sorrow (**Psa 18:5; Psa 116:3**).

5. Hell is a place of eternal fire (**Mat 5:22; Mat 18:9; Mar 9:43; Jud 1:7; Rev 14:10-11**).
6. Hell is a place of damnation (**Mat 23:33**).
  - A. Damnation - 1. The action of condemning, or fact of being condemned (by judicial sentence, etc.); condemnation. 2. *Theol.* Condemnation to eternal punishment in the world to come; the fact of being damned, or doomed to hell; spiritual ruin; perdition. (Opposed to *salvation*.)
  - B. Condemnation - 1. The action of condemning or of pronouncing adverse judgement on; judicial conviction; expression of disapprobation or strong censure; the fact of being condemned
7. Therefore hell is a place of unending torment, pain, mental and physical anguish, and condemnation.
8. It is worth giving up and mortifying any fleshly lust to have the *assurance* that you're not going to hell (**Mat 5:29-30 & Mat 18:9 c/w Col 3:5-6**).
9. God will destroy both soul and body of the wicked in hell (**Mat 10:28**).
  - A. The destruction of the soul happens immediately after death (**Luk 16:22-23**).
  - B. The destruction of the body happens after the body is resurrected on the last day (**Joh 5:28-29 c/w Joh 11:24**).
10. Hell has an insatiable appetite (**Pro 27:20; Pro 30:15-16; Isa 5:14; Hab 2:5**).
11. Death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire (**Rev 20:14**).

VI. Jesus taught that hell is a place where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (**Mar 9:43-44**).

1. This is a quote from **Isa 66:24**.
2. In that **Isa 66:22** speaks of the new heavens and the new earth, some have concluded that people on the new earth will be able to see those in hell or the lake of fire.
3. This is not so: consider the context of the passage.
  - A. **Isa 66:14-17** speaks of God executing judgment against His enemies (happened in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem; will also happen at the end of time).
  - B. After that, the Gentiles in all nations shall see His glory (**Isa 66:18-19 c/w Col 1:27**) (the gospel went to the Gentiles in all nations).
  - C. These Gentiles will be an offering to the Lord (**Isa 66:20 c/w Rom 15:16**).
  - D. These Gentiles will be made priests of God (**Isa 66:21 c/w Rev 1:6; Rev 5:10; 1Pe 2:5,9 c/w Mal 3:3**).
  - E. God then promises to Israel that just as the new heavens and new earth that He *will make* shall remain before Him, so will the seed of Israel (Abraham's seed - those who are in Christ - **Gal 3:28-29**) and their name (the Israel of God - **Gal 6:16**) remain (**Isa 66:22**).
  - F. In that day when the Gentiles will be brought into the commonwealth of Israel (**Eph 2:11-22**) and made priests of God (**1Pe 2:5,9 c/w Isa 66:21**), they shall come to worship God from one new moon to another (monthly communion?) and from one sabbath to another (weekly church service?) (**Isa 66:23**).
  - G. During that time they shall see the destruction of the Jews in Jerusalem who transgressed against God (**Isa 66:24 c/w Psa 37:34 c/w Dan 9:24,27**), and later the destruction of God's enemies at the end of time (**Rev 19:21**).

- H. When these judgments happen, they will look upon the carcasses (*the dead body of man*) (**Isa 66:24 c/w Rev 19:21**) of those wicked people whose souls are burning in hell (**Mat 23:33**).
- 4. **Isa 66:22-24** is not a prophecy of the new heaven and the new earth, but rather of the NT church times and the judgment of God's enemies which happens during them.
  - A. God simply used the reference of the new heavens and the new earth as a comparison to show that, just as they will remain once they are made, so will the seed and name of Israel (those that are in Christ, the Israel of God) remain forever.
  - B. The NT church began in the first century and will remain forever (**Eph 3:21**).
- 5. Furthermore, there will be no carcasses (dead bodies) to look at when the saints are living on the new earth because it will be after the resurrection when the bodies of the just and unjust will be resurrected (**Joh 5:28-29**).

## VII. The Lake of fire

1. The beast and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire (**Rev 19:20**).
2. The devil will be cast into the lake of fire (**Rev 20:10**).
  - A. The lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels, and the wicked will join them there (**Mat 25:41**).
  - B. There will be everlasting punishment for them there (**Mat 25:46**).
  - C. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever (**Rev 20:10**).
  - D. Torment v. - 1. *trans.* To put to torment or torture; to inflict torture upon.
  - E. The wicked will be tormented with fire and brimstone *in the presence* of Jesus Christ for ever and ever (**Rev 14:9-11; Pro 15:11; Job 26:6**).
    - i. They will be punished with everlasting destruction from (coming from) the presence of the Lord (**2Th 1:9**).
    - ii. This doesn't mean that they will be separated from the presence of God.
    - iii. From *prep.* - 1. Denoting departure or moving away: governing a n. which indicates a point of departure or place whence motion takes place. 1611 Bible Gen. iv. 16 And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.
    - iv. Just as Cain went from the presence of the Lord (**Gen 4:16**), so the punishment and everlasting destruction will go from the presence of the Lord unto the wicked (**2Th 1:9**).
    - v. "This destruction shall come from the presence of the Lord, that is, immediately from God himself. Here God punishes sinners by creatures, by instruments; but then he will take the work into his own hands. It will be destruction from the Almighty, more terrible than the consuming fire which consumed Nadab and Abihu, which came from before the Lord. It shall come from the glory of his power, or from his glorious power. Not only the justice of God, but this almighty power, will be glorified in the destruction of sinners; and who knows the power of his anger? He is able to cast into hell." (Matthew Henry's Commentary, commenting on 2Th 1:9)
    - vi. In the same way that punishment comes to the wicked from the presence of the Lord, times of refreshing shall come to the righteous *from the presence of the Lord* (**Act 3:19**).
    - vii. To say that the wicked will be separated from God's presence is to say that God is not omnipresent, which is false (**Pro 15:3**).
3. Death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire (**Rev 20:14**).

4. All who are not written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire (**Rev 20:15**).

VIII. The justice of eternal judgment.

1. It is often asked, how can a just God consign a person to an eternity of torment in hell?

- A. To some who understand the doctrine of election, it seems especially unrighteous for God to send someone to hell who was made a sinner by Adam's transgression (**Rom 5:12,19**) and never had a chance to be saved.
- B. To some, it seems even more unfair that God would damn an unborn baby (**Rom 9:11-13**) to hell who was not one of His elect.
- C. Let's examine these things.

2. Why does God send anyone to hell?

- A. God is holy (**1Pe 1:15-16**).
- B. God's law is holy, just, and good (**Rom 7:12; Psa 119:137**).
- C. Sin is the transgression of the law (**1Jo 3:4**).
- D. Sin must be punished.
- E. The wages of sin is death (**Rom 6:23**).
- F. Evil cannot dwell with God (**Psa 5:4**).
- G. God is so holy that He cannot even look on iniquity (**Hab 1:13; Isa 59:2**).
- H. God hates sin (**Heb 1:9; Jer 44:3-4**).
- I. God hates sinners (**Psa 5:5; Psa 11:5**).
- J. Sinners hate God and are His enemies (**Rom 5:10; Rom 8:7**).
  - i. Enmity - 1. The disposition or the feelings characteristic of an enemy; ill-will, hatred.
  - ii. Every person that goes to hell hates God.
- K. Because God is righteous and just, He cannot acquit the wicked nor clear the guilty (**Nah 1:2-3; Exo 34:7; Num 14:18; Job 10:14**).
- L. Therefore, God must punish sinners.

3. Why punish the wicked with fire?

- A. God's wrath burns like fire (**Psa 21:8-9; Eze 22:21**).
- B. Fire removes impurities (**Pro 17:3**).
  - i. Melting silver removes the dross (**Pro 25:4**).
  - ii. The wicked are dross (**Psa 119:119**).
  - iii. Therefore, God melts them in the fire (**Eze 22:17-22**).
  - iv. The wicked in hell are 100% dross; there is no silver or gold in them to refine (**Rom 3:9-18**).
  - v. Fire burns off wood, hay, and stubble (**1Co 3:12-15**).
  - vi. The wicked are only wood, hay, and stubble, therefore there is no saving them by fire (**Mat 3:12**).
- C. God has always required a burnt offering for sin (**Exo 29:14; Lev 5:12**).
- D. The wicked are the burnt offering for their sin.

4. Why is the suffering in hell eternal?

- A. Fire consumes and destroys (**Num 11:1; Num 16:35**).

- B. The soul and spirit of man is immortal and doesn't die when the body does (**Ecc 3:21; Gen 35:18**).
  - C. Punishment of sinful men doesn't purge their sin; they just become more sinful.
    - i. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not, nor can be, subject to the law of God (**Rom 8:7**).
    - ii. The wicked will not seek after God (**Psa 10:4**).
    - iii. The nature of the wicked is unchangeable (**Jer 13:23**).
    - iv. If favor is shown to them, they won't change (**Isa 26:10**).
    - v. If a fool is severely punished, he will still remain a fool (**Pro 27:22**).
    - vi. If God scorches them, they will not repent, but will continue to blaspheme God (**Rev 16:9-11**).
  - D. Therefore, no amount of punishment in hell would be enough to purge the sin of the wicked, therefore they must be burned forever.
5. Why do we all deserve hell?
- A. All have sinned (**Rom 3:23**).
  - B. There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not (**Ecc 7:20**).
  - C. We are *all* as an unclean thing before God (**Isa 64:6**).
  - D. We are all by nature the children of wrath (**Eph 2:1-3**).
  - E. We all deserve hell for the same reasons the wicked reprobate do: because the elect in their natural state are no different than they are. (See Section II,6,G,ii - Why does God send anyone to hell?)
6. Why did God allow Adam to sin, knowing that Adam's transgression would condemn the human race to an eternity in hell?
- A. God did not cause Adam to sin.
    - i. God doesn't tempt men with evil (**Jam 1:13**).
    - ii. God never commands people to sin, nor does it come into His mind to do so (**Jer 19:5**).
    - iii. Adam was no different.
  - B. God knew that Adam would sin because God knows everything (**Psa 139:1-6; Psa 147:5**).
  - C. God created Adam as a perfect sinless man (**Gen 1:31**).
  - D. God gave Adam a law to keep (**Gen 2:17**), which was holy, just, and good (**Rom 7:12**).
  - E. God gave Adam freewill to choose to obey or disobey Him: Adam had the ability to *freely eat* (**Gen 2:16**).
  - F. Adam knew the punishment for His sin before he committed it: *thou shalt surely die* (**Gen 2:17**).
  - G. Adam willingly and knowingly chose to rebel against God.
    - i. Adam was drawn away of his own lust and enticed (**Jam 1:14**).
    - ii. His lust conceived and brought forth sin, which brought forth death (**Jam 1:15**).
    - iii. God allows people to sin by giving them over to their own lusts (**Rom 1:24**).
    - iv. Nobody, including Adam, can blame God for their sin (**Jer 7:9-10; Jam 1:13**).

- H. By creating a perfect human being with freewill to choose to obey God or rebel against Him, God can never be accused of not letting us have it our way: God is justified in His sayings and He will overcome when He is judged by wicked sinners who blame Him for their sin (**Rom 3:4**).
  - I. No man can ever blame God for his sin.
  - J. No man can ever condemn God for not giving man freewill.
  - K. The clay has no right to complain to the potter and ask, *why hast thou made me thus* (**Rom 9:20**).
  - L. No man can say that he would have done any better, given the chance, if a perfect man couldn't keep God's law.
7. Why didn't God prevent Adam from sinning?
- A. God can restrain the sin of man if He chooses to (**Psa 76:10**).
  - B. If God would have restrained Adam from sinning the first time, he would almost certainly have sinned in the future.
  - C. God then would've had to continually restrain Adam from sinning.
  - D. God would have had to restrain all of Adam's progeny from sinning as well, since once they sinned, they would pass their sinful nature down to their children.
  - E. If God restrained all men from sinning all the time, then the human race would not have freewill and would be as robots living out a preprogrammed life.
  - F. How much glory would God receive from a bunch of automatons?
    - i. We show our love to God by keeping His commandments (**Joh 14:15**).
    - ii. God would not receive love from people who did not willingly keep His commandments, but were instead forced to by Him.
  - G. If God would have limited our freewill, then the same people who complain about God allowing Adam to sin would complain that God didn't give them freewill (if they had the freewill to complain).
8. Why did Adam's sin pass down to all men?
- A. When Adam sinned, spiritual death was the result (**Gen 2:17 c/w Gen 3:6**).
  - B. That spiritual death passed from Adam to all of his posterity (**Rom 5:12**).
    - i. Adam's children were made in his image (**Gen 5:3**), not in God's image as Adam was (**Gen 1:27**).
    - ii. All living things pass their nature to their children through biological generation.
    - iii. Dogs produce dogs with dog natures; cats produce cats with cat natures; humans produce humans with human natures.
    - iv. We are *by nature* the children of wrath (**Eph 2:3**).
    - v. Nature *n.* - 1. a. The essential qualities or properties of a thing; the inherent and inseparable combination of properties essentially pertaining to anything and giving it its fundamental character.
    - vi. A clean thing can't come out of an unclean thing (**Job 14:4; Job 25:4-6**).
    - vii. Think of our spirit and soul as having spiritual DNA.
    - viii. When a mutation happens in a woman's mitochondrial DNA, it passes down to all her daughters, who pass it down to all their daughters.

- ix. Our "spiritual DNA", which is corrupted by sin, was passed down from Adam to his children, and it continues to get passed down through each man to his children (**Rom 5:12**).
  - a. This is evident because all have sinned (**Rom 5:12**).
  - b. Babies are conceived in sin (**Psa 51:5**).
  - c. The wicked start sinning as soon as they are born (**Psa 58:3**).
  - d. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child (**Pro 22:15**).
  - e. Man's heart is evil continually from his youth (**Gen 8:21**).
  - f. Jesus Christ is the only man to whom a sinful nature did not pass down because Jesus didn't have a human father (**Luk 1:35**), and He was therefore born without sin (**2Co 5:21**).
  
- x. This answers the question: How could a just God punish an aborted unelect baby, who like Esau, has not yet done any evil, by throwing him into the eternal Lake of Fire, where he will consciously experience unspeakable unending torture?
  - a. Because an aborted unelect baby is conceived in sin (**Psa 51:5**) and is by nature a child of wrath (**Eph 2:3**) who will grow up to be a wicked sinner, God is perfectly justified in condemning him to hell.
  - b. God sees the end from the beginning and sees what that person would be when they grew into a child and then into a man: a wicked, vile sinner.
  - c. A similar question could be asked: How could a person find a nest of termite eggs in the floor of their house and be so cruel to crush them all before they hatched and actually started eating their house?
  - d. Because they are termites by nature and they will turn into full grown termites when they hatch and then will start eating up the house.
  - e. This is a good analogy since man is likened to an *unclean worm* (**Job 25:4-6**).
  - f. A man likewise would be justified in crushing rattlesnake eggs that he finds in his bedroom because he knows they have a rattlesnake nature and will turn into deadly snakes when they hatch and mature, even though they have not caused any harm yet.
  - g. This is another good analogy because we are all by nature children of the devil (**Eph 2:3 c/w Joh 8:44**) who is a snake (**Rev 20:2**).
  
- C. With spiritual death came judgment and condemnation for all men (**Rom 5:18**).
- D. Because we are all by nature the children of wrath and we all have sinned, we all deserve to go to hell (See Section II,6,G,ii - Why does God send anyone to hell?).
- E. No one can blame Adam or God for their condemnation because they themselves chose to sin and continually choose to sin (**1Jo 1:8,10**).

9. Why didn't God choose to save everyone and not send anyone to hell?

- A. If you understand how holy God is and how wicked and filthy sin is, the question should be: Why did God choose to save *anyone* instead of sending us all to hell where we deserve to be?



- B. It is not unrighteous for God to choose to have mercy on some and not others (**Rom 9:10-18**).
- i. We have no right to question God about whom He chose to have mercy on and whom He didn't (**Rom 9:19-20**).
  - ii. God is the potter and we are the clay, which is a sinful lump of mankind, which God has the right to do with as He chooses (**Rom 9:21**).
  - iii. Adam fitted the lump to destruction (**Rom 9:22 c/w Rom 5:12**).
  - iv. God, in mercy, prepared some of the fallen lump unto glory (**Rom 9:23**), and left the rest to suffer the punishment they deserve.
- C. God hasn't told us *why* He chose to save some sinners, but not all.
- i. God's ways and thoughts are infinitely higher than our ways and thoughts (**Isa 55:8-9**).
  - ii. His ways are past finding out (**Rom 11:33**).
  - iii. The secret things which God was not revealed to us belong unto Him (**Deu 29:29**).
  - iv. Don't argue with Him or question Him (**Rom 9:20; Isa 29:16; Isa 45:9; Jer 18:3-6; Job 9:2-4; Dan 4:35**).
  - v. He doesn't have to give an account of Himself to us (**Job 33:12-14**).