

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 1

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

Popular Misconceptions Concerning Satan's Appearance, God Casts Down Satan For Being Lifted Up In Pride Due To His Beauty, Hell And Dante's Inferno Poem, Warped Understanding Of Scriptural Truth, Manipulation Through Fear, King James Version Bible Manuscript Sources And Original Languages, Old Testament Hebrew Word Sheol, Lowly State Of Our Human Flesh, Brevity Of Human Life Span, Divine Fire Will Consume Earth, New Heavens And New Earth, The Height Of Heaven And Depth Of Hell, An Old Testament Prophecy: Jesus Would Not Experience Decay In The Grave, Sheol Is Both Hell And Grave, Faith In The Coming Resurrection Of The Dead, Sheol Is In The Earth, Hell In New Testament Greek Is Hades, Spiritual Abode Of The Dead, Apostle Peter Uses Old Testament Prophecy As A Witness In Jerusalem, Jesus Christ Has The Keys Of Hell And Of Death

What if I were to tell you that in spite of the fact that I have been a God-fearing, Bible-believing Christian since the time that I was a young boy, and even though I have strived to faithfully serve the Lord for over forty years now, I am still going straight to hell when I die? In fact, what if I told you that despite what you think, you are likewise going to hell when you die as well? Would you be shocked? Would you consider me heretical, or crazy, or at least doctrinally misguided and confused? Before you jump to any erroneous conclusions, I encourage you to read the following series. One of the things which you will quickly discover, is the fact that while they may not realize it yet, every single person on this planet has an appointment with hell when they die. Are you intrigued? Then read on!

One of the common misconceptions amongst modern Christians who don't have a great deal of time to study the Word of God, revolves around the significance of Satan and Hell in the Bible. Aside from a lack of time on the part of these would-be Bible students, I believe that this problem can also be attributed to a bit of sloppiness on the part of some of the early Bible translators, who may possibly have been influenced by certain religious and/or political forces at the time.

Because of these two points, and a few other factors, when many people hear the word "Satan" or "Devil" or "Lucifer", they usually imagine a caricatural red-suited demon with two short horns protruding from his head, a long pointed tail, possibly a sharp goatee-like black beard, untrusting shifty eyes, dark evil-looking eyebrows, and a trident -- that is, a pitchfork -- held proudly in his hand. As I point out in such articles as "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires", "Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea" and "Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future", this picture of this Denizen Of Darkness is simply not true whatsoever. Satan was created by the Lord as a magnificent creature full of wondrous beauty

and light; and it is because of his ability to still appear this way, that many people have been foolishly seduced and deceived by his evil machinations. Consider the following verses:

"Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee."
Ezekiel 28:12-17, KJV

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."
2 Corinthians 11:14, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."
2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

If you are wondering why the Lord refers to Satan as the "king of Tyrus" in the previous verses, please consider reading my article entitled "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires".

At the same time, when many people hear the word "hell", they immediately picture this same character cackling with glee as he prods long-faced lost souls down a steep grade into the agonizing flames of a fiery abyss that is full of thick smoke, the stench of sulphur and agonizing screams. This foreboding scenario is probably adopted from the poem of Alighieri Dante, who as some of you will know, was an Italian poet of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century who wrote the very graphical "Dante's Inferno".

It is truly sad how much our perception and understanding of the Bible has been warped by literary works such as this; as well as by inaccurate Bible translations, and by intentional brainwashing and manipulation by certain denominations -- such as the Roman Catholic Church, for example -- which rely upon fear as a vehicle to subjugate the masses, and to force them to accept said church's authority over their lives. This is not to suggest that there is no such place as I described to you in the previous paragraph, but it most certainly is not the only meaning of the word "hell" in the Bible, as I will proceed to clearly demonstrate in this series.

Many Christians are aware of the fact that the King James Version of the Bible is translated from ancient texts such as the Textus Receptus -- that is, the "Received Text" -- which itself is a collection of ancient Greek New Testament manuscripts which were compiled by the Dutch theologian Desiderius Erasmus during the Sixteenth Century. I discuss this topic more at length in the two-part article entitled "History of the Authorized King James Bible". The primary languages which were spoken by, and/or written by, the Old Testament Prophets, as well as by the Apostles and Disciples of the First Century, were Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Aramaic. Because of this fact, in the Holy Scriptures, four different words were used to denote what has been passed down to us as one word today; that is, the word "hell".

In the Old Testament, the only word that is translated into English as "hell" is the Hebrew word "sheol". This word has a few minor spelling variations in English, but it is not important. As the definitions below from the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon will show, this word was used to denote two different meanings; either the spiritual underworld of the dead where the wicked were punished, or the common grave; that is, the ground of the Earth where our physical bodies are buried and eventually decay -- or corrupt -- into the original elements of which they consist. Please notice that in the King James Version of the Bible, this word "sheol" has been translated an equal number of times as "grave" and "hell":

----- Begin Quote -----

sh@'owl {sheh-ole'} or sh@ol {sheh-ole'}

AV - grave 31, Hell 31, pit 3; 65

- 1) sheol, underworld, grave, hell, pit
 - 1a) the underworld
 - 1b) Sheol - the OT designation for the abode of the dead
 - 1b1) place of no return
 - 1b2) without praise of God
 - 1b3) wicked sent there for punishment
 - 1b4) righteous not abandoned to it
 - 1b5) of the place of exile (fig)
 - 1b6) of extreme degradation in sin

----- End Quote -----

If more people were more conscious of their lowly state, perhaps they would not be so quick to reject Salvation when it is offered to them; or be so haughty against the Lord. Following is a group of verses which emphasize the lowly state of our physical body, despite the fact that so many people spend so much of their time, energy and money in order to make their vehicle of flesh look its best:

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
Genesis 2:7, KJV

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou

return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
Genesis 3:19, KJV

"And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:"
Genesis 18:27, KJV

"Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?"
Job 10:9, KJV

"All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust."
Job 34:15, KJV

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."
Psalms 103:14, KJV

"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust."
Psalms 104:29, KJV

"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."
Ecclesiastes 3:20, KJV

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
Ecclesiastes 12:7, KJV

Despite the fact that in reality we are just sentient clumps of dust, as the Apostle Paul writes in his Epistle to the Ephesians, none of us hate our own flesh:

"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:"
Ephesians 5:29, KJV

The Apostle James and other authors of the Bible compare our short existence on this Earth in our physical bodies of dust to the passing of a cloud, or to the grass that eventually dries up, or to a flower that soon wilts, as we see here:

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
Psalms 90:10, KJV

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."
Isaiah 40:7-8, KJV

"But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"
Luke 12:20, KJV

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

Hebrews 9:27, KJV

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

James 4:14, KJV

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

1 Peter 1:23-25, KJV

Returning to our discussion concerning the word "sheol", one example which clearly reveals that "sheol" is located within the depths of the Earth is the following verse that is found in the Book of Deuteronomy. As you read this verse, please notice that it does not say that hell is a place of fire and brimstone; rather, it says that the Lord will kindle a fire on the surface of the Earth which is not only going to burn up the increase -- that is, the produce of the soil, from the Hebrew word "yebuwl" -- but it is a fire so intense that it is also going to reach down to the foundations of the mountains to burn them up. This appears to be referring to the igneous rock strata -- such as granite -- which forms the actual foundation of the Earth:

"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." Deuteronomy 32:22, KJV

This certainly sounds like a prophecy regarding the future in which the Lord is going to burn up both the Earth and the atmospheric heavens, in order to provide room for the New Heavens and the New Earth. The Apostle Peter likewise wrote about these cataclysmic events, as we see by the following verses:

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men . . . 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. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:7, 10-13, KJV

The previous description goes hand-in-hand with the Apostle John's remarks that are found in the twenty-first chapter of

the Book of Revelation, as we see here:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

Revelation 21:1, KJV

The Patriarch Job and King David also spoke of the contrast which exists between the height of heaven, and the depth of hell within the bowels of the Earth, when they wrote the following lines:

"It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?"

Job 11:8, KJV

"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

Psalms 139:8, KJV

Following is an example where the Hebrew word "sheol" is used in the Book of Psalms. As you may possibly know, this verse is commonly accepted as a prophecy concerning Jesus' time in the grave. In fact, in a moment I will be sharing with you its counterpart in the New Testament, where the Greek equivalent is used in place of the Hebrew word "sheol":

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

Psalms 16:10, KJV

In the previous verse, the word "soul" is derived from the Hebrew word "nephesh". In this particular case, I believe that it is referring to the actual physical body. The word "corruption" is translated from the Hebrew word "shachath". This word has a variety of meanings, including corruption or destruction. Thus, this verse is obviously referring to the destruction or natural decay of the human body in the grave; because a soul -- or spirit -- cannot rot or decay.

In Psalm Forty-Nine we find a verse where the word "grave" is used instead of "hell". However, when we look up the Hebrew root in the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon, we discover that it is also the very same Hebrew word "sheol". Consider this:

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah."

Psalms 49:15, KJV

Either David was again prophesying regarding the coming Resurrection of the Messiah, or else he was fully aware of his own coming Resurrection. King David was certainly not alone when it came to his faith in the coming Resurrection of the Dead. The Patriarch Job expressed similar thoughts. Consider these verses:

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and

not another; though my reins be consumed within me."
Job 19:25-27, KJV

If you would like to study additional verses concerning the Resurrection of the Dead and our coming Resurrection Bodies, please avail yourself of my KJV Bible verse lists entitled "Our Resurrected Bodies" and "We Fly Away - Resurrection and Rapture", which you can find on the Endtime Prophecy Net website in the Bible Study Tools section.

Following are some additional verses which clearly identify "sheol" -- or hell -- as a place that is located inside the bowels of the Earth. In some cases, it represents the common grave, while in others it signifies the underworld where the wicked are punished. As you will learn shortly, it may very well be that hell is actually a multi-tiered system:

"Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them."
Psalms 55:15, KJV

"For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell."
Psalms 86:13, KJV

"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow."
Psalms 116:3, KJV

"Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death."
Proverbs 7:27, KJV

"But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell."
Proverbs 9:18, KJV

"The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath."
Proverbs 15:24, KJV

"Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied."
Proverbs 27:20, KJV

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

"I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth."
Ezekiel 31:16, KJV

"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down."
Amos 9:2, KJV

In the New Testament, we discover that the Greek equivalent

for the Hebrew "sheol" is the word "hades". Thayer's Greek English Lexicon states the following regarding this Greek word:

----- Begin Quote -----

hades {hah'-dace}

AV - Hell 10, grave 1; 11

- 1) name Hades or Pluto, the god of the lower regions
- 2) Orcus, the nether world, the realm of the dead
- 3) later use of this word: the grave, death, hell

In Biblical Greek it is associated with Orcus, the infernal regions, a dark and dismal place in the very depths of the earth, the common receptacle of disembodied spirits. Usually Hades is just the abode of the wicked, Lu. 16:23, Rev. 20:13,14; a very uncomfortable place.

----- End Quote -----

Please notice that out of the eleven times that "hades" is used in the New Testament, ten of those times it signifies the spiritual abode of the dead -- that is, disembodied spirits -- that is located deep within the bowels of the Earth, while only one time it actually refers to the common grave. It wasn't until later that the physical grave became a more common interpretation of "hades".

As I mentioned earlier, the prophecy regarding Jesus Christ not experiencing physical decay -- or corruption -- in the grave that is found in Psalm 16:10, has a counterpart in the New Testament. In the second chapter of the Book of Acts, we find the following verses where the Greek "hades" is used instead of the Hebrew "sheol". Peter is using this prophecy of the Old Testament to witness to his fellow Jews regarding the Messiahship of Jesus Christ:

"Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption . . . He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

Acts 2:27, 31, KJV

Notice that Peter appears to be making a distinction here by using the word "neither". In other words, he seems to be referring to both the earthly grave -- or sepulchre -- where the Lord's body was placed -- and wasn't left to rot, or see corruption -- as well as to the spiritual underworld where disembodied spirits abide. In the following verse, we again see the Greek word "hades" being used, except this time it is translated as the English word "grave":

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

1 Corinthians 15:55, KJV

Following are a few more examples where the Greek word "hades" is used in the New Testament:

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

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell."
Luke 10:15, KJV

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

Please notice that in the final verse that is found in the Book of Revelation, we are told that Jesus has "the keys of hell and of death". The fact that keys are mentioned implies that something must be unlocked. What He is going to unlock are the doors which keep people locked in the dark prison of death. Thus, it should come as no surprise to us that near the beginning of His Earthly Ministry, Jesus in fact told His audience -- by quoting from the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah -- that this is precisely what He came to accomplish. Consider these verses:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"
Luke 4:18, KJV

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."
John 8:31-32, 36, KJV

Thus, as I explain in other articles, at His Coming, all of those people who have believed in Him, and who are currently "locked" in death -- or sleep -- in their graves, shall be raised to Eternal Life, in a new Glorified Body, and we will then be, even as He is now. As the Apostle Paul wrote in the previous verse "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Consider the following additional verses:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
John 5:28-29, KJV

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."
1 John 3:2, KJV

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the

dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, KJV

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 2

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

Greek "Thanatos" Equals Death, Adam Was Whole But Lifeless Without God's Breath Of Life, State Of Being Dead, Jesus Will Destroy Both Physical Hell And The Process Of Death, Greek Word "Tartaros" Is Deepest Abyss Of Hell, Nephilim: Fallen Angels And Giants Of Genesis, Greek Word "Phulake" Represents Subterranean Prison For The Rebellious Spirits, "Gehenna": Hell, Valley Of Lamentation, Valley Of Hinnom, Unbelieving Jews Conspired Against And Hastily Killed Jesus, Contrary To Popular Belief Jesus Christ Preached Hellfire And Damnation, Jesus Repeatedly Used Gehenna To Symbolize Lake Of Fire, "Krisis": Damnation, Be Judged, Great White Throne Judgment: Great Separation And Division, Parable Of The Sheep And Goats, Parable Of Wheat And Tares, A False Watered Down Politically Correct Compromised Gospel That Mitigates Accountability And Consequences, Cast Into Hell

In Revelation 1:18 -- which I shared with you in part one -- the word "death" is rather interesting. We find another verse in the Book of Revelation where death and hell are also mentioned side by side. Consider this verse:

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

In both of these verses -- Revelation 1:18 and 20:14 -- the

word "death" is derived from the Greek word "thanatos". This word has several meanings. First, it signifies the death of the physical body through the separation of one's flesh and spirit. As I explain in other articles, until God actually breathed the Breath of Life into the organism that was Adam, Adam was just a lifeless human form. All of his organs were present and ready to function, but without the in-dwelling of God's life-giving Spirit -- an infusion of Spiritual Energy we might say -- Adam was just a hunk of dead flesh. Consider this verse:

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
Genesis 2:7, KJV

The second meaning of "thanatos" is the miserable state of being dead. It is not the same as actually dying. It is the state our body lays in while we are in Hades; that is, in the grave. In other words, we lay in a state of death. So then, what it seems that we are actually being told, is that not only is Jesus going to destroy the literal place called "hell" that is located inside the bowels of the Earth, but He is also going to destroy the process of death itself, and the power that it currently holds over our natural bodies.

If you are wondering how hell can possibly be cast into the Lake of Fire if hell is itself a place of fire and brimstone as many people have been led to believe, I will address this issue in just a moment. To further clarify these concepts for you, following is an expanded definition of the Greek word "thanatos" that is taken from Thayer's Greek English Lexicon:

----- Begin Quote -----

thanatos {than'-at-os}

AV - death 117, deadly 2; 119

1) the death of the body

1a) that separation (whether natural or violent) of the soul and the body by which the life on earth is ended

1b) with the implied idea of future misery in hell

1b1) the power of death

1c) since the nether world, the abode of the dead, was conceived as being very dark, it is equivalent to the region of thickest darkness i.e. figuratively, a region enveloped in the darkness of ignorance and sin

2) metaph., the loss of that life which alone is worthy of the name,

2a) the misery of the soul arising from sin, which begins on earth but lasts and increases after the death of the body in hell

3) the miserable state of the wicked dead in hell

4) in the widest sense, death comprising all the miseries arising from sin, as well physical death as the loss of a life consecrated to God and blessed in him on earth, to be followed by wretchedness in hell

----- End Quote -----

Another word which is translated as "hell" in the KJV New Testament is the Greek word "tartaros". This word is only used one time, and is used in reference to the Watchers of Genesis chapter six and the Book of Enoch. As I explain in other articles such as the series "Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis" and "The Book of Enoch: Truth or Heresy?", these Watchers were a group of Angels who rebelled against the Lord, and who chose to descend to the Earth -- possibly on Mount Hermon -- after which they engaged in illicit sexual intercourse with human women. This resulted in the birth of giant half-breeds who are referred to as the Nephilim.

The word "Nephilim" is derived from the primitive root word "naphal", which means to fall down, cast down, fall away, overthrow, inferior, and other things. So gain, these giant Nephilim were the children of the Fallen Angels; that is, the Watchers. In speaking of the judgment of the Fallen Angels following their rebellion against the Lord, and the wickedness which they committed on the Earth, the Apostle Peter wrote the following words:

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;"
2 Peter 2:4, KJV

To reiterate, this is the only place in the entire King James Version of the Bible where we find the word "hell" translated from the Greek word "tartaros". Thayer's Greek English Lexicon states the following regarding this word:

----- Begin Quote -----

tartarow tartaroo {tar-tar-o'-o}

from Tartaros (the deepest abyss of hell);; v

AV - cast down to Hell 1; 1

1) the name of the subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead, where they suffer punishment for their evil deeds; it answers to Gehenna of the Jews

2) to thrust down to Tartarus, to hold captive in Tartarus

----- End Quote -----

Notice that "tartaroo" -- or "tartaros" -- seems similar to "hades", except in this case we are told that it is in fact the deepest abyss of an obviously multi-tiered hell. Let me mention here that I have my doubts regarding Tartaros being the same as Gehenna. I will explain why I feel this way in a moment. What I find interesting regarding Peter's comments is that in his first Epistle, he also makes mention of this very same incident concerning the fate of the Watchers. The difference is that in his first Epistle, instead of using the word "hell", he uses another Greek word which has been translated into English as "prison". Consider these verses:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

1 Peter 3:18-20, KJV

In this case, the word "prison" is translated from the Greek word "phulake", which Thayer's Greek English Lexicon informs us means a prison, or one who watches over a prison. Allow me to share the full definition with you:

----- Begin Quote -----

fulake phulake {foo-lak-ay'}

AV - prison 36, watch 6, imprisonment 2, hold 1, cage 1, ward 1; 47

1) guard, watch

1a) a watching, keeping watch

1a1) to keep watch

1b) persons keeping watch, a guard, sentinels

1c) of the place where captives are kept, a prison

1d) of the time (of night) during which guard was kept, a watch i.e. a period of time during which part of the guard was on duty, and at the end of which others relieved them. As the earlier Greeks divided the night commonly into three parts, so, previous to the exile, the Israelites also had three watches in a night; subsequently, however, after they became subject to the Romans, they adopted the Roman custom of dividing the night into four watches

----- End Quote -----

From the Scriptural and lingual evidence we have examined thus far, it becomes rather apparent that hell is indeed a real place. Furthermore, the word "hell" does not refer to the common grave alone; rather, it also signifies a type of subterranean, multi-tiered prison system where rebellious spirits, Fallen Angels and disembodied spirits abide. Based on the definitions of these root words, I suspect that this unseen prison of the dark underworld may possibly operate in a fashion that is very similar to the prison system that we use in our own world. In other words, there seems to be different sections and security levels for different types of criminals. The more dangerous the criminal, and the more heinous his crimes, the deeper he appears to be imprisoned in the bowels of the Earth, in chains and utter darkness.

Before moving on in our discussion, let me just mention here that Enoch and the Apostle Peter are not the only writers who discuss the fate of the Fallen Angels, and how these beings are currently "cast down to hell" and imprisoned in "chains of darkness". In his brief Epistle, the Apostle Jude writes the following regarding this very same incident:

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left

their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

Jude 1:6, KJV

If you happen to be one who has rejected the Lord's Mercy and Salvation time and time again, and if you are utterly afraid of the dark, perhaps having this knowledge will motivate you to get your heart right with the Lord while you still have the time to do so. Just imagine for a moment if you were to suddenly find yourself imprisoned in such a terrible place with others who are equally as wicked as yourself. Imagine that the darkness is so thick, that you can't even see them, or know what they may be doing or possibly even be planning against you!

Finally, we come to the last Greek word that is translated in the New Testament as "hell"; that is, the word "Gehenna". It is this word which is normally identified with the place of fire and terrible destruction which most people are familiar with. Gehenna is actually derived from two combined Hebrew words. These words are "gay" -- pronounced gah'-ee, which is a steep valley or narrow gorge -- and "hinnom" -- which means "lamentation". Thus, the word Gehenna signifies the "valley of lamentation". The following information is extracted from Thayer's Greek English Lexicon:

----- Begin Quote -----

Hinnom {hin-nome'}

probably of foreign origin

AV - Hinnom 13; 13

Hinnom = "lamentation"

1) a valley (deep and narrow ravine) with steep, rocky sides located southwest of Jerusalem, separating Mount Zion to the north from the "hill of evil counsel" and the sloping rocky plateau of the "plain of Rephaim" to the south

----- End Quote -----

Referring again to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, we find some addition information which provides us with an even clearer picture concerning why Jesus often referred to this valley when describing the final destruction of the wicked at the end of this present age. Please refer to some of my other other articles -- such as "From Armageddon to the New Earth" -- which describe some of these interim events. Here then is what the Greek lexicon tells us regarding Gehenna:

----- Begin Quote -----

geenna {gheh'-en-nah}

of Hebrew origin 01516 and 02011

AV - Hell 9, Hell fire + 3588 + 4442 3; 12

1) Hell is the place of the future punishment call "Gehenna" or "Gehenna of fire". This was originally the valley of

Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.

----- End Quote -----

Imagine how those rebellious, unbelieving Jews must have felt each time that the Lord would speak of the future fate of the wicked, and He would use this phrase "gay hinnom". Jesus obviously knew that they understood it perfectly well. Is it any wonder then that the unbelieving Jews conspired to kill the Lord, and eventually succeeded with their devilish task? While there appears to be a modern inclination to try to deflect criticism from the unbelieving Jewish religious leadership of that day, and cast the blame completely upon the Romans who were not that familiar with Jewish messianic prophecies, the Bible makes it very clear who is responsible for Jesus' hasty trial and murder, as we see by these verses:

"Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people."
Matthew 26:3-5, KJV

"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people."
Luke 22:1,2, KJV

"And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."
John 5:16-18, KJV

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him . . . Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? . . . Then said some of them of Jerusalem, is not this he, whom they seek to kill?"
John 7:1, 19-20, 25, KJV

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even

because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:37-44, KJV

"Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar."

John 19:10-12, KJV

". . . My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

John 18:36b, KJV

"And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree."

Acts 5:27-30, KJV

Imagine how you would personally feel if you lived at that time, and Jesus came up to you, looked you straight in the eyes, and said with the authority of God's Spirit, "Listen, you know that deep gorge called Hinnom that is located to the south of Jerusalem where you burn all of your garbage and filth and the bodies of dead animals and criminals? Yes, the place that has the terrible stench of putrefaction, and that is always full of flies and maggots, where the fires never burn out. Well, if you don't repent of your unbelief, you are going to end up in a place very similar to that!"

You would think that such a powerful statement would suffice to shake up anyone, and would motivate them to repent of their rebellion and unbelief. Sadly, as we know, such was not the case with some of those stiffnecked Jews. Like the Egyptian Pharaoh of old, they chose to harden their wicked hearts even more, until they finally murdered the very One who had come to save them.

Contrary to the dangerous, popular belief which has been promoted by a number of modern preachers and misguided false prophets, Jesus Christ most certainly did preach hellfire and damnation. In the following verse where Jesus uses the phrase "hell fire", the original Greek word that is used there is in fact "Ghehenna":

"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."

Matthew 5:22, KJV

It is difficult to not conclude that Jesus is using the word "Gehenna" -- that is, the Valley of Hinnom -- as an example of the Lake of Fire in the above verse. The same holds true with the following verse where He again uses Gehenna as an example of the Second Death which will occur to everyone who is not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and as a result will thus be cast into the Lake of Fire following the Great White Throne Judgment:

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Matthew 10:28, KJV

Consider these next verses where Jesus warns the unbelieving Jewish Elders that not only are they going to end up being burned in Gehenna -- which symbolizes the Lake of Fire -- but every person who they convert to their false religion is going to suffer the very same horrible fate:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves . . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

Matthew 23:15, 33, KJV

To reiterate, in all of the previous verses, "Gehenna" is used in the original Greek text, and not "Hades". There is a reason for that. The authors of the Bible were careful in their choice of words. While later English translators chose to translate all of these different words as "hell", I view this as a mistake on their part, because the original authors obviously intended different meanings for the verses which I have shared with you. In the case of the previous verses, the Lord is not talking about the common grave, or Hades. He is warning His listeners about the dangers of the Lake of Fire, and using the Valley of Hinnom, or the Valley of Lamentation -- that disgusting garbage dump which was located outside of the walls of Jerusalem, and which had a terrible stench and was always on fire -- as a metaphor, or symbol, for it.

In that last verse that is taken from the Gospel of Matthew, the word "damnation" is rather interesting. It is translated from the Greek word "krisis", which is usually translated as "judgment". In other words, the word "damnation" means to be judged, and Jesus is talking about being judged at the Great White Throne Judgment, and then being cast into the Lake of Fire.

However, according to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, it seems that "krisis" has another meaning of which I personally was not aware; and that is "a separating or a sundering". I am reminded of another verse I have often quoted where the same kind of phrase is used, even though the Greek word "merismos" is used instead. Similar to "krisis", "merismos" also means a

division, separation or partition. Consider this verse:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

If there is one thing that the previous verses all make very clear, it is that a Great Day of separation and division is coming. While the spiritual sheep and goats may share this present world for the time being, and while the useless tares may currently be growing right along side the wheat, in God's chosen time, a clear separation and division, that is to say, a dividing asunder, is going to take place. The sheep will go to their reward, while the goats, or tares, will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Jesus spoke about these events a number of times in the Gospels, and each case, He plainly stated that these reprobate offenders will be cast into the fire, as we see by the following sample verses:

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

Matthew 25:31-34, 41, 46, KJV

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

Matthew 13:24-30, KJV

In light of Parables such as the previous two, as well as the other verses which I have shared with you thus far, in my view, it is ludicrous to claim that Jesus never preached hellfire and damnation. The people who promote this false doctrine are clearly in denial of the Scriptures, and are in fact preaching the doctrines of men. They are preaching a watered down, compromised, politically correct, false gospel which offends no one, and which motivates no one to repent

of their rebellion and unbelief. The dangerous attitude that this false doctrine promotes is this: "If there is no hell, then what is there to worry about? We can all live as we please, and never have to suffer any consequences for it." In short, this devilish doctrine mitigates accountability.

It is very clear from God's Word that when that final Day of Judgment arrives for the wicked, the Lord is going to speak the Word -- which is symbolized as a Sword which proceeds out of His mouth in the Book of Revelation -- and they are going to be cast into the Lake of Fire. As Jesus said, it will be similar to how the ancient Jews cast the bodies of undesirables, dead animals and criminals into the Valley of Hinnom, where they were burned up. What happens to these unbelieving reprobates once they are cast into the Lake of Fire is an issue which I will be discussing later on in this same series. Following are a few more verses that are found in the Gospels where Jesus discusses being cast into hell, and uses Ghehenna as a symbolic reflection of the Lake of Fire:

"And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:"
Mark 9:45, KJV

"But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
Luke 12:5, KJV

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 3

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

Gehenna: Valley Of Hinnom, Valley Of Lamentation, Symbol Of The Lake Of Fire, Fire That Never Shall Be Quenched, John The Baptist's Similar Message, Jesus Repeatedly Warned That The Fire Is Not Quenched, Do Gehenna And The Lake Of Fire Refer To The Same Thing?, Greek Words "Asbestos" And "Sbennumi" And Unquenchable Fire, Supernatural Divine Fire?, Moses And The Burning Bush, Enoch Sees Vision Of The Fiery Throne Of God, "Where Their Worm Dieth Not", Scolex Maggots And Tapeworms, Self-Righteous Good Works, No Righteousness Of Our Own, Saved By Grace Alone Through Faith In Christ, Maggot Metamorphosis, Valley Of Hinnom Overrun With Maggots, "His Blood Be On Us", First Jewish-Roman War And Slaughter Of The Jews, Mass Grave In The Valley Of Hinnom, "Wrath Upon This People", Prophesied Destruction Of Jewish Temple, Future Battle Of Gog And Magog,

The Lord Destroys Sodom And Gomorrah With Fire And Brimstone, Our God Is A Consuming Fire, The Outcome Of Battle Of Gog And Magog, Weapons Will Be Burned For Seven Years, Durability Of Plastics, Hard Plastics Used In Some Military Applications, Columns Of Thick Black Smoke, Proper Timing Of Gog And Magog

I concluded part two of this series with the following verse from the Gospel of Mark where the Lord offers a very serious admonition regarding being cast into hell, into a fire which "shall never be quenched":

"And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:"
Mark 9:45, KJV

In part two, I explained that in this verse, as well as in a number of other verses that are found in the New Testament, the word "hell" is derived from the Greek word "ghehenna", which refers to a steep gorge that was located to the south of Jerusalem. This valley -- which in English is known as the Valley of Hinnom, or the Valley of Lamentation -- was used by the people of Jerusalem as a common dumping ground for garbage, dead animals, and the dead bodies of criminals. It was a rather disgusting place filled with the stench of decay and death, where fires were continually burning. It was this place that Jesus used as a symbol for the Lake of Fire.

Allow me to draw your attention to the words "fire that never shall be quenched". In studying the Gospels, we discover that John the Baptist made a similar remark regarding unquenchable fire as he engaged in his ministry of repentance and baptism along the banks of the Jordan River. Consider these verses:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."
Matthew 3:11-12, KJV

In fact, this point regarding unquenchable fire seems to be so important, that when Jesus was speaking about getting rid of an offending member lest our whole body be cast into hell in the previous verse from Mark, He mentioned this fact four times. In the following quote I have omitted the extraneous verses in between for the sake of emphasis:

"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched . . . And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into Hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched . . . Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched . . . Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
Mark 9:44-46, 48, KJV

Rarely did Jesus ever repeat something so many times in one small conversation; so if He did it here, it is because He

obviously wants us to sit up and take note, and realize how terrible it will be for those rebellious individuals who do not repent of their wickedness and unbelief. In part two I briefly discussed the Great White Throne Judgment and the Second Death which are mentioned in the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation. In the same chapter, we discover the following verse which reveals the final fate of the wicked following the Second Resurrection, which involves everyone who has ever lived who has not accepted Christ. Remember; the believing Saints were already resurrected and raptured during the First Resurrection. At any rate, following the Great White Throne Judgment, during which the Book of Life will be opened, this is what happens to the unbelievers:

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
Revelation 20:15, KJV

Now the question that arises in my mind is this: Is the Lake of Fire the same thing as the fiery hell -- or Gehenna -- which Jesus warns us about in the Gospels? From everything I have shared with you thus far, I do not believe that it is. It is my current view that they are two separate things. This is why I have been very careful to state that the Valley of Hinnom was only a symbol of the actual Lake of Fire. It was just an example that Jesus used to convey to the hardhearted Jews what awaits those people who refuse to repent of their unbelief.

Some of you may be surprised to learn that I have arrived at this particular conclusion. However, if you have known me for any length of time, and if you have taken the time to read some of my other articles, then you will probably know that normally, I do not just talk off the top of my head in an irresponsible fashion. It is only after a considerable amount of Biblical research, that I arrive at my personal conclusions. Having said that, allow me to share with you what I believe to be strong Scriptural evidence for what I am proposing here.

To begin with, in the previous verses I emphasized the fact that in comparing Gehenna -- the Valley of Hinnom -- with the Lake of Fire, Jesus stated that the fire would never be quenched. In other words, this fire is inextinguishable. It might interest you to know that in Matthew 3:12, the word "unquenchable" is derived from a Greek word which many of us are familiar with; that is, the word "asbestos". As you may know, asbestos is a fire-resistant material which is used in many industrial applications. Please note that the letter "a" at the beginning of the word means "not". Thus the word means "not quenchable", or unquenchable, as in John the Baptist's warning regarding "unquenchable fire".

This same Greek word is used in some of the verses that I shared with you earlier from the Gospel of Mark, while in others, the Greek word "sbennumi" is used, which means to extinguish or quench. However, in those verses, the word is used in a negative sense, meaning not extinguished, or not quenched. Thus "asbestos" and "sbennumi" signify the same thing in those verses.

Now obviously, the fires in the Valley of Hinnom are not

burning right now. In fact, they have not been burning for most of the past two thousand years. We all know that the only way that a regular fire can remain unquenchable, that is, inextinguishable, is if it is fed a constant source of fuel, if it receives a sufficient amount of oxygen, and if it is protected from both wind and water. If any of these conditions is not met, the fire will simply burn out.

Surprisingly, I have read a few commentaries where it has been suggested that the fact that this fire is not quenched, simply means that it will not be put out by any human agent. In other words, it is claimed -- and erroneously so in my view -- that the fire will automatically go out once all of the wicked have been burned up. Considering how many times Jesus informs us that this fire is unquenchable, which John the Baptist also confirmed, I am amazed that some people can arrive at such a conclusion. Their position certainly seems to be in denial of the Scriptures.

To reiterate, this fire is not going to go out by itself. It is not going to be quenched or extinguished by anyone. Jesus makes this point sufficiently clear. That being the case, it seems to me that what Jesus is describing may be some kind of supernatural fire, or "Divine Fire" if you prefer. I am not convinced that it is the kind of fire that we normally associate with combustion, any more than the fire that Moses saw in the Burning Bush. As you may recall, it enveloped the bush, and yet the bush was not consumed by the fire. I will be discussing this topic later on in this same series.

In addition, I also encourage you to read the Book of Enoch, as it also contains many descriptions regarding places of fire, both good and evil. For example, following is one of Enoch's descriptions regarding the Throne of God, which we also find in the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation:

". . . And I beheld a vision, And lo! there was a second house, greater than the former, and the entire portal stood open before me, and it was built of flames of fire. And in every respect it so excelled in splendour and magnificence and extent that I cannot describe to you its splendour and its extent. And its floor was of fire, and above it were lightnings and the path of the stars, and its ceiling also was flaming fire. And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne: its appearance was as crystal, and the wheels thereof as the shining sun, and there was the vision of cherubim. And from underneath the throne came streams of flaming fire so that I could not look thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon, and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and could behold His face by reason of the magnificence and glory and no flesh could behold Him. The flaming fire was round about Him, and a great fire stood before Him, and none around could draw nigh Him: ten thousand times ten thousand (stood) before Him, yet He needed no counselor. And the most holy ones who were nigh to Him did not leave by night nor depart from Him. And until then I had been prostrate on my face, trembling: and the Lord called me with His own mouth, and said to me: 'Come hither, Enoch, and hear my word.' And one of the holy ones came to me and waked me, and He made me rise up and approach the door: and I bowed my face downwards."
Book of Enoch 14:15b-25

Returning our attention to the verses that are found in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of Mark, there is something else which Jesus said that is worthy of note. The Lord said "where their worm dieth not". While we may be tempted to assign all kinds of spiritual interpretations to that phrase, the simple truth of the matter is that, according to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, that word "worm" means exactly what it says. It is derived from the Greek word "skolex" which refers to a species of worm which preys upon dead bodies. In other words, it sounds like some kind of maggot. In fact, in the field of zoology, the word "scolex" refers to the anterior end of a tapeworm which bears suckers and hooks so that it can attach itself to its host.

Now, while it is obvious to me that there are not going to be maggots in the Lake of Fire, sadly, according to certain online accounts I have read, there are some misguided people who claim that they have not only gone to "hell", but while there, have observed suffering souls in the flames of hell who are covered with maggots which continually devour their flesh. To me, this sounds so much like something that would be invented by the misguided followers of the Roman Catholic Church. After all, many Roman Catholics have been deceived into accepting the false doctrine which claims that personal physical suffering is necessary, in order to make us more righteous, and worthy of Salvation. This false doctrine is even promoted in some modern movies which are influenced by the Roman Catholic Church.

Of course, as I explain in other articles which deal with the topic of Salvation, this is a blatantly false doctrine which finds absolutely no support in the Scriptures. We are all unrighteous, filthy sinners, who are saved by the Mercy of God through our faith in the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ alone. So-called "good works" -- such as inflicting our bodies with physical pain -- is an exercise in futility and does not gain us any points with God. This point is made perfectly clear by verses such as the following.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."
Isaiah 64:6, KJV

"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"
Psalms 130:3, KJV

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:"
Malachi 3:2, KJV

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
Romans 3:10, 21-23, KJV

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

Returning to the issue of the phrase "where their worm dieth not", it seems probable to me that the Lord was referring to the multitudes of maggots which no doubt crawled all over and devoured the decaying bodies and other organic waste which filled the Valley Of Hinnom, or Ghehenna, south of Jerusalem. But what did Jesus mean when He said "dieth not"? Well, in a technical sense, maggots, larvae, caterpillars and grub don't really die. They just metamorphose and transform into flies, beetles, butterflies, moths, dragonflies or into some other insect.

However, my curiosity led me to search even deeper, and so I looked up "dieth" in Thayer's Greek English Lexicon. What I discovered is rather interesting. As it turns out, this word is derived from the Greek word "teleutao", which in turn is presumed to be derived from "teleo". While "teleutao" is translated as "die" or "dead" eleven of the twelve times that it is used in the New Testament, I was surprised to discover that it is only translated as "decrease" one time. The reason for my surprise is that the meanings of these two Greek words are to finish, fulfill, bring to a close, or to come to an end.

In light of this piece of information, it has occurred to me that the Lord may not really have meant that their worm would never die -- being as all living things most certainly die at some point in time -- rather, He may have been describing how the Jews would be dumping so many corpses and organic waste into the Valley of Hinnom -- or Ghehenna -- that the maggots would simply never disappear. There would be so many flies in that wretched place, that their life cycle would be ongoing and continuous, and there would be no end to those disgusting maggots. As we have seen, that is precisely what "teleutao" and "teleo" mean. While this is just a personal theory on my part, it seems quite plausible to me.

Some of you may be wondering "Well, if the Lord only meant for us to understand Ghehenna -- the Valley Of Hinnom, the Valley of Lamentation -- as a foreshadow of the real Lake of Fire, what was He talking about when He warned about people being cast into hellfire, 'where their worm dieth not'? Were His words ever fulfilled?"

While I have not yet taken the time to compile some actual historical data, I do believe that there has already been a literal fulfillment of the Lord's words. As I amply explain in such articles as "The Great Tribulation and the Rapture", there are quite a few verses in the New Testament where we are told that God's Wrath was going to be poured out upon the people of Jerusalem, due to their rebellion and sin of unbelief. You may recall that during the Lord's trial before

Pontius Pilate, the unbelieving Jews not only demanded that Jesus be crucified, but they also said the following:

"Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."
Matthew 27:25, KJV

Please notice carefully that it wasn't just the Jewish Elders who demanded Jesus' blood, it was "all the people". Well, as we know from the historical record, those rebellious Jews got exactly what they asked for. While I haven't identified the precise source yet -- it may be Josephus or Tacitus -- it is claimed that during the first Jewish-Roman War of 66-70 AD, when Roman General Titus -- the son of Emperor Vespasian who later also became an emperor himself -- invaded the city of Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple, close to one million Jews were slaughtered. Even by the modern standards of war, that is a very major slaughter. Whether or not the figure is inflated, I honestly do not know. However, considering so great a slaughter, the surviving Jews must have disposed of the bodies in some way, and it must have taken them a very long time to burn them all in order to reduce the threat of disease.

While it is only speculation on my part, it seems probable that the survivors of that great slaughter used the Valley of Hinnom as one disposal area since it was already in use, and located just outside of Jerusalem. In other words the place known as Ghehenna in Greek, or Gay Hinnom in Hebrew, became a mass grave that was filled with the stench and the smoke of burning bodies for many months. This is supported by material I have read which states that just prior to the destruction of the Second Temple, many of the Jews actually ran inside of it, because they erroneously thought that God would protect them from their Roman persecutors. Even Jesus Himself clearly warned of the coming Divine Wrath upon the Jewish people, as we see by the following verses:

"But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people."
Luke 21:23, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Matthew 23:37-24:2, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye

shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say,
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
Luke 13:34-35, KJV

Thus, many of those foolish Jews were literally burned alive, while many more fell to the Roman sword. I have read that the heat from the flames was so intense, that all of the golden items in the temple melted down between the blocks of which the temple was constructed. It was precisely for this reason that, in fulfillment of Jesus's words, the Romans tore the temple apart stone by stone, in order to recover the melted gold.

Again, allow me to remind the reader that this interpretation of Jesus' words regarding the Valley of Hinnom, the worm that never dies, and unquenchable fire, should only be understood as a foreshadow of the real Lake of Fire that is discussed in the Book of Revelation. In thinking about Jesus' words, I am wondering if it is possible that at the time that He uttered this sober warning, He may have also been thinking of a far future event as well; that is, the Battle of Gog and Magog. As I explained in such articles as "Battle of Gog and Magog and War in Yugoslavia" and "From Armageddon to the New Earth", the post-Millennial Battle of Gog and Magog will involve many evil nations of the world, which will be influenced by Satan to surround the Camp of the Saints, as we see by these verses:

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."
Revelation 20:7-9, KJV

This very same battle -- or a very similar battle that occurs in the same place -- is also described in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of the book of Ezekiel. Following are some of the key verses from those chapters:

"And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel . . . And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone . . . Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD. And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD."
Ezekiel 38:18-19, 22, 39:4-6, KJV

Please notice how in both the Book of Ezekiel and the Book of

Revelation, Gog and his bands meet their final fate when the Almighty God sends fire and brimstone from the heavens. While some modern Bible teachers and preachers place this event in the very near future, personally, I believe that they are in error, because the Book of Revelation clearly states that the Battle of Gog and Magog happens sometime after the 1000-year Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ and the Saints on the Earth.

As I explain in the aforementioned articles, the Battle of Gog will be the Ultimate Battle between Good and Evil. It is going to be Satan's final rebellion against God, and it will involve many nations. Nevertheless, as we can see by these verses, the Lord is going to reveal the symbolic fire of His Wrath in a very physical manner in the form of hailstones, fire and brimstone. This won't be the first time that God has resorted to such extreme measures of punishment. No doubt, many of you will recall the following event that is found in the Book of Genesis:

"Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."
Genesis 19:24-28, KJV

I am reminded of the Apostle Paul's admonition that is found in his Epistle to the Hebrews. Consider these verses:

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."
Hebrews 10:31, 12:29, KJV

While the Battle of Gog and Magog may at first appear to be a detour from our primary discussion concerning hell and the Lake of Fire, and the events of 70 AD, there are some rather interesting similarities when we consider the outcome of the Battle of Gog and Magog. If anything, the Battle of Gog and Magog can be considered a much larger version of the Roman slaughter that occurred in 70 AD, because it will involve the rebellious population of the entire Earth, who will rise up against the Lord and His Saints. Returning to the Book of Ezekiel, we discover that after the Lord smites Gog's great army upon the mountains of Israel, a massive cleanup ensues. Consider the following verses:

"And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD."
Ezekiel 39:9-10, KJV

Notice that this army is so great, that it will take a full seven years just to burn all of the weapons of war. The fact that they will be able to burn them may imply that when the Lord returns and sets up His Millennial Kingdom, He is going to do away with all modern science and technology. Perhaps man is going to be forced to return to a more natural, and less destructive, way of life, such as existed prior to this current age of industrialization, in which we have witnessed the Earth being polluted in so many different ways.

There is another possible explanation regarding how weapons of war will be able to be burned. As you will know, over the past five decades, the use of plastics has risen to a global level; so much so that they have become a big environmental hazard. Just visit a public beach or a national park and you will find plastic bags scattered everywhere. Garbage dumps are also full of them. There are some manufactured plastic compounds which are as hard as iron, and they are extremely heat resistant as well. As such, they are found in quite a number of industrial applications, such as in the manufacture of parts for combustion engines, such as you will find in your car.

If we consider that some of these durable, super-strength, heat-resistant plastics are currently being used in different military applications, is it possible that similar weapons will be used during the Battle of Gog and Magog? If so, it is easy to understand why it would take seven full years to burn up everything. Of course, one serious problem would no doubt be the huge amount of black smoke and toxic pollution which would obviously be generated by such fires. I am reminded of the columns of thick black smoke which arose over Iraq when former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein set the southern oil wells on fire during the Gulf War. Remember; plastics are a petroleum by-product.

Of course, there is another possible scenario which would explain how weapons of war are burned following the Battle of Gog and Magog. It is indeed a controversial one, and will no doubt cause some Christians a bit of consternation. While I have suggested that the war that is described in the Books of Ezekiel and Revelation may be one and the same, what if they aren't? In fact, what if, contrary to modern popular opinion amongst certain Christians, Ezekiel's Battle of Gog and Magog is not some near future event, but in fact already occurred in the distant past? We cannot simply dismiss the fact that the weapons which are used in this great war consist of bows and arrows, shields and bucklers, and handstaves and spears, just because it doesn't agree with our personal theology. It would certainly make it easier to understand how the weapons could be burned.

As we continue this series in part four, I will be addressing a final point concerning the Battle of Gog and Magog, which will further demonstrate its similarity to the events which occurred in Jerusalem following the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. I trust that you will join me.

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
http://www.endtimeprophecy.net

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 4

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

Disposal Of Bodies Following Battle Of Gog And Magog, Seven Full Months To Bury The Dead, Great Burial In The Valley Of Hamongog Or Valley Of The Passengers, A Great Feast For The Fowls And The Beasts, Valley Of Hamongog Burial Surpasses Valley Of Hinnom, The Wicked Transformed Into Red Maggots?, Ghehenna Is Not The Literal Lake Of Fire, Skolex Maggots, Lake Of Fire Is Not Derived From Sheol, Hades, Ghehenna Or Tartaros, Lake Of Fire Is Literal Translation Of The Greek Words "Limne Pur", Enoch's Vision Of The Fiery Abyss Where The Fallen Angels Are Imprisoned, A Jehovah Witness's View, How Death And Hell Can Both Be Cast Into The Lake Of Fire, Valley Of Hinnom Reignited?, Will Global Fire Consume The Earth And Atmospheric Heavens?, Problems With Word "Cast", Theories Regarding Possible Location Of The Lake Of Fire, Center Of The Earth And Black Holes, Gravitational Collapse And Supernovas, Will The Earth Someday Collapse Into A Black Hole At Its Core?, Possible Significance Of Death Swallowed Up In Victory, Children Of Light And Children Of Darkness, Lucifer: Rebellious Prince Of Darkness And His Demons, Jesus Is The Light Of The World, Morning Stars And Sons Of God, God Is The Father Of Lights Who Is Symbolized By The Sun In The Bible, Jesus Reflects God And Is Thus Similar To The Moon

Having now discussed the destruction of the weapons of war that occurs following this great Battle of Gog and Magog, let us now consider what is done with all of the dead bodies which no doubt result from so great a conflict as this war. Continuing in the Book of Ezekiel, we read the following:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search."

Ezekiel 39:11-14, KJV

Just imagine; there are so many dead carcasses scattered upon the mountains of Israel, that it requires seven full months

to bury them all. It is evident that this is considerably worse than Ghehenna -- or the Valley of Hinnom -- because this tremendous burial campaign occurs all over the land of Israel. No doubt, it is one stinking mess. In fact, we are told that it is so bad, that people have to stop their noses. The carcasses and stench and maggots are everywhere; at least for a few weeks, if not for a few months, until all of the dead bodies have either decayed, or have been consumed by the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. Notice where they take the remains of these dead bodies:

"And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog. And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land."
Ezekiel 39:15-16, KJV

Here we discover that all of the dead carcasses, or at least what is left of them, are carried to the Valley of Hamongog to be buried. This name in Hebrew actually means "multitude of Gog". Previously in verse eleven, we saw that at the time that Ezekiel wrote his prophecy, this valley was called the Valley of the Passengers. Research reveals that it is located on the east side of the Dead Sea. We are also informed that a city is built called Hamonah -- which means "multitudes" -- to commemorate the Lord's victory over Gog and Magog. As I mentioned previously, being as it takes such a long time to locate and bury all of the dead, Ezekiel informs us that the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field engage in a fantastic feast of human flesh for at least a few weeks, as we see by the following verses:

"And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD."
Ezekiel 39:17-20, KJV

So it is evident that just as occurred one thousand years earlier following the Battle of Armageddon, God is going to require the assistance of the ravenous fowls of the air and the beasts of the field to clean up this foul-smelling and putrifying mess. Based upon this description, it is easy to determine that the Valley of Hinnom cannot compare to the magnitude of the aftermath of the Battle of Gog and Magog.

While it is speculation on my part, I would venture to say that just as the Valley of Hinnom was set on fire in order to burn the garbage and the dead bodies which were cast into it, the same thing probably occurs in the Valley of Hamongog for sanitation purposes as well. Once again, disease-ridden, filthy maggots will be crawling throughout this valley, and

throughout Israel.

As I mentioned earlier, sometimes it is very easy for us to fall into the error of misinterpreting the Scriptures. As an example, I recall reading one particular commentary a number of years ago in which the writer was likewise endeavoring to understand hell, where the worm dieth not. This person -- who has written a number of excellent commentaries -- erroneously concluded that the souls of the wicked will be reduced to red worms -- or maggots -- which will writhe in agony in a hell of literal fire and brimstone. While I too believe that some passages in the Bible are meant to be understood in a very literal sense, I honestly do not believe that God is going to transform the wicked into red maggots, or anything similar.

Thus far, I have demonstrated through two infallible proofs, that Ghehenna -- that is, the Valley of Hinnom, which has been translated as "hell" in the New Testament -- is not the same place as the Lake of Fire. It is not the literal Lake of Fire. As we have seen, the fire in the Valley of Hinnom has not burned for a very long time; and thus it cannot be considered unquenchable, as Jesus plainly stated. The "worm" Jesus was referring to were maggots -- from the Greek word "skolex" -- which, while they easily survived in the Valley of Hinnom, could not possibly survive in a literal Lake of Fire, contrary to what some people -- who have allegedly gone to "hell" -- claim.

The third way to prove that Jesus was only using the Valley of Hinnom as an example, and not actually saying that it is the literal Lake of Fire is simple indeed. In this series I have examined four different words which are translated as "hell" in the Scriptures; that is, sheol, hades, ghehenna and tartaros. Considering all of the Scriptural examples I have provided in this series, doesn't it seem likely that if the literal Lake of Fire is any one of these, that the phrase itself would be derived from one of these same ancient words? Yet, the fact of the matter is that it isn't derived from any of them whatsoever. It stands all by itself. It is something separate and unique.

In the New Testament, the word "lake" finds its origin in the Greek word "limne". This word has only one meaning: lake. It does not mean valley or gorge, as in the Valley of Hinnom. It is believed to be derived from the Greek word "limen", which signifies a harbor or a haven. In similar fashion, in the New Testament, the word "fire" is translated from the Greek "pur". It too has a single meaning: fire. Thus we plainly see that the phrase "Lake of Fire" is a very literal translation of the original Greek words "limne pur". It has absolutely no connection to the other four words which we have examined in this series.

The only connection we can really find is in the fact that Jesus compared Ghehenna -- or the Valley Of Hinnom -- to the Lake of Fire; and this is because they are both places of fire and destruction; but they are not the same place. In fact, as I mentioned in part three, the Book of Enoch also contains many references to fire; and some descriptions in Enoch's writings sound just like the Lake of Fire; that is, terrible places which are filled with fire and destruction. Enoch spoke about deep gorges and burning stones, and many

other amazing sights. Some of these places appear wondrous, while others are quite horrendous. Consider the following graphic example which appears to be describing the judgment of the Watchers, or the Fallen Angels:

". . . And from thence I went to another place, which was still more horrible than the former, and I saw a horrible thing: a great fire there which burnt and blazed, and the place was cleft as far as the abyss, being full of great descending columns of fire: neither its extent or magnitude could I see, nor could I conjecture. Then I said: 'How fearful is the place and how terrible to look upon!' Then Uriel answered me, one of the holy angels who was with me, and said unto me: 'Enoch, why hast thou such fear and affright?' And I answered: 'Because of this fearful place, and because of the spectacle of the pain.' And he said unto me: 'This place is the prison of the angels, and here they will be imprisoned for ever.'"
Book of Enoch 21:7b-10

The fourth reason concerning why I believe that the fiery gorge that is known as Ghehenna is not the same as the Lake of Fire, but only a foreshadow of the same, can be found simply by reexamining the Greek roots of some of the words that are used in Revelation 20:14. Here is the verse again:

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

A number of years ago, a Jehovah's Witness told me that the Lake of Fire is meant to be understood in a symbolic sense. Part of her reasoning was that there is no way that hell can be cast into itself; that is, if we assume -- as she did -- that hell and the Lake of Fire are referring to the exact same thing. Furthermore, she proceeded to say that neither can death -- which is not a solid object -- be cast into the Lake of Fire. Finally, she concluded that the Lake of Fire must not be a place of actual torment, because when we die, we lay in an unconscious state in the grave -- or sheol -- and have no thoughts or feelings. I partially discuss this last topic in the article entitled "What Really Happens When We Die?".

There is some merit to part of what this woman said, and it will be covered more thoroughly. However, for the time being, allow me to point out that once we understand what is really meant by each term, and realize that hell and the Lake of Fire are not referring to the same thing, not only does the confusion disappear, but we realize that both death and hell can indeed be cast into the Lake of Fire. If you are still a little confused, please just keep reading, and your eyes will hopefully be opened.

In the previous verse from the Book of Revelation, the word "hell" is derived from the Greek "hades". As we saw earlier in this series, based upon the original meaning of the word, Hades is the multilevel physical and spiritual abode of the dead that is located within the bowels of the Earth. Hades extends from our graves on the surface level, to the deepest level -- called Tartaros -- where the most wicked spirits -- such as the Fallen Angels, or Watchers -- are kept bound in

chains in utter darkness, until the Great Day of Judgment.

So how can the insides of the Earth -- or hell -- be cast into the Lake of Fire? Even more troubling, how can death be cast into the Lake of Fire? Obviously, the act of dying cannot be cast into anything. However, you may recall that the Greek word "thanatos" not only refers to the actual act of dying, it also refers to the state of death; that is, the state of laying dead in the grave. So in effect, by casting the insides of the Earth -- that is, hell or Hades -- into the Lake of Fire, death is likewise being cast into the Lake of Fire, because hell -- the common grave -- is where dead bodies reside, unless, of course, they have been cremated.

Quite some time ago, I read a commentary which suggested that what may possibly be implied by Revelation 20:14, is that at some point in the future, Gehenna -- the Valley Of Hinnom -- may be reignited, in order to begin burning the bodies of the wicked. Then, according to this theory, in the Lord's time, this valley of fire will spread until it eventually engulfs the entire planet; thus consuming it -- and the atmospheric heavens -- in flames, just as the Apostle Peter describes it for us in his Epistle. While this theory may seem to have a degree of merit, personally, I am doubtful concerning it.

For one thing, I don't see how a fire that is burning in a little valley in Israel could possibly spread to engulf the entire planet, and much less burn up the heavens; that is, the atmosphere which surrounds the Earth. Just the simple fact that the continents are divided by natural barriers such as the vast oceans makes it physically impossible for a fire to spread from the Valley of Hinnom in Israel. Furthermore, what the Apostle Peter describes for us in his Epistle is considerably more catastrophic, as we will discuss again in a moment.

Another problem with this theory is the word "cast" that is found in Revelation 20:14. It may seem insignificant, but it isn't. It is a definite action word which must be addressed. Derived from the Greek "ballo", its primary definitions are to cast, to throw, or to thrust. These words indicate an intentional action of force. Even if it were possible for the flames of the Valley Of Hinnom to somehow spread until they engulf the entire world -- which it isn't -- it still does not sound like a forceful action where something is being cast, thrown or thrust.

After giving this perplexing issue further thought, I arrived at several possible scenarios which may explain how the very bowels of the Earth -- hell, or hades -- can be cast into the Lake of Fire. Bearing in mind that what I am about to share with you is only personal speculation at best, allow me to share my thoughts with you.

One possible explanation that is worthy of our consideration is that the Lake of Fire may be located at the very center of the Earth. This idea of a terrible place of sadness and torment that is filled with smoke, and fire and brimstone, which is located deep under our very feet would certainly be in agreement with the understanding that is embraced by many religious people. Furthermore, science has long theorized that the very center of the Earth consists of a molten or

semi-molten core, which is composed primarily of iron. As a result of this superheated core, the temperature rises as we penetrate deeper into the Earth's crust.

But consider this interesting question: Being as no human has obviously ever been to the center of the Earth, and being as radar technology can barely scratch the surface of the Earth -- a few centimeters to several hundred meters at best -- is it possible that men of science have simply misunderstood what is actually there? While volcanoes indeed spew forth molten rock in the form of magma, is it possible that deeper down -- in the actual core -- there is something else?

As many of you will already know, another interesting theory which has received considerable attention in recent decades concerns the existence of Black Holes. Some astrophysicists now believe that the nucleus of certain stars, and even the centers of galaxies, are characterized by Black Holes. It has even been suggested that the molten core of the Earth itself may be characterized by just such a Black Hole. According to this theory, Black Holes are of such immense density, that they possess an extremely powerful magnetic field. Theorists state that this magnetic field is so great, that absolutely nothing can escape from it, not even light rays. Once matter -- planets, stars and other spacial matter -- reach the event horizon of such a Black Hole, they are simply gobbled up. In a word, Black Holes are like insatiable monsters.

While to my knowledge there is no clear, physical proof of the existence of Black Holes -- that is to say, there are no photographs of actual Black Holes, but only circumstantial evidence, such as from NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory -- what if these theories are correct? It may interest you to know that a number of months ago, while I was conducting astronomical research for a website that I was designing at the time, I learned that astrophysicists believe that some day, many many years from now, when our Sun finally uses up all of its hydrogen fuel, it will undergo a stellar process -- known as a supernova -- whereby its outer layers will be suddenly expelled, while its inner core will contract due to gravitational collapse resulting from the loss of hydrostatic equilibrium. According to the theory, the end result of this stellar process will be that our Sun will be converted into a high density neutron star or Black Hole.

Assuming that all of the previous information is correct, and that Black Holes really do exist, and that a Black Hole does exist at the Earth's core, what if by God's Design, at some point in the future, the Earth were to be sucked into itself? If you think about it, the Earth and its surrounding atmosphere being violently sucked into its molten core may possibly be what the Apostles Peter and John are describing for us when they inform us that death and hell are cast into the Lake of Fire, that the atmospheric heavens and the Earth are "reserved unto fire", and "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." Peter even states that "these things shall be dissolved".

Obviously, this is only a personal theory, which I certainly cannot conclusively prove beyond a shadow of a doubt. For all

I know, it may not even be scientifically plausible, not that God is in any way limited by man's current understanding of His Creation. While the Bible offers us few clues regarding exactly what physical mechanism God will use to activate the chain of events which will ultimately result in this total destruction of the Earth and the atmosphere, there is one verse which may possibly support the aforementioned scenario involving a Black Hole which is theoretically located at the Earth's core. The Apostle Paul writes the following in his first Epistle to the brethren at Corinth:

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."
1 Corinthians 15:54, KJV

The question is this: Is Paul speaking in a figurative sense when he says that "death is swallowed up", or should we take a more liberal approach in our understanding, and connect the phrase "swallowed up" to the Apostle John's words concerning death and hell being cast into the Lake of Fire? If for the sake of argument we adopt the latter position, then death being swallowed up in victory could also equate to death and hell -- the state of laying dead in the earth, and the bowels of the Earth itself -- being "swallowed up", or sucked into, the theoretical Black Hole which certain scientists say is located in the molten core of the Earth.

As intriguing as the aforementioned theory may seem, there is one major problem with it. Based upon my limited knowledge of astrophysics -- and it is indeed very limited -- it seems to me that if the Earth were to actually be sucked into a Black Hole that is located at its core, then the molten core itself would likewise disappear into the Black Hole as well. If we equate the Earth's molten core with the Lake of Fire, then the end result is that the Lake of Fire would cease to exist. The Bible does not say anything about the Lake of Fire ever being destroyed. For this reason, perhaps we need to consider an alternative solution in order to explain how death and hell can be cast into the Lake of Fire.

While I am not absolutely certain what the Lake of Fire is, or where it is even located, taking into consideration the various Hebrew and Greek words which we have studied in this series, I am relatively certain that I know what it isn't. As I noted previously, the Lake of Fire appears to be something which is totally different from the meanings of hell we have examined thus far. Allow me to offer another speculation for your consideration:

As I mention in a number of other articles, such as "Dracula: Fighting Fear With the Word, Faith and Love", "The Children of Light: Are You One of Us?" and "This Little Light, Glory of the Lord and Our Bright Future" throughout the Bible there are many references to the contrast which exists between the light and the darkness, and the Children of Light, and the Children of Darkness.

The Children of Light are of course represented by people who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and who humbly submit to His Authority in their lives. In contrast, the

Children of Darkness signify those spiritually blind people who rebel against God, who reject the Light of Jesus Christ, and who choose instead to follow after Lucifer. As I explain in a few other articles such as "Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future", Lucifer -- who is also known as the Devil and Satan -- is God's former Lightbearer, who through his pride and own rebellious choice, became the Prince of Darkness, and God's most staunch adversary. This Demon of Darkness has an army of Fallen Angels and rebellious spirits of an uncertain size.

If there is one thing that we know from the Scriptures, it is that these Children of Darkness and the demons who influence them, cannot stand the light. In fact, they hate the light -- both physical light and spiritual light -- and they refuse to come to it. Consider what Jesus said in the third chapter of the Gospel of John:

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."
John 3:19-20, KJV

Of course, when I speak of spiritual light, I am referring to Jesus Christ, who is the "Light of the world" and also "the bright and morning star". Consider the following verses:

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."
John 1:4-9, KJV

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."
John 8:12, KJV

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."
John 9:5, KJV

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth . . . I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."
John 12:35, 46, KJV

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."
Isaiah 60:19-20, KJV

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."

Revelation 21:23-25, KJV

"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."

Revelation 22:16, KJV

"Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:"

Psalms 104:2, KJV

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

Isaiah 9:2, KJV

"And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;"

Isaiah 10:17, KJV

To take this analogy a step further, we also learn from the Bible that the created Angels -- that is, the sons of God -- are also symbolically referred to as the morning stars, or celestial lights, who were present at the time of Creation, as we see by this verse that is found in the Book of Job:

"When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

Job 38:7, KJV

Of course, we know that the Greatest Light of all, the most Brilliant One of all, is God the Father; and thus, He is represented by the Sun in the following verse that is found in the Book of Psalms:

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Psalms 84:11, KJV

In fact, in the previous verse, the word "sun" is derived from the Hebrew root "shemesh" which means "brilliant". One thing which makes the Sun rather different from all of the planets in our Solar System, besides the fact that it is the giver of both light and heat due to the processes of nuclear fusion which occur within it, is that being as it is a star, and not a planet, it does not go through phases. Instead, it is constant, invariable and unchanging. Thus, because God the Father is also constant, invariable and unchanging, the Apostle James refers to Him as the Father of Lights, as we see by this verse:

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and

cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no
variableness, neither shadow of turning."
James 1:17, KJV

Well, if God the Father is represented by the Sun, what
would Jesus be represented by? As you may recall, in the
Gospels, Jesus often reminded the people that He only did
those things, and spoke those things, which were shown to
Him by His Father, as we see by these verses:

"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I
say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he
seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these
also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son,
and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will
shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel . . .
I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and
my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but
the will of the Father which hath sent me."
John 5:19-20, 30, KJV

In other words, while Jesus was on the Earth, He reflected
His Father's Power, Light and Glory. Thus, just as God the
Father is symbolized by the Sun in the Scriptures, it is easy
to see how Jesus can also be symbolized by the Moon; because
not only does the physical Moon reflect the light of the Sun,
but it is also referred to as "the lesser light" in the Book
of Genesis, as we see by these two verses:

"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule
the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the
stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven
to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and
over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness:
and God saw that it was good."
Genesis 1:17-18, KJV

Notice that God created these two lights in the heavens not
only to rule over the day and the night, but also to divide
the light from the darkness. So in a symbolic sense, we can
say that between God the Father and Jesus, we have spiritual
protection twenty-four hours a day. The Lord constantly keeps
His Children of Light protected by keeping them divided from
the Children of Darkness.

Please go to part five for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 5

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

God The Father Symbolized By The Sun, Jesus Symbolized By The Moon, No Need For The Sun Or Moon In Heavenly City, Saints Of God Are Represented By The Stars, Rewarded According To Our Works, Physical Creation Is Proof Of God's Eternal Existence, Unbelieving Fools, Can Spirit Beings Actually Be Destroyed?, A Fail-Safe Mechanism, Spiritual Wickedness In High Places, God Is A Man Of War, Our Sun Is A Physical Shield For Earth, God Is A Spiritual Shield Against Satan And His Demons, Why Is God Permitting The Demonic Forces To Encroach On The Earth?, Satan Will Execute His Wrath On Earth And Persecute God's People, Are Aliens And UFOs Real, Similarities Between Aliens And Demons, No Fellowship With Works Of Darkness, Resist The Devil, Barney And Betty Hill Abduction Case, The Alien Grays From Zeta Reticuli Binary Star System, Description Of Grays

I concluded part four by explaining to you how God the Father is symbolized by the Sun in the Scriptures, and is referred to as the Father of Lights by the Apostle James. In similar fashion, Jesus can be symbolized by the Moon, because while He was on the Earth, He reflected the Light, Glory and Power of His Father. You may also recall that in the Gospels, we are told that Jesus often arose a great while before it was day, just as is often the case with our own Moon. Consider this verse that is found in the Gospel of Mark:

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."
Mark 1:35, KJV

In the Book of Revelation, we are also told that the Light of God the Father, and the Light of Jesus Christ -- who is the Lamb -- are so brilliant, that there will be no need for either the Sun or the Moon, or for any other light source, to illuminate the Heavenly City. Consider these verses:

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there . . . And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."
Revelation 21:23-25, 22:5, KJV

If in a symbolic sense, God the Father is represented by the Sun, and Jesus Christ is represented by the Moon, where does that leave us, the Believers? Well, we are represented by the stars, as we see by this verse:

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."
Daniel 12:3, KJV

However, just as all of the stars do not shine at the same magnitude, neither will all of the Saints of God shine with

the same glory. While the Scriptures clearly inform us that we are not saved by our works, as I explain in such articles as "Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service" and "Study, Work and Don't Be Ashamed", our Heavenly Rewards will indeed be based upon our faithful work for the Lord in this current life. Consider the following verses:

"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:"

1 Corinthians 15:40-43, KJV

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."
Matthew 16:27, KJV

"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"
Proverbs 24:12, KJV

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"
1 Peter 1:17, KJV

". . . I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."
Revelation 2:23b, KJV

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
Revelation 14:13, KJV

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."
Revelation 20:12-13, KJV

At this point you may be wondering what all of this has to do with our main discussion regarding hell and the Lake of Fire. Quite simply, I am grounding you in a few Biblical truths in order to prepare you for what I am about to propose next. As we have now seen, things in the physical realm are sometimes used to symbolize or represent realities in the Spirit Realm. In other words, as the Apostle Paul informs us in his Epistle to the Romans, one purpose of the physical Creation is to aid us in understanding spiritual realities. Stated another way,

the physical Creation offers clear proof of God's existence. Consider this verse:

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
Romans 1:20, KJV

Clearly then, absolutely no one -- other than a hardhearted utter fool -- can look around at the natural world here on Earth, or look up into the starry night sky, and claim there is no Divine Creator. As the Apostle Paul writes, we are all without excuse because we are surrounded by the magnificence and splendor of God's wonderful Creation. It is clear proof of His Intelligent Design, and His Divine Signature can be seen everywhere. King David of old came to the very same conclusions, as we see by these verses:

"[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."
Psalms 19:1, KJV

"[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.] The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."
Psalms 14:1, KJV

[To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, A Psalm of David.] The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good."
Psalms 53:1, KJV

One idea which I have embraced for a number of years now, is the belief that spiritual beings -- such as Satan, the Fallen Angels and demons -- cannot be destroyed. While I can't point to any particular Scriptures which clearly support this view, the Biblical evidence we do have does seem to suggest it. For example, we know that as a result of their rebellion against God that is mentioned in Genesis chapter six, in the Book of Enoch and in the Book of Jubilees, the Fallen Angels were not destroyed; rather, they are bound in chains in darkness deep within the Earth, where they are awaiting their judgment.

In similar fashion, when the Lord cast out evil demons in the Gospels, we are never told that He outright destroyed them; rather, Jesus Himself informs us that they go about searching for a new host; or as I explain in the article "What Happened to the Evil Spirits Known as Legion?", the Lord trapped them in the Abyss, which I believe is the same as the Bottomless Pit. Consider these verses:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

Matthew 12:43-45, KJV

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."
Luke 11:24-26, KJV

In the case of Satan or the Devil, we see the very same thing happening. Nowhere are we told that God outright destroys him either. Rather, that serpent is cast into the Lake of Fire, where he "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever", as we see by this verse:

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."
Revelation 20:10, KJV

So, just as physical matter cannot really be destroyed, but is only converted into something else, or into some form of energy, the impression I receive from the Scriptures is that being as they are spiritual beings who were created by God, and assuming that Spirit is simply some form of energy which is unknown to us, perhaps they cannot be destroyed either.

Yet, at the same time, it doesn't seem quite right that our all-powerful God is able to create such beings in the first place, but that He does not possess the means to destroy them as well. Even in our earthly realm, it is common practice for inventors to incorporate some type of fail-safe mechanism in their creations, just in case something should go wrong. So to embrace the view that God is not capable of destroying the spiritual beings which He has created, seems to diminish His Power.

Is it possible then that the answer to this dilemma is that it is not that God cannot destroy these evil creatures, but rather that for reasons which He alone knows, He has simply chosen not to destroy them, at least not yet? Is it possible that one day all of the demonic forces in the world, and in fact, in the Universe, will ultimately be destroyed by God the Father and Jesus Christ?

At this point in our discussion, we are going to delve even deeper into the area of speculation. Considering the various spiritual parallels and symbolism which exists between the Sun, the Moon and the Stars, and God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Saints, is it also possible that up until some point in our recent history, most of the evil spirits and Fallen Angels who follow Satan have been kept at bay in the darkness of Outer Space beyond the Earth's atmosphere, perhaps even as far away as the outer fringes of our Solar System?

While we know that some demons have been free to roam the Earth since the time of the Nephilim thousands of years ago, at the same time, Biblical evidence clearly reveals that spiritual wickedness likewise exists in high places -- that is, in Earth's own atmosphere -- as well as in the heavens

beyond. Consider the following verses which verify this very point:

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"
Ephesians 2:2, KJV

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."
Ephesians 6:12, KJV

"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! 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: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."
Isaiah 14:12-15, KJV

"And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."
Luke 10:18, KJV

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth . . . And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."
Revelation 12:3-4a, 7-9, KJV

Clearly then, Satan, Fallen Angels and other evil entities have had, and may still have, access to the heavens. They may not yet be permanently bound to the Earth. It is difficult to say, because the exact timing of certain prophetic events is not easy to determine in the Scriptures, and they have been the subject of debate for many years. But if we assume that there is any truth to this possibility that these deceptive entities have been kept at bay by the Lord so that they do not wreak havoc on the Earth until it is their time to do so -- please refer to Revelation 12:12 -- what mechanism might God use in order to accomplish this purpose? One possibility which has occurred to me is the very powerhouse of light which we call our Sun.

As we have seen, the physical Sun symbolizes the presence of God the Father Himself. However, that is not all that it is. It is also a tremendous source of intense light, and that may possibly be the key. As we saw earlier, King David wrote the following in his Psalm:

"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."
Psalms 84:11, KJV

While previously I used this verse to emphasize the symbolic relationship between God and our physical Sun, allow me to draw your attention to another descriptive word which King David uses in that verse: shield. This word is derived from the Hebrew word "magen", which signifies a shield or buckler, and a means of defence. Considering that King David was a man of war for much of his adult life, it really should come as no surprise to us that he would compare God to a shield. In fact, the Bible informs us that God the Father and Jesus are both men of war as well, as we see by the following verses:

"The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name."
Exodus 15:3, KJV

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."
Revelation 17:14, KJV

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."
Revelation 19:11-21, KJV

But what I find equally interesting is the fact that in our modern day, with the invention of telescopes, satellites and interplanetary Space probes, scientists have come to realize that the physical Sun in fact acts as a shield, and protects the Earth by swallowing up, and burning up, many asteroids,

comets, meteoroids and other space travelers, that might otherwise possibly cause substantial harm to the Earth.

Just as the physical Sun acts as a shield and protects our planet from harm from these various bodies from Outer Space, so too, our Heavenly Father -- who James refers to as the Father of Lights -- shields us, his fragile creatures, from the very real spiritual danger and evil which lurks just beyond our sight and perception, by His very Brightness. If, as I have proposed, these evil forces do lurk in the depths of the darkness of Outer Space -- as spiritual wickedness in high places -- is it possible that by God's own Design, these demonic entities have actually begun to encroach on the Lord's territory? If so, why is this happening? Furthermore, why is it happening now?

No doubt, the Lord could decisively stop the advance of these rebellious beings if He really wanted to, so why hasn't He? From studying the previous verses, as well as others that are found in the Bible, it seems to me that the simple answer is that God intends to use Satan and his demons as His tools of chastisement to execute His judgments on the people of the Earth, just as He has always done. In other words, Satan is going to be permitted to execute his wrath upon the people of the Earth with God's permission, just as that demon was also allowed to test the Old Testament Patriarch, Job. Thus, in the Book of Revelation we read the following. Please notice that the red dragon persecutes those people who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ":

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 12:12-17, KJV

If there are two things which Satan hates the most in this world, it is the nation of Israel -- which brought forth the Savior -- and it is God's worldwide nation of Christians who continue to propagate the Message of Salvation through faith in the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It seems that this is precisely who he attacks in the previous verses.

At this point in our discussion regarding hell and the Lake of Fire, we are going to delve into a topic which, at first glance, may not appear to be related to our primary subject matter. However, please bear with me, as you will eventually see that there may be a connection between the two.

As I amply explain in articles such as the twenty-part series entitled "Nature of the Alien: ET's, Demons or a Government Plot?", I am convinced that there is some level of truth to the alien and UFO phenomenon. After performing an in-depth study of this topic during a two-year period over fourteen years ago, I could arrive at no other conclusion. There are simply too many reports being generated by well-grounded, intelligent people to simply dismiss all of these claims of sightings and close encounters as being nothing more than misidentifications, hallucinations, undiscovered natural phenomena, hoaxes, mere fabrications, etc.

While many UFO-related incidents can indeed be placed within the aforementioned categories, there still remains a small percentage of cases which defy logic and reason. Furthermore, as I explain in "Nature of the Alien", if one studies this subject closely, he will come to realize that these strange beings manifest characteristics which are similar to the demons of old. They are extremely deceptive. They can pass through physical objects. They can speak to our minds. They claim to possess great wisdom and knowledge which will be extremely beneficial to humankind. They are usually seen or experienced in the darkness of the night. They are usually seen in the company of glowing craft. And finally, according to the people who have remembered to call out to the Lord during the time of their encounter, it appears that they are afraid of the name of Jesus.

Is it possible then that we are merely seeing the same old devilish deception being wrapped in a modern, more attractive package? As I have shared with my readers before, Satan only has a limited number of tricks and disguises which he seems to use over and over again throughout the ages. Returning to our analogy regarding the Sun and the shield, if there is one thing that I have made quite clear in this series, it is that these beings are creatures of darkness. They hate the Light! They wish to have absolutely no fellowship with the Light; that is, with Jesus Christ. Furthermore, we are warned quite explicitly to have no fellowship with them either. We are to resist the powers of darkness, and to resist the Devil, as we see by the following verses, whether we call them aliens or demons:

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."
Romans 13:12, KJV

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"
2 Corinthians 6:14, KJV

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light . . . And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."
Ephesians 5:8, 11, KJV

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:"
Colossians 1:13, KJV

"Neither give place to the devil."
Ephesians 4:27, KJV

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."

1 Thessalonians 5:4-5, KJV

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
James 4:7, KJV

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:"
1 John 1:6, KJV

If you are at all familiar with the alien and UFO phenomenon, then you may already know that the most prevalent species of "alien" being is referred to as the Gray, or Grey. It claims to come from the Zeta Reticuli binary star system. This star system is located in the southern constellation of Reticulum, and is about thirty-nine light years from our own planet. The relationship between these Grays and the Zeta Reticuli binary star system first came to light during the Barney and Betty Hill alleged abduction case which occurred during the early 1960's.

The Zeta Reticulan Grays are normally described as being short, hideous creatures which stand three to four feet in height. It is alleged that they are thin, nimble creatures with clammy, reptilian-like skin, similar to that of a snake or a lizard. They possess no body hair, a small featureless mouth, a barely discernible nose with two nostrils, plus there is an absence of ear cartilage. Again, these are also all characteristics of reptilian creatures. They are usually gray, off-white, or some shade of blue in color.

However, what is most often remembered by those people who claim to have encountered these evil beings, is their eyes. According to all of the material I have read, while the eye itself is described as being almond-shaped, the actual pupil is vertical and diamond-shaped, just like a snake or other reptilian creature. The possible significance of these vile, deceptive creatures can be found in the following verse:

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"
Genesis 3:1, KJV

It may interest you to know that there are certain people -- including some Christians -- who are convinced that Satan and his demonic horde are one such race of reptilian-like beings. Personally, I have my doubts regarding this possibility. As I explain in such articles as "Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future", the Holy Scriptures describe Satan's appearance very differently. If anything, he is one handsome devil, and not an ugly reptilian-looking creature.

Under normal conditions, it is reported that one cannot see the actual eyes of these "alien" Grays. Supposedly, this is because these creatures wear a thick black lens over their eyes, which is what gives them the appearance of having large almond-shaped eyes. As you may know, for a number of decades now, these "alien" beings with large almond-shaped eyes have been quite popular within the alien and UFO subculture. They can be found on T-shirts, as well as on quite a few other UFO-related items. There is in fact an entire industry that has been built around this phenomenon.

Please go to part six for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 6

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

Zeta Reticuli And Solar Classifications, Theories Regarding Why Zeta Reticulan "Aliens" Wear Eye Coverings, Blinded By Divine Light, Flee From The Light, Unable To Understand The Light, Ignorance Fear And Hate, Barney And Betty Hill Case, 1947 Roswell UFO Event, Increasing Rate Of Appearances And Boldness Of Alleged Aliens, God's Shield Of Protection Is Decreasing As More People Lose Faith And Rebel Against Him, The Lord Does Not Change, The Spiritual Wickedness In High Places, Surveys And The Popularity Of Aliens And UFO's, Will Satan And His Demons Manifest Themselves In The Near Future?, How Would God Destroy Satan And Demons?, Breath Of Life, Life Force Spirit And Energy, Our Sun And Nuclear Fusion, Fallen Angels Are Imprisoned In Chains Of Darkness In Tartaros, Why Did God Choose Tartaros?, Moses' Shining Face, Energized And Empowered By God's Presence, Antichrist Destroyed By Jesus' Brightness, Cocoon Movies, Spirits Flames Of Fire And Holy Ones In The Book Of Enoch, Devil And His Angels Cast Into An Everlasting Fire, Tormented Day And Night For Ever And Ever, The Lake Of Fire May Not Be Located At Center Of The Earth, Two Great Lights: Sun And Moon, Importance Of Perspective, Surface Of The Sun Is Very Similar To The Lake Of Fire, Will Planet Earth Be Thrown Off Course And Plunge Into The Sun?

Continuing our discussion from part five, the question in my mind is this: If, for the sake of argument, we accept that these so-called "alien" beings really exist, why is it that they wear coverings over their eyes? According to UFOlogists, it is because the Zeta Reticuli binary star system is not as bright as our own Sun. However, allow me to point out that according to astronomers, Zeta Reticuli is classified as a solar analog star system. This means that the binary stars are photometrically similar to our own Sun. The only higher

classification is solar twin, which they are not.

Is it possible then that the real reason why these creatures wear such eye coverings is because they wish to conceal their true snake-like character and demonic origin? Is it just to shield themselves from the natural light of our brighter Sun; or is it really to protect themselves from the brightness of God's spiritual Light? In thinking about this, I am reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul, and what he wrote regarding the Antichrist, in the second chapter of his second Epistle to the Thessalonians. Paul wrote thusly:

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:"
2 Thessalonians 2:8, KJV

Whether we choose to view them as real aliens or as demons, as I pointed out in part four, the truth of the matter is that these creatures of darkness absolutely hate the Light. They are afraid of it, and avoid it like the Plague. Perhaps they are even blinded by Divine Light. Furthermore, not only do they hate the Light of God's Truth, but they cannot begin to understand it either. Allow me to share these verses with you one more time:

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."
John 3:19-20, KJV

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."
John 1:5, KJV

"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
Matthew 13:14-15, KJV

This attitude is typical of so many people today. The things which people cannot understand, are quite often the things which they fear; and the things which they fear, are often the things which they likewise hate. The root cause is just ignorance, and a stubborn refusal to come to the Light of the knowledge of the Truth. I am reminded of this verse:

"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."
2 Timothy 3:7, KJV

As we have seen, one of the reasons why these Denizens of Darkness refuse to come to the Light is because their works are evil, and they simply do not wish to forsake them. But could there be another reason why they purposely avoid the

Light? In considering this, I pondered what would be the easiest and quickest way to destroy them.

Earlier in this series we discovered that in Psalm 84, King David compared the Lord to the Sun. We also learned that it is the brilliance of God's spiritual presence in our lives which serves to protect or shield us from the influence of the Demons of Darkness which lurk in the perimeters of our lives, just as "aliens" and UFO's are said to originate in the darkness of Outer Space. While the Barney and Betty Hill alleged abduction case brought the topic of aliens and UFO's to the fore of the public conscience during the 1960's, as many UFO buffs will already know, these beings -- regardless of whether they are real aliens or just demons -- have been encroaching on God's territory -- that is, our Solar System -- and making their presence known to us in an increasing rate since the 1947 Roswell incident.

From all of the information I have read online, it seems we are at a point where these Demons Of Darkness are becoming very bold; so much so that they are even making many daylight appearances all around the world. It is almost as if they are proclaiming, "We are here, and we are about to take over the Earth!" Why is this happening? Why is God allowing this? Why is it occurring now? Let me emphasize that my comments are based on information which is freely available online, much of which should obviously not be trusted. Personally, during my lifetime, I have never experienced, witnessed or seen an alien or a UFO of any kind.

But again, assuming that at least a small portion of these alleged alien and UFO experiences are genuine, why are they happening now? I have begun to suspect that there may be a correlation between people's diminishing faith, their lack of love for the Lord, and their failure to obey His Word, and the sudden spike in the appearances of these beings on the Earth. In other words, as people's faith and trust in God and in His Word grows weaker and less effective, and as they also lose their reverence for Him, and begin to rebel against Him, these beings are becoming more powerful, and bolder as well. I am reminded of the following verses:

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."
Ephesians 6:16, KJV

". . . Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"
Luke 18:8b, KJV

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."
Matthew 24:12, KJV

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."
Matthew 15:7-8, KJV

"There is no fear of God before their eyes."
Romans 3:18, KJV

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first . . ."

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a, KJV

Perhaps God is not willing to continue to bless the people of Earth with the protection of His spiritual shield, if they are no longer willing to have faith in Him, nor love Him, nor have a fearful respect of Him. Such a possibility should not really come as a surprise to us. After all, as I explain in such articles as "The Fruits of Disobedience" and "Beholding the Evil and the Good", the Bible does reveal how the Lord temporarily abandoned His people, and left them to their own devices -- as well as exposed them to their enemies -- when they were rebellious against Him. This occurred time and time again throughout the Old Testament. Why shouldn't it happen today as well? Consider these verses:

"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Malachi 3:6, KJV

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Hebrews 13:8, KJV

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

1 Corinthians 10:11, KJV

It seems quite possible then, that it may very well be the unbelief and rebellion which we harbor in our hearts, which is slowly destroying the Lord's spiritual forcefield around our planet, which is protecting us from the onslaught of the enemy; that is, the Prince of the Power of the Air and all of his evil followers who lurk in the depths of Outer Space; the "spiritual wickedness in high places". Whether you wish to view them as being real aliens, or as demons, God's Word indicates that they are indeed out there.

Many people today -- either through ignorance, or through the hardness of their hearts -- may not realize it, but by rejecting the one true God, they are in fact opening their hearts, spirits and lives to these false gods from the Realm of Darkness who want to suck out their spiritual lives. I discuss this topic in more detail in the article entitled "Dracula: Fighting Fear With the Word, Faith and Love". If you are wondering exactly how many people embrace a belief in aliens and UFO's, consider the following. According to one 1997 CNN report:

80% of Americans believe that the U.S. Government is hiding information regarding the existence of extraterrestrial life forms.

54% of Americans believe that intelligent life exists outside of planet Earth.

64% of Americans believe that aliens have contacted humans.

50% of Americans believe that aliens have abducted humans.

37% of Americans believe that aliens have contacted the U.S. Government.

That was fifteen years ago. I suspect that the percentages may be even higher today. In fact, according to a poll that was conducted by the Center for Survey and Research Analysis at the University of Connecticut, which was commissioned by the National Geographic Channel in 2005:

60% of respondents believe that extraterrestrial life exists on other planets.

77% of respondents believe that alien lifeforms can develop on planets that are very different from the Earth.

80% of respondents believe it is likely that intelligent aliens on other planets are more advanced than humans.

It is alarming to consider that there may be as many people in the world today who believe in aliens and UFO's, as those who believe in God and the Bible. Even more alarming is the sad fact that through New Age practices such as channeling, spirit writing, Eastern meditation and other mediums, these ignorant people may be inviting these demons to manifest themselves in our world and in their lives. Is it possible that the Prince of the Power of the Air and his demons are even now preparing to manifest themselves in a way that will totally astound the world? Please refer to some of my other alien and UFO related articles for a possible answer.

Returning to our main point, if God wanted to destroy all of these evil spirits, how would He accomplish it? As I stated in part five, I do not believe that the Lord is powerless to destroy them. If He created them, then He can most certainly destroy them as well. The challenge is in trying to determine what the method and place of destruction might be. Earlier, I proposed the theory that the very center of the Earth may be the Lake of Fire. While casting the physical bodies of these beings -- such as the human bodies that they possess -- into the Lake of Fire would certainly be a very effective way to destroy them, it is the destruction of the evil spirits -- or demons -- themselves, which is the real challenge.

Several decades ago I was an upcoming science fiction writer; at least until God -- in His wisdom -- placed my feet on a better track with my writing skills. In my unpublished novel entitled "The Encephalon Project: Quest For Immortality", I endeavored to help atheists and scientists to understand the spiritual truths of God's Word by using terminology which they could more easily relate to. For example, consider the word "spirit". One definition of "spirit" is the following:

"The animating or life-giving principle within a living being."
(1981 American Heritage dictionary)

As I have explained in a number of my other articles, God

breathed into Adam the breath of life; and it was then that he became a living soul. Consider the following verses that discuss the breath of life, and the spirit that will return to God when the physical body passes away:

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
Genesis 2:7, KJV

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."
Genesis 3:19, KJV

"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die."
Genesis 6:17, KJV

"And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life . . . All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died."
Genesis 7:15, 22, KJV

"Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD."
Psalms 150:6, KJV

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
Ecclesiastes 12:7, KJV

"And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:"
John 20:22, KJV

Exactly what is this "breath of life"? It is a life force. It is some form of energy which originates with -- and proceeds from -- God, in order to animate our physical flesh. It is similar to placing batteries in a toy. Without that source of energy, the toy is dead. So, in that sense, we can say that the breath of life is spirit, and that spirit is some form of Divine Energy. It is the Divine Spark which gives life to all living things, and it is something which even science cannot emulate.

Let's proceed now to connect a few of the dots. According to astrophysicists, our Sun is likewise a ball of energy. It is a type of furnace that is characterized by nuclear fusion in which hydrogen nuclei are fused into helium, and matter is converted into energy. Some of this energy escapes the Sun and travels through Outer Space in the form of Solar Flares, CME's -- or Coronal Mass Ejections -- and the Solar Wind.

If Spirit Beings are indeed composed of some type of energy which is currently beyond our human comprehension, and if the Fallen Angels and other evil entities hate the light, that is, both God's spiritual Light, as well as physical light, is it possible that casting them into a brilliant

sphere of energy and light might destroy them? As we saw earlier in this series, due to their rebellion against the Lord, and the great wickedness which they wrought upon the Earth, at this current time, the antediluvian Watchers, or Fallen Angels, are currently imprisoned deep in the Earth, bound in chains of darkness, where they await their final judgment. As the Apostle Peter wrote:

"For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;"
2 Peter 2:4, KJV

Thus again we see that these evil spirits are presently in one of the lowest tiers of hell, which in the New Testament Koine Greek language is known as Tartaros. The question in my mind is this: Why did God choose Tartaros as their place of imprisonment? My personal theory is that it is because it is extremely dark there. In other words, my suspicion is that being separated from God for such a long period of time, and being kept in the dark, may possibly rob them of their energy and power. It may possibly weaken them. To understand this, let me remind you of what happened after Moses received the Commandments on the summit of Mount Horeb:

"And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him."
Exodus 34:29-35, KJV

My impression is that during the time that Moses spent on the top of Mount Sinai -- or Horeb -- he may have absorbed energy -- or Spirit -- from God. Maybe that is why his skin shone as it did. Now consider Spirit Beings who are permitted to be in the presence of God for an undetermined amount of time. Is it possible that just like rechargeable batteries, it is this process which gives the Angels their brilliance and power? Is it possible that by constantly being in God's presence, they absorb His Essence, and are actually energized and empowered by the same? In contrast, if Angels are banished from God's presence, would it have the exact opposite effect? In other words, would their energy eventually be drained, particularly if they are imprisoned in darkness, as the Fallen Angels are? Would it render them relatively harmless, at least compared to their former powerful and glorious state?

As I have already mentioned, these Fallen Angels are reserved

for their final judgment; and as we saw in part two, in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus Himself speaks of "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels". Whether or not this includes the Fallen Angels of Genesis notoriety remains to be seen. It is interesting to note that in discussing the fate of the Jewish false messiah in his second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul likewise informs us that this deceptive antichrist will be destroyed by the very brightness of the Lord's Coming, as we see here:

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:"
2 Thessalonians 2:8, KJV

Returning to the nature of Angelic Beings, obviously, none of us really knows with any degree of certainty what they are actually made out of, because we don't understand what Spirit really is. My theory regarding it being some form of energy which is beyond our current comprehension is the best that I can offer you at this current time. In thinking about these possibilities I am reminded of two sci-fi movies that were made by director Ron Howard a few decades ago: Cocoon and Cocoon II. In those movies, the hibernating alien beings -- who were called Antareans -- lost their energy -- or life force -- when it was absorbed by a group of old fogies from a nearby rest home. When the life force was strong in these alien beings, they glowed brilliantly. This reminds me of a number of verses in the Bible such as the following:

"His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:"
Matthew 28:3, KJV

"And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."
Exodus 3:2-5, KJV

"Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:"
Psalms 104:4, KJV

"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;"
Revelation 2:18, KJV

"And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."
Revelation 4:5, KJV

"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."
Revelation 22:16, KJV

You may also recall the verses that I shared with you in part three that are found in the Book of Enoch. They describe the fiery Throne of God with the "most holy ones" who are close by the Lord's side. It is possible that these may be the same Seven Spirits who are mentioned in the previous verses in the Book of Revelation.

While beings in the Spirit World are obviously more powerful than human beings, as I stated in part five, I do not believe that they are indestructible. I suspect that God may possibly have some fail-safe mechanism in place, in the event that it becomes necessary to use it. The question that we need to consider is whether or not this is what the Lake of Fire is for. While Jesus tells us that the Devil and his angels will be cast into everlasting fire, will this result in their destruction? I will provide some possible answers shortly.

In part four, I explained why I am not currently convinced that the Lake of Fire is located at the center of the Earth. To reiterate, based on our knowledge of the destruction of the current Earth, as described by both the Apostle Peter in his Epistle, and the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation, this would prevent the Lake of Fire from being an eternal place of imprisonment, torment, or destruction, being as it would be destroyed right along with the Earth, if it were located in the center of the Earth. That is why I stated that we need to find an alternative solution in order to explain how death and hell can be cast into the Lake of Fire.

This brings us back to the topic of the Sun. Perspective is a very interesting thing. Depending on our actual location, the same object can appear very differently from place to place. For example, the Book of Genesis describes the Sun and the Moon in the following fashion:

"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."
Genesis 1:16, KJV

From our perspective on the Earth, the Sun and the Moon do indeed appear as two great "lights" in the day and night sky. However, imagine that you are the Apostle John two thousand years ago; and by His Power, God lifts you up in the Spirit, and draws you closer to the Sun. As you draw closer, what at first appeared as a brilliant light from your perspective on the Earth, suddenly acquires new characteristics. You begin to see new disturbing features which alarm and perhaps even frighten you. Whereas before the Sun appeared as a brilliant, smooth, featureless orb in the sky, you suddenly realize that its surface is in fact a superheated, roiling, ever-changing, explosive sea of plasma and violent magnetic storms. It is a veritable Lake of Fire and a very frightful place indeed! If you doubt that this is so, please consider the images below:

[Place solar images here]

If you would like to see a very impressive GIF animation of the Sun which clearly reveals the Sun to be a Lake of Fire,

please visit the URL below. The animation is about 20 MB in size, so it will take some time to load in your web browser. You can also download the GIF animation to your computer:

http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov/data/LATEST/current_eit_304.gif

Thus, as we saw in part four, if hell refers to the bowels of the physical Earth where the dead are buried, as well as the world where evil spirits are imprisoned; and if death refers to the state of laying dead in the Earth, then the act of the Earth being hurled into the Sun would fulfill the Scriptural requirement of both death and hell being cast into the Lake of Fire, being as the multi-tiered hell is located inside of the Earth.

The Earth is obviously a physical object. Its destruction, as described by both Peter and John, is very physical in nature. Therefore, it must require a very physical process in order to destroy it, such as actual combustion. As I explained in part one, the Lord could simply set the current Earth on fire so that it burns down to the very foundation of the planet, thus destroying death and hell. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the Book of Revelation clearly informs us that the current heavens and the Earth flee away, and that death and hell are cast into the Lake of Fire. My emphasis is on the word "cast", as in being hurled. Considering the size of the Earth, and the size of the Sun, it seems quite plausible to me that the Lord could use some mechanism -- such as a comet or asteroid -- to throw our current Earth off course, so that it is eventually captured by the Sun, and meets a fiery death as it plunges into that great orb.

Granted, this is only a personal theory, and I honestly do not know with any degree of certainty whether or not the Sun is actually the Lake of Fire. One could argue "Well, why did John refer to it as the Lake of Fire? Why didn't he just call it the Sun?" One possibility that has occurred to me is that if the surface of the Sun really is the Lake of Fire, perhaps John didn't realize that he was looking at the Sun up close. What he was accustomed to seeing is what you and I see every day; a whitish, brilliant orb in the sky and nothing more. He certainly would not expect to see something like the previous images. If you would like to see even more amazing images and movies of the Sun, please consider visiting the SOHO website at the following URL:

<http://sohowww.nascom.nasa.gov/data/realtime-images.html>

Please go to part seven for the conclusion of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 7

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

The Fate Of Satan Rebellious Angels Demons And Wicked People, Death And Separation Of Body And Spirit, God's Purpose For The Lake Of Fire, Destruction Or Everlasting Punishment And Torment?, Will A God Of Love Condemn Billions To Suffer For Eternity?, How Will Saved People Cope With Their Lost Loved Ones Suffering For Eternity In Lake Of Fire?, Snuffed Out Of Existence?, No Memory Or Consciousness In The Grave, Lazarus The Beggar, A God Of Love Versus A God Of Wrath And Revenge, Rejecting Scriptural Truth Can Lead Us To Strong Delusion, God Does Not Afflict Willingly, No Pleasure In The Death Of The Wicked, God's Desires Everyone To Repent And To Be Saved, Universalism, Total Annihilation Or Universal Reconciliation?, Thanatos And The Second Death, Dust To Dust, Millennial Reign, First And Second Resurrections, Great White Throne Judgment

Returning to our topic concerning Satan, his angels and other demons of darkness, as I asked in part six, what exactly will be their fate when the Lord casts them into the Lake of Fire? Furthermore, what will happen to the wicked, unsaved people who are cast into the Lake of Fire as well? Will these wicked beings and people really be destroyed, or is it possible that something else will occur to them? Can we be certain that we have fully understood God's plan at this current time?

As we saw earlier, God's Word teaches us that at the moment of our death and our departure from this current life, the Lord separates our body from our spirit. Our body then decays in the ground, and over time breaks down into its original components, while our spirit -- or life force, the breath of life -- returns to God who gave it. Obviously, being as they are spirits and not physical flesh and blood beings as we are, the same thing cannot happen to Satan and his minions.

While I have considered the possibility that these spiritual entities may somehow experience annihilation after they are cast into the Lake of Fire, both Jesus and the Apostle John seem to suggest that the real purpose of the Lake of Fire is not to completely destroy Satan and other demons of darkness, or even to totally destroy rebellious humans either; at least not all of them. Rather, the following verses seem to suggest that God desires to accomplish some other objective which has remained hidden from -- or perhaps simply ignored by -- many modern Christians.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
Matthew 25:41, 46, KJV

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."
Revelation 20:10, KJV

As you can see, Jesus speaks of "everlasting fire" as well as "everlasting punishment", while John speaks of "the lake

of fire and brimstone" and being "tormented day and night for ever and ever." Assuming that "everlasting fire" and "the lake of fire and brimstone" are referring to the same place, then neither verse clearly speaks of the Lake of Fire being a place of absolute destruction for the wicked, or for Satan and his angels. Rather, it is a terrible place where "everlasting punishment" and "torment" will be meted out "for ever and ever."

Several verses later in Revelation chapter twenty, we read the following verses as well:

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
Revelation 20:13-15, KJV

Similar to many other Christians, I have long been challenged by the concept of a loving, merciful, patient God, who on one hand desires that all men will be saved -- 2 Peter 3:9 -- and who was even willing to sacrifice His own beloved Son in order to achieve this noble goal, and yet on the other hand, would condemn countless millions, if not billions, to suffer in a horrible place of torment for eternity, if they choose to not accept the Atoning Sacrifice of His Son as a just ransom for their sins. Furthermore, I have asked myself how those of us who are saved could possibly and fully enjoy Heaven and the Heavenly City, knowing all the while that some of our loved ones are being tormented forever and ever, as a result of their rejection of Jesus Christ. Have you ever wrestled with this seeming contradiction?

After searching the Scriptures and contemplating this issue for a while, I arrived at several possibilities. The first one -- for which I can provide no Scriptural support at this current time -- was that, in His Mercy, God would erase our memories, so that we would no longer remember our separated loved ones who are suffering eternal torment in the Lake of Fire. The second possibility, which I briefly talk about in such articles as "God's Mercy, Judgment and Fallen Angels", "The Great Tribulation and the Rapture" and "What Really Happens When We Die?", is that people who are cast into the Lake of Fire following the Great White Throne Judgment are simply snuffed out of existence. One verse which seems to support this view is the following:

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

As we saw in part two of this series, in the previous verse, the word "hell" is translated from the Greek word "Gehenna"; which, as I already explained, was a reference to the Valley of Hinnom, which I believe was a archetype or foreshadow of the actual Lake of Fire. In other words, by being snuffed out of existence -- both body and spirit -- these incorrigible people would not suffer any pain or torment whatsoever; they would simply cease to exist. Their demise would be final. It

would be the Second Death. Furthermore, as we are told in the following verses, in death, there is no memory or conscious state:

"For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?"

Psalms 6:5, KJV

"Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?"

Psalms 88:12, KJV

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; or there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Ecclesiastes 9:10, KJV

Thus, as in the first mortal death of the physical body, so too in the eternal Second Death . . . at least so I assumed. In other words, after everyone is raised from the dead at the time of the Second Resurrection, if their name is not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life during the Great White Throne Judgment, they will simply die again, and that will be the end of them.

However, as you may have already determined, this view does not agree with the verses that we examined earlier where the Lord Himself talks about "everlasting punishment", and the Apostle John speaks about being "tormented day and night for ever and ever." In fact, if you recall the story of Lazarus the Beggar, which is found in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel of Luke, in that Parable, Jesus likewise informs us that hell is a place of torment, that is filled with flames, as we see here:

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 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; And in hell he lift 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 tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then 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. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Luke 16:19-31, KJV

In the previous Parable, the word "torment" is mentioned four times, while the word "flame" is mentioned once. Just as the word "tormented" is derived from the Greek word "basanizo" in the phrase "tormented day and night for ever and ever", as we find it in the Book of Revelation, so too, in the previous verses from the Gospel of Luke, the various forms of the word "torment" are also derived from the Greek word "basanos", and refer to pain. It seems evident then that Jesus and John are talking about the same thing and the same place. They are both describing a place where there will be pain and torment of some kind. Of course, this shouldn't surprise us, being as it was Jesus who passed along the Book of Revelation to John via His Angelic Messenger.

In light of all of this Scriptural evidence, how do we find agreement and unity between these various verses and words? Do people who are cast into the Lake of Fire die permanently and altogether? Are they totally snuffed out of existence, and is this what the Second Death really means? Or do they somehow remain alive and suffer eternal torment in literal flames, as is commonly believed according to the general understanding of the word "hell"? Is our God of Love who sent His Son to die for the sins of the world, likewise a God of Wrath and Revenge who enjoys watching those people who refuse to repent of their unbelief, suffer for all of eternity in a literal place called "hell", that is filled with flames that really hurt?

While we can foolishly try to rationalize in our minds, and attempt to explain away this very negative image of God, we simply cannot -- and should not -- ignore the truth of the Scriptures; because to purposely ignore the truth of God's Word is to invite deception and strong delusion into our lives. The following sample verses -- and there exist many more -- describe in plain language the other side of God's Nature, which many people -- including some Christians -- refuse to acknowledge:

"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste."
Deuteronomy 32:35, KJV

"O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself."
Psalms 94:1, KJV

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;"
Isaiah 61:1-2, KJV

"God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies."
Nahum 1:2, KJV

"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?"
Romans 3:5-6, KJV

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."
Romans 12:19, KJV

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"
2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, KJV

"For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people."
Hebrews 10:30, KJV

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."
Jude 1:7, KJV

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God . . . For our God is a consuming fire."
Hebrews 10:31, 12:29, KJV

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."
John 3:36, KJV

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"
Romans 1:18, KJV

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."
Ephesians 5:6, KJV

"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"
Revelation 6:16-17, KJV

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb . . . And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth,

and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."
Revelation 14:10, 19, KJV

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God . . . And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever."
Revelation 15:1, 7, KJV

"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth . . . And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."
Revelation 16:1, 19, KJV

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."
Revelation 19:15, KJV

Please notice that in describing the Wrath and Vengeance of Almighty God, the previous verses include such phrases as "flaming fire", "everlasting destruction", "eternal fire" and "consuming fire". Clearly, some kind of fire -- perhaps both physical and symbolic -- plays a central role in God's ultimate plan for humanity. While our God of Love is also a God of Wrath and Vengeance, what we also need to remember is that the Bible informs us that He does not afflict willingly. As we saw earlier, He truly desires that men come to a state of repentance and belief; but if they don't, then as Jesus Himself tells us, the Wrath of God will abide upon them by their own proud, stubborn choice. The following verses make it rather clear that the Lord's earnest desire is not really to destroy, but rather to heal:

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"
Ezekiel 33:11, KJV

"For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men."
Lamentations 3:31-33, KJV

"And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village."
Luke 9:51-56, KJV

"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."
2 Peter 3:9, KJV

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."
Hebrews 12:5-13, KJV

Taking the previous verses into consideration, while I am not in a position to provide a definitive answer regarding the significance of the Second Death and the Lake of Fire, and the final fate of those people who are cast therein, I would like to offer you some additional comments which may throw more light on this difficult subject. As we have now seen, God's desire is for all men to be saved. There is a school of thought within Christianity which in fact is of the opinion that someday, in God's time, all of humanity will indeed be saved. This rather controversial doctrine is referred to as Universalism -- or Universal Reconciliation -- and has been in existence since at least the Seventeenth Century. The Apostle Paul discusses this reconciliation between God and man in verses such as the following:

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."
Romans 5:8-11, KJV

"For if the casting away of them [the Jews] be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"
Romans 11:15, KJV

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."
2 Corinthians 5:18-20, KJV

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"
Ephesians 2:16, KJV

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:"
Colossians 1:20-22, KJV

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"
Hebrews 2:17-3:1, KJV

Several times in this series now, I have questioned whether God's ultimate objective in creating the Lake of Fire is the complete and total destruction of Satan and the rebellious angels and other spirits who follow him, as well as people who are seemingly incorrigible, or if perhaps the Lord may have some other goal in mind. In other words, is God really interested in total annihilation, or is He really interested in Universal Reconciliation? Which of these two objective is more in agreement with what we know about God's loving and caring Nature? If it is the latter, then perhaps we need to take a closer look at the meaning of the Second Death, as it is used in the following verses:

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."
Revelation 2:11, KJV

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."
Revelation 20:6, KJV

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

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and

murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21:8, KJV

It may interest you to know that in all four of the previous verses, the word "death" is derived from the very same Greek word that we studied in part four of this series; that is, the word "thanatos". As I explained earlier, this word refers to the actual process of dying. More specifically, Thayer's Greek English Lexicon indicates that "thanatos" concerns the death of the body, and the actual separation of the soul and the body at the time of death. The fact that this Greek word is used in conjunction with the phrase "the Second Death" is very telling. Why? Because it tells us what happens at the time of the Second Death.

If you still haven't understood the significance of this, let me explain. As I have told you several times now, at the time of our death, our body and spirit -- or soul, if you prefer -- are separated by God. Our body returns to the ground where it decays and is converted back into its original elements, or dust -- unless we have arranged to be cremated -- while our spirit returns to God. Here again is the verse from the Book of Ecclesiastes which verifies this point:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7, KJV

The fact that people who are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life undergo something that is called the Second Death in the Book of Revelation, suggests that they experience a process that is very similar to their first death. How can this be? Quite simply, because as I explain in such articles as "From Armageddon to the New Earth", this very same Book informs us that sometime after the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ and the Saints concludes, the rest of the world's people will be brought back to life during the Second Resurrection, so that they can be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment, as we see by these verses:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and

brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

Revelation 20:4-13, KJV

Just as our bodies and spirits are separated at the moment of death at the end of our natural lives, in similar fashion, the bodies and spirits of the rest of the world -- that is, those people who do not participate in the First Resurrection -- will be reunited at the time of the Second Resurrection, in order to be judged before the Lord. That is why they will experience a Second Death if their names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life. That is why their bodies and spirits will be separated again, a second time. While it appears that their physical bodies will be destroyed, what will happen to their spirits? As I stated earlier, this is where the belief in Universalism -- or Universal Reconciliation -- enters the picture.

Please go to part eight for the conclusion of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

HELL, THE LAKE OF FIRE AND UNIVERSALISM : PART 8

Copyright 1994 - 2012 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : September 22, 1997

Last Updated : February 11, 2012

Fate Of Unrepentant Unsaved Spirits, No Unregenerate Spirits Will Be Allowed In God's Presence, God Is Light In Whom Is No Darkness At All, Parable Of Lazarus The Beggar, Rich Man's Spirit Tormented In Lake Of Fire, God's Plan For Unregenerate People And Spirits, God Will Ultimately Be All In All, God's Light Will Fill All, Organized Religion And Fear Of Hellfire, Theological Controversy: Greek Aionios And Aion, Will Torment In The Lake Of Fire Truly Be Forever And Everlasting Or For An Age And Of Limited Duration?, Will Satan The Fallen Angels Beast And False Prophet Finally Be Regenerated And Forgiven?, Are People Actually Destroyed In The Lake Of Fire?, Types Of People Who Are Cast Into The Lake Of Fire, Not Everyone Lives In New Jerusalem, Will Some Unrepentant People Live Outside Of Heavenly City?, Everlasting Life Or Shame And Everlasting Contempt, Is Torment Of Lake Of Fire Symbolic Of Emotional or Mental Suffering?, God's Character: Love And Mercy, Prodigal Sun, Universalism And Universal Reconciliation, Conclusion

As I asked at the conclusion of part seven of this series, while the physical bodies of the people who face the Second Death appear to be destroyed when they are cast into the Lake of Fire, what will happen to their actual spirits? Will they just return to God in their unregenerate state, or will something else happen to them? Considering God's Holiness and Purity, it doesn't seem likely that such a spirit would be welcome in His presence; that is, unless it has somehow been reformed; and this is where Universalism, or Universal Reconciliation, enters the picture. I am reminded of verses such as the following:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"
2 Corinthians 6:14, KJV

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."
Ephesians 5:11, KJV

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."
1 Thessalonians 5:5, KJV

So again, because God is Light, and is in fact the Father of Lights in whom is found no darkness at all, as both John and James inform us in their Epistles, it seems very likely that He will not allow darkness -- such as an unsaved spirit -- to enter into His presence. Consider the following verses:

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."
1 John 1:5, KJV

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
James 1:17, KJV

To understand what may happen to these unsaved, unregenerate spirits, all we have to do is look back to the Parable of Lazarus the Beggar. As I explained in part seven, it seems clear to me that Jesus was describing the Lake of Fire, and not the common grave. If that rich man was in a conscious state, and was looking up at Abraham who was in Heaven, and was begging Abraham to allow Lazarus to cool his tongue with water, then in my mind, that is even more proof that Jesus was talking about the Lake of Fire. Why? Because as we also saw in part seven, the dead are unconscious in the grave. In contrast, the rich man was very much alive, and very much conscious as well. Therefore, we can only conclude that it was his spirit which was being tormented in the Lake of Fire, which is why he asked Abraham to send Lazarus with water.

In my view, there are only two possible ways that we can look at this situation concerning the spirits of those people who have experienced the Second Death. Either our Heavenly Father is not a God of Love, but rather a sadist who enjoys watching

people's spirits suffer for eternity, or else in His Divine Wisdom, He has a plan for these unregenerate people which is not fully understood by everyone yet. I believe that I have already revealed His ultimate plan to you in part seven. As I explained there, God does not willingly afflict His children. He truly desires that men come to a state of repentance and belief. His earnest desire is not to destroy, but rather to heal; and I propose that this is what the fiery purge in the Lake of Fire may be all about.

Within the Universalist camp, it is this driving belief of God ultimately being all in all, which supports the idea that torment in the Lake of Fire is not truly eternal, or forever and ever, as has been supposed and translated for hundreds of years, but rather that it is only a temporary situation which in God's chosen time, will come to an end. This may in fact be the reconciliation that the Apostle Paul was talking about in his Epistles. Please consider this verse. I have added a few phrases in brackets for the sake of clarification:

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him [unto Jesus], then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [unto God] that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

1 Corinthians 15:28, KJV

In other words, it would seem that as long as there is any degree of darkness, evil, sin and rebellion left anywhere in the Universe, then God's plan of Forgiveness, Redemption, Salvation and Universal Reconciliation cannot be considered to be complete, and God cannot be "all in all". Let me remind you again that God is Light, and that in Him is no darkness at all. What is darkness, if not the absence of light? So in order for God to truly be "all in all", all darkness must by necessity be destroyed, and that can only happen through the continual presence of God's Divine Light.

No doubt, a lot of Christians who have been taught -- perhaps erroneously so -- to embrace the eternal torment in hellfire scenario will question my point of view, because in the New Testament we do find phrases such as the following:

1. everlasting fire
2. tormented day and night for ever and ever
3. the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever
4. eternal fire

However, what if we have all been purposely misled by certain religious authorities, because their true goal has only been to maintain tight control over the masses through fear and intimidation? Wouldn't the threat of eternal hellfire serve such a purpose, and keep a lot of people under the thumb of organized religion? While many of you may not be aware of it, for several hundred years now, there has existed an ongoing debate within theological circles regarding whether or not these translations are really accurate, and what the original writers intended. In the case of the words "everlasting" and "eternal", the original Greek word that is used in the New Testament is "aionios". Thayer's Greek English Lexicon defines this word as follows:

----- Begin Quote -----

- 1) without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be
- 2) without beginning
- 3) without end, never to cease, everlasting

----- End Quote -----

This is the Greek word that is used in the phrases "eternal fire", "everlasting fire", "eternal life" and "everlasting life". In contrast, the phrase "for ever and ever" is used a total of twenty-one times in the New Testament, and finds its origin in the Greek phrase "eis aion aion". The Greek word "aion" is actually used twice. However, unlike the former word "aionios" -- which does seem to signify everlasting and eternal in the truest sense of the word -- as you can see by the definitions below, Thayer's Greek English Lexicon offers a clear possibility that "aion" could signify a limited time frame or age, and not necessarily eternity in every case:

----- Begin Quote -----

- 1) for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity
- 2) the worlds, universe
- 3) period of time, age

----- End Quote -----

Now, where this theological debate becomes very interesting is in the fact that -- as you can see by my previous list of phrases above -- the phrase "for ever and ever" is used in direct association with both of the phrases where torment is mentioned. In other words, this is one of the reasons why Universalists hold to the view that torment in the Lake of Fire may be for a limited duration -- that is, for a period of time, or for an age, as opposed to for eternity -- and that said torment will cease when the desired result -- that is, repentance, regeneration and reconciliation with God -- has been achieved. Only in this way, will God truly be "all in all" according to Universalist doctrine.

Now, obviously, this is a very explosive issue, because it begs the question "Does this likewise mean that someday even Satan and the Fallen Angels, as well as the Beast and the False Prophet and their followers, will be regenerated, and will be released from the Lake of Fire, and welcomed back into full fellowship with God?" Personally, I don't even dare to try to answer such a profound question, because I honestly do not know. It would certainly seem to be in agreement with the Universalist point of view. I can say no more than that.

Earlier, I mentioned that it appears that the bodies of the people whose names are not found written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be destroyed in the Lake of Fire. I used the word "appears" for a very specific reason. That reason is that I am not absolutely certain that this is what is going to happen to them. Allow me to call your attention to the chronological order of the two events that are mentioned in the following verses:

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the

book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
Revelation 20:14-15, KJV

As you can plainly see, we are told that death and hell are cast into -- and we assume destroyed in -- the Lake of Fire in verse fourteen, and then the people whose names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life are cast into the Lake of Fire in verse fifteen. Now if we choose to be rather literal and technical about this and accept the verses for what they say, then we would have to conclude that death is destroyed first in verse fourteen, and then these people are cast into the Lake of Fire in verse fifteen. Is this possible proof that these people do not die a second time -- meaning that their physical bodies and their spirits are not separated again -- being as death and hell have already been destroyed in verse fourteen? Don't be too quick to offer an answer.

To understand the importance of this question, and why it needs to be asked, please consider what we are told in the following verses that are found in chapters twenty-one and twenty-two of the Book of Revelation:

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death . . . And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Revelation 21:8, 24-27, KJV

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Revelation 22:14-15, KJV

The first thing that we can determine from the previous sets of verses is who some of the people are who are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life, and who are thus cast into the Lake of Fire. Among others, these people include liars, murderers, idolaters and whoremongers.

A second thing we can learn from the previous verses is that despite its huge size, it seems that not everyone actually lives inside of the Heavenly City, New Jerusalem. We are clearly told that there are nations of saved people living outside of the City who are allowed to freely enter into the Heavenly City.

The third thing that we learn from these verses is who will not be allowed to enter into the City. Now, stop and think about this. If all of the wicked people who were not found in the Lamb's Book of Life were already destroyed in the Lake of Fire at the end of chapter twenty, then why would

there even be any need for John to tell us who won't be allowed to enter into the City in chapter twenty-one? It is obvious then that these people -- at least some of them -- must still exist.

If you doubt that this is so, then notice the confirmation that we are given in the verses that are found in chapter twenty-two beginning with the phrase "For without". As you can see, the very same kinds of wicked people are mentioned, who we were told a chapter earlier were cast into the Lake of Fire. If these wicked people are outside of the Heavenly City, as the verses in chapter twenty-two state, and if they are in the Lake of the Fire, then this also tells us that the Lake of Fire must be located somewhere outside of New Jerusalem. Exactly where, I honestly do not know. My point is, all of these verses inform us that the people whose names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life:

1. will be cast into the Lake of Fire
2. apparently are not actually destroyed
3. are somewhere outside of the Heavenly City

Now, why would God do this, unless He still has some plan, and perhaps some hope, for them? Could it in fact be then that He is patiently waiting for the Lake of Fire to purge them of their iniquity, and to bring them to a state of real repentance? Are we possibly seeing Universalism in action in these verses? I honestly don't know. What do you think? The possibility that there may actually be two classes of people living outside of the Heavenly City may also be hinted at in a verse that is found in the Old Testament. In the Book of Daniel we find the following verse:

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."
Daniel 12:2, KJV

The previous verse from Daniel is apparently describing the Second Resurrection which occurs sometime prior to the Great White Throne Judgment. As we have already discussed, it will involve everyone who has ever lived, and who was not raised during the First Resurrection. But let me ask you a question. If the wicked and unbelieving people are cast into the Lake of Fire, and are thereby destroyed, how could they possibly experience "shame and everlasting contempt". Granted, they could experience temporary shame after judgment is passed on them at the Great White Throne Judgment, but they certainly cannot experience "everlasting contempt" if they are dead, as a result of the Second Death. After all, as we saw in part seven, following death there is no memory or even a conscious state.

On the other hand, we could argue that the verse means that such wicked people who have already been destroyed in the Lake of Fire, will be remembered, and viewed with shame and contempt, by those people who have been blessed with the gift of Everlasting Life, as the verse states. Perhaps it is these people who will "have right to the tree of life", as we saw in Revelation chapter twenty-two. This latter interpretation does seem to make more sense when we consider that the word "shame" is translated from the Hebrew word "cherpah", which

means reproach or scorn. Furthermore, the verse from the Book of Daniel does seem to suggest that the first group will gain Everlasting Life, while the latter will not. In other words, the phrase "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" seems to be suggesting a contrast which we could possibly interpret as "some to everlasting life, [as opposed to] some to shame and everlasting contempt."

However, the problem here is that the previous verses from the last chapter of the Book of Revelation do clearly state "For without"; meaning that the aforementioned wicked people will be alive somewhere outside of the Heavenly City, and presumably in the Lake of Fire. For this reason, I have even wondered if perhaps the fire and torment that is experienced in the Lake of Fire, and maybe even the Lake of Fire itself, are symbolic of emotional or mental torment. Think about it. If there are people all around you who are allowed to enter into the Heavenly City whenever they please, but you are not permitted to do the same because of your unbelief and other other sins, wouldn't you experience shame and contempt, and some level of emotional and mental torment as well?

Of course, this issue brings us right back to the question concerning God's character. If He is a God of Love and Mercy as we believe, why would He choose to allow people to live in such a state of horrible mental and emotional torment for all of eternity? If His ultimate goal is repentance, healing, forgiveness and Salvation for all, so that He can truly be "all in all", wouldn't He want to bring their suffering to an end once they have learned the lessons that He is trying to teach them? Similar to a human parent, once a rebellious son has come to his senses, and learned the lessons that needed to be learned, wouldn't the Father want to open up His arms of love and fellowship to him again, just like the story of the Prodigal Son? So once again it seems that maybe we need to consider the possibility of Universalism, or Salvation for all.

As you probably realize by now, personally, I would very much like for Universalism -- or Universal Reconciliation -- to be a true doctrine. The idea of a merciful God who is capable of eventually reconciling everyone and everything to Himself, is so much more appealing to me than a God of Wrath and Revenge who would allow people to suffer torment and pain for all of eternity in a literal Lake of Fire because of their sins. In the end, it all comes down to the correct translation of the Greek words "aionios" and "aion". Because I am by no means an expert regarding the Koine Greek language, I honestly do not know with any degree of certainty who is correct concerning this issue. Is it the people who believe in eternal suffering and torment in a literal Lake of Fire, or is it actually the Universalists who believe that the age of suffering will be of limited duration, and will eventually come to an end, and everyone will finally be reconciled to God?

While I have not provided a lot of definitive answers here, and in fact have offered a substantial amount of personal conjecture, nevertheless, I hope that this series has been a blessing in your life, and that it has motivated you to stop to examine your own personal beliefs regarding hell and the Lake of Fire, and related issues. Are your beliefs actually in line with God's Word, or like so many people, have you

allowed your perspective and understanding regarding these issues to be colored by misguided religious doctrine? With these words I will bring this series to a close.

Written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>