

Man's Last Day in God's Court, Part 3

Scripture: Revelation 20:14-15

Code: 66-79

I'm sure you've anticipated our subject tonight as we come to the last message in the twentieth chapter of the book of Revelation. And we look at part three in our series on man's last day in God's court. This very powerful, frightening text sets forth for us the final judgment of all the ungodly of all the ages. This is what John writes, starting in verse 11, "And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away and no place was found them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne and books were opened and another book was opened which is the book of life. And the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire, this is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

It's a passage that ultimately consigns all of the ungodly of all the ages to eternal hell. Hell is, of course, as it is taught in the Scripture, distinctively a Christian doctrine. But Christianity is not the only religion in the world that speaks about punishment after death. In fact, virtually every major religion in the world teaches some form of punishment after death for sins committed in this life.

For example, one strand of Islamic doctrine says that each individual is questioned by two angels, one named Mooncar(?) and the other Nakier(?), before walking across a bridge that stretches over hell. The faithful then cross safely into paradise while unbelievers fall into a place with seven grades of punishment, including being roasted, boiled and afflicted with pus. Other Islamic teaching says that they will be burned until their skins are destroyed at which point they will be given new skins so the process can be repeated.

Buddhism mentions many hells to be endured on an unpleasant journey toward Nirvana, a kind of blissful non-existence. Classical Buddhists' teaching has seven hot hells, each surrounded by torture chambers which include fiery pits and quagmires while other versions of hell speak of cold hells which have less traumatic punishment for minor offenders. According to certain Chinese Buddhists, devils in human form inflict all kinds of gruesome torture including pulling out slanderous tongues with red-hot wires and pouring molten lead down liars' throats.

In Taoism the god of walls and moats sends the wicked to one of several hells where they are punished for a fixed period of time. Hinduism has twenty-one hells tailor made to match a person's behavior on earth. Hinduism says if you fail to feed the hungry while you were living, you might be chained to a rock where birds come to eat your stomach. An adulterer might be forced to embrace a beautiful woman whose temperature is white hot while the worst offenders face incarceration in a series of lower hells where they are scorched in hot sand, boiled in jars, or eaten by ravens. Jainism(?) a spinoff of Hinduism has no fewer than eight million, four hundred thousand hells as well as a bottomless abyss where the worse sinners are kept forever.

What does all this signify? It signifies that people have an innate sense of justice. They have an innate sense of retribution, a feeling that somehow some day, some way they will pay, that perhaps on the other side of the graves wrongs will be righted and evil will finally be punished and crushed. Those grotesque guesses are certainly not representative of biblical truth, but they do point to the conscience and its activity in the human heart that stirs up a sense of culpability, shame, remorse, regret in view of future and perhaps eternal accountability. And this is a stubborn instinct in man that he may be punished for his sin.

What does Christianity say? Well, for example, Jesus Himself who is the author of Christianity, in Luke 12:5 said this, "I warn you who to fear. Fear the one who after He has killed you has the authority to cast you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him." Don't fear those who kill the body, Jesus said, fear the one who can destroy body and soul in hell. That is to fear God. God is the one who ultimately will send everyone to hell who is on the way, who is going there. The Bible tells us that hell is a place of eternal punishment where God will forever incarcerate the wicked. Hell is that realm of life where just punishment is exacted, not by any means with the warped and ignorant and weak prejudices of human justice, but with perfect execution alongside the standard of a holy God who alone is perfectly just. And the violation of whom knows no satisfaction. Unsaved sinners therefore will spend forever punished in hell and that is what Christianity teaches.

Truth, frankly, is not popular. The doctrine of hell is more popular among Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus, their warped doctrine, than the true doctrine of hell is among Christians. You say, "What do you mean by that?" Just this, here's a sample. In 1977 a poll was published in Des Moines, Iowa, and it showed that only five percent of those interviewed believed they were going to hell. Sixty-five percent thought they would go to heaven. And thirty percent were not sure or had absolutely no opinion. One year later, in 1978, a sampling in Minnesota revealed that just four percent felt they were on their way to hell. Ten years later in 1988 a Newsweek magazine survey suggested that seventy-six percent of Americans thought they had a good or excellent chance of going to heaven, while only six percent felt they were on their way to hell. In 1991 a Gallup Poll taken for U.S. News and World Report produced almost identical results, seventy-plus percent thought they were headed for heaven, and four percent for hell.

Those percentages over that rather lengthy period of time are significantly consistent and they yield to us the understanding that most people think that if hell exists, it is for somebody else, and not for them. Maybe there is such a place as hell, but it's for Hitler, or Stalin or Charles Manson, but not for just plain people, good people. That's kind of popular opinion.

Beyond the popular opinion, it is amazing to me that even theologians who call themselves evangelical, theologians who would affirm belief in the veracity of the Bible reject eternal hell. For example, it wasn't many years ago that I read a book written by a well-known evangelical writer by the name of John Windham(?). The title of the book is The Goodness of God. It is a book that tries to deal with the anger and the wrath of God and eternal punishment and deals with it, basically, by saying it isn't going to happen. John Windham spoke in August of 1991 at the Fourth Edinburgh Conference on Christian Dogmatics, this is what he said, quote: "I believe that endless torment is a hideous and unscriptural doctrine which has been a terrible burden on the mind of the church for many centuries and a terrible blot on her presentation of the gospel. I should indeed be happy if before I die I could help in sweeping it away," end quote.

Philip Edgecome(?) Hughes(?), a very astute commentator on New Testament books has written a book called The True Image, in that book he says this, quote: "The everlasting existence side by side of heaven and hell would seem to be incompatible with the purpose and effect of the redemption achieved by Christ's coming. The renewal of creation demands the elimination of sin and suffering and death," end quote. No hell.

Now some decide to believe in universalism, everybody is going to be saved in the end. Others decide to believe in annihilationism, as these two writers I have quoted, that ultimately all sinners will just go out of existence. Some believe in soul sleep, which is a permanent state of unconsciousness. And others would believe in a temporary period of punishment. But no one can accept Scripture as true, and deny eternal punishment. The same terms that describe eternal punishment describe the eternal God. The same phrases, the same original terms, the same words that describe eternal punishment describe eternal life. So if there is not eternal punishment, then there is not eternal life and there is not an eternal God.

If the ungodly are not punished forever, then the righteous do not live forever and God does not exist forever either. But God is the eternal God, heaven is the eternal dwelling of the righteous and therefore hell is also eternal.

For example, just to illustrate the point I made. In Matthew chapter 25 and verse 46 it says, "These will go away into eternal punishment, the righteous into eternal life." You can't have eternal life, same term, and not have eternal punishment. And one is as long as the other and both will last as long as God lasts, and He is the eternal one.

And the issue of hell is not to be decided by a poll. It is not to be decided by emotion. It is not even to be decided by reason. It is to be decided by revelation. No one really likes the doctrine of eternal punishment, it is a horrifying thing. All of us could wish from a human perspective it didn't exist, but it does. And we have to take the Bible at face value.

The text I just read to you sets the reality of eternal punishment in place. It tells us about the lake of fire. And this lake of fire is described back in verse 10 as a place where the occupants will be tormented day and night forever and ever. The event that we just read in verses 11 to 15 is that event the end of which is the godly being cast into eternal punishment. Here is the vision that God gives John of the final divine judgment on all sinners from all human history since creation. All sinners will be raised, they will be given new supernatural bodies suited to eternal torment in the time of the great white throne, as it is called. This is the last act of judgment and involves the ungodly of all ages, coming before the final throne of God for their final sentence. And God is rightly to be their judge because it is against Him that they have sinned, as Psalm 51:4 says, so that God is justified, says the psalmist, when he speaks and blameless when He judges them because they are genuinely guilty.

Now remember the chronology. The Bible teaches that the Lord will come and take His church. Then will be a period of Tribulation. Then the Lord will return, set up His thousand-year Kingdom. At the end of the thousand-year Kingdom, all the ungodly of all the ages are brought before the great white throne. You say, "Well where have they been since they died?" And the answer is, they've been in a place of torment and a place of punishment in their spirits, but not joined with a final supernatural body fitted for their punishment in the eternal hell which is another kind of punishment from that which they are now experiencing. We use the illustration, it's like a prisoner who hasn't had his trial yet, he's still incarcerated, he's incarcerated in a jail until his trial at which time he is sent to the penitentiary to serve out his life sentence. They are incarcerated now in a place of torment away from God. They will be brought before the tribunal of God, they will be given a new body, a resurrected body fit for their eternal incarceration in the final hell called the lake of fire.

Now as this passage unfolds, let's remind you, first of all, we saw the scene in verses 11 and 12...the great white throne, the one sitting on it, of course, God in the form of Jesus Christ to whom has been given all judgment. And then there is the dissolving of the entire universe. Heaven and earth flee away and no place is found for them. And John sees the dead, the great and the small, they're all there standing before the throne. That's the scene.

Secondly we saw the summons. In verse 13, "The sea gave up the dead which were in it, death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them." The sea, of course, representing just that, death and Hades representing all the graves over the whole world through all of its history will yield up bodies. It doesn't literally mean that out of every grave is going to come a body right through the dirt, it just

means that those locations represent human lives and there will be a body to come to join every eternal spirit of the ungodly.

As the universe passes away then, it...it engorges all the people who have ever died, all the ungodly come out. This is what Jesus called "the resurrection of damnation," or condemnation in John 5:29. This is the resurrection that the Apostle Paul is referring to in Acts chapter 24 and verse 15, the resurrection he calls "the resurrection of the wicked."

Now remember, the godly of all the ages have already been raised...the church at the Rapture, the Old Testament saints at the end of the Tribulation, the Tribulation saints at the end of the Tribulation with the Old Testament saints, the Kingdom saints are transformed when they die during the Kingdom. So all the godly have already been glorified, they've already received their glorified bodies, and they were all a part of the first resurrection which is a resurrection unto life and a resurrection unto righteousness. Now comes the resurrection of the rest of the dead, as they are identified back in verse 5.

Then we saw not only the summons but the standard by which they are judged. Go back to verse 12, books were opened, it says, and another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds. At the end of verse 13, they were judged everyone of them according to their deeds. And then in verse 15, "Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire."

Judgment then is made against an absolute standard. What is the standard? Perfect holiness. And anybody who ever violates the law of God one time falls short, and Paul says in Romans, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There's none righteous, no not one." We're all cursed. "Cursed is everyone who breaks the law at any point," he says in Galatians chapter 3. So the standard is perfection. Nobody meets the standard, so all are damned by the record of their own failures. And God has kept exacting books which contain every sin of every ungodly person ever committed. And it's with that record, that literal indictment that they will be sentenced to final hell.

The only hope would be if their record of sin was overruled because their name was written in the Lamb's book of life indicating they belonged to God through faith in Jesus Christ. And if their name is not in the book, they are cast into the lake of fire. The tragedy is that none of the folks at this judgment have their name in the book and so all they're left with is the record of their sins. When the name goes in the book, when we put our faith in Christ, the list of sins against us in Colossians 2, it says, is erased, or blotted out. But if one never comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, then the list of sins is intact and becomes the standard of judgment.

Thus the Lord will pass the verdict guilty and that leads to the final point, the point that we want to look at for just a brief time tonight, the sentence...the sentence. The scene, the summons, the

standard we've seen, now let's look at the sentence. And I don't want to beg the issue but I do want to be faithful to what the Bible teaches to plant this in your mind.

Let's look at verses 14 and 15, "And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire, this is the second death, the lake of fire, and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire."

Now he starts out by saying, "And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire." What are death and Hades? Well it's just the grave and the place of the ungodly dead, terms that any student of the Old Testament would be familiar with, and any student of the New would be familiar with. They just represent the place of the dead which is a place of torment and incarceration in flames of remorse, guilt, sin and pain. And when he says they're thrown into the lake of fire, he simply means they go out of existence, they're swallowed up by the final hell. This is the eternal realm of punishment.

And people who are suffering now are suffering in their spirit only because there's been no resurrection of their body. So that when the resurrection occurs and they have some kind of a supernatural body joined to that spirit, the conditions of their suffering have to alter, that's why the eternal hell has to be different than the current Hades. It's amazing how specific Scripture is. This is the hell that is utterly separate from and outside the prior created universe in which exists the prior Hades. When the universe goes out of existence, Hades goes out of existence with it, the place of the ungodly dead goes out of existence and a new place is prepared. Something outside and beyond this created order as we know it.

You remember I told you that creation as we know it, matter as we know it will cease to exist. It will turn into energy, and that divine energy again will recreate a new heaven and a new earth not like anything we've ever understood or even comprehend.

You say, "Is God preparing hell now?" Yes. Hell is prepared for the devil and his angels. We could assume that it's prepared. There is an eternal heaven already prepared outside the universe as we know it, it would have to be because the universe is touched with sin and fallenness and why not already a place for the devil and his angels to occupy? But hell at this point is unoccupied. The first occupants are indicated, as you know, back in chapter 19 when it says in verse 20 the beast, that's the Antichrist, and the false prophet who perform signs in his presence and so forth, these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. Technically they become the first occupants of the eternal hell. And then a thousand years later, verse 10 of chapter 20 says the devil is thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are also. We can assume the devil and all of his angels go together into that place.

Now while there is no one at the current time occupying the final hell and the first occupants appear to be, and this is just the best we can ascertain it, you don't want to be overly dogmatic, but it seems as though the final hell is not occupied now until the Lord throws the beast and the false prophet alive into it and transforms their bodies somehow to suffer eternally. And until Satan and his angels go there in their spirit forms, they too will suffer. And though hell is not currently occupied, and it wasn't occupied any time in the past, even during the life of Christ, Jesus referred to it because it is the final place. And the New Testament uses a particular word and that's the word "gehenna," g-e-h-e-n-n-a, the clearest and most vivid of the New Testament words which refer to the eternal and final realm of punishment for the ungodly. It is a place that includes soul and body in hell. And that is the place that ultimately they will be cast. And that's why in Matthew 10:28 Jesus said, "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul, fear Him...follow this...who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." So that the eternal state is both soul and body, whereas now the temporary thing called Hades is only a place for the spirits of the ungodly dead. That's why there has to be a resurrection of damnation, a resurrection of the wicked.

So those who die now, follow this, in their sins in the created world of time and space will die a second death in a world where there is no time and there is no space, and then enter into eternal punishment. They have no part in the first resurrection, so they will experience a second resurrection and with it a second death, a second death as verse 14 says. This is the second death. They died once and their spirit went into torment, and they will, in a sense, die again when spirit and body go into torment. The first resurrection is the resurrection of life, the resurrection of justification, the resurrection of glory. All believers are in that one, including Christ the church, the Old Testament saints, Tribulation saints, Millennial Kingdom saints. All believers are in the first resurrection and none of them experience the second death. All unbelievers are in the second resurrection and all of them experience the second death.

And what is the second death? He says, "This is the second death." What? "The lake of fire...the lake of fire." And he says it again in verse 15 at the end of the verse, "The lake of fire."

Now when you talk about the final punishment, most commonly fire is referred to. More than twenty times the New Testament refers to the fires of hell, most of those times the words of Jesus Himself. And people always ask the question...will it be a literal fire as we understand a literal fire? And the answer is, it's not like the fire you see on a match or the fire you light in your house, or the fire you see when something burns because you have a totally different environment. The created order as we know it is gone, whatever this fire represents will be something that is as real as the eternity in which it exists. It's enough to know that it's like a lake of fire, that conveys what the Lord wants people to understand.

It exists outside the created universe as we know it, outside time and space. It is a place of fearful, frightening, horrifying pain, agony and torment illustrated by the concept of being thrown alive into a

lake of fire in which you can burn forever but never die. And our Lord used the word Gehenna because it was such a good way to illustrate the suffering.

Southwest of the city of Jerusalem, and I have seen this place on numerous occasions and never look at it without being very much aware of what the Bible says about this, but southwest of the city of Jerusalem there is a...there is a valley called the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, the Valley of Ben-Hinnom. It was for a long time the city dump of Jerusalem, the garbage, the refuse of the city was taken to the Valley of Ben-Hinnom. And it was then thrown into that valley and there was a fire there that never went out. It was being burned all the time. And that valley was known for fire and smoke and maggots. Dead bodies were thrown there, the corpses of criminals were thrown there. The people who were not worthy to be buried, strangers and so forth, were thrown there. And what you had in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom was a filthy stench, an unending fire, maggots eating the garbage and the filth and the refuse and the corpses, it was the most frightening and fearful place.

And when Jesus looked at that indescribable horrible place where the worm never died, but fed on a constant flow of refuse and the fire never went out, He said that's hell, Gehenna. A very vivid term to describe the indescribable. And the New Testament describes that place as the place that is prepared for the devil and his angels, the place that is prepared for the ungodly. And the Bible says, as you notice there in chapter 20 and verse 10 that the torment goes on day and night. That means all the time, constantly, unrelentingly, forever and ever. In other words, it never ends and there's never any relief. It's constant forever. It's not intermittent, it's constant forever.

Back in chapter 19 and verse 20 that fire, that lake of fire burns with brimstone. The indication that it is extremely hot. And what Jesus is trying to do and what, of course, the vision the Holy Spirit gives to John here is trying to do is to let you understand what awaits the ungodly in frightening, paralyzing, terrorizing pain and suffering.

Now let me just talk briefly about the elements of hell that are outlined for us in Scripture. And I don't need to say a lot but I just want to be fair to give you what the Bible says. I need to discharge my responsibility before the Lord in that behalf. First of all, it describes the place called hell as a place of darkness. In Matthew 8 verse 12, Matthew 22:13, Matthew 25:30 it is called outer darkness...outer darkness. I'm sure night after night after night as the sun would go down on the hill, the mountain or the plateau that is Jerusalem and, of course, there would be no lights in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom because no one would live there, there would be no candles, there would be no torches, there would be nothing there but the smoldering burning refuse and the black billowing smoke. There would be nothing to light the place because there would be no life there. That was the picture of the outer darkness of hell. Darkness that is penetrating darkness you can almost feel.

In fact, in 2 Peter 2:17 and Jude 13 it is called the blackness of darkness, as if to say it's not just dark but it's black dark. And both Peter and Jude say it is reserved for you. Again indicating that it isn't

occupied, it's reserved. Darkness. It's not going to be a place of light and light speaks of life, and fellowship, and communion, and socializing, and variety and being able to see things and have different experiences. In the blackness of darkness, nothing.

Secondly, it talks about the worm. Isaiah started that when he said in Isaiah 66:24, "Their worm will not die." And Mark 9:48 picks it up in the New Testament, "The worm will never die." In other words, the refuse will burn forever and the maggots, as it were, will eat forever.

Some feel that the gnawing worm is emblematic of the conscience. And as I told you in the series we did on the conscience and in the book that I wrote on The Vanishing Conscience, I really do believe that one of the greatest components of eternal suffering is going to be a fully informed accusing conscience that is absolutely relentless. It could well be depicted in the worm that never dies but just gnaws away.

Some feel the black darkness is the absence of anything good, and the absence of anybody else to see or be with. So you're all alone with a chewing conscience forever. In addition to darkness and the worm, the Bible as we noted talks about fire. The psalmist spoke of the wicked in Psalm 11 verse 6, coming to fire and brimstone. Isaiah said fire will devour their enemies.

In Isaiah chapter 30, let me have you look at that passage, Isaiah chapter 30. I just want to read you a verse there that I think is important. As Isaiah is talking about the judgment of God, he says in verse 30, "The Lord will cause His voice of authority to be heard," chapter 30 verse 30, "and the descending of His arm to be seen in fierce anger and in the flame of a consuming fire." In other words, God is going to come in the judgment of fire. Then down in verse 33, further describing, he says, "For Topheth has long been ready." And that again leads me to believe that hell is already in place, it's just not occupied because the word "Topheth" is a very interesting word. You know what Topheth refers to? It refers, would you believe this, to the Valley of Ben-Hinnom. It refers to the Valley of Ben-Hinnom before it was the city dump.

You say, "What was it before it was the city dump?" I'll tell you what it was, it was the place...the place where, you won't believe this, people offered children as sacrifices burned alive to the pagan god Molech. You say, "You mean the children of Israel did it?" Yes. The pagan nations in the land of Canaan had done it, and some of the children of Israel joined in that unbelievable worship. It was the Valley of Hinnom where the altar to Molech was. That's one of the reasons that the Jews put the city dump there because it was such a vile and foul and desecrated place.

And so Topheth has long been ready. Indeed it has been prepared for the King, He has made it deep and large. Who's the King? God. A pyre of fire with plenty of wood, the breath of the Lord like a torrent of brimstone sets it afire. Once the pagans made a fire there to offer babies as living burnt offerings to the god Molech, and the day is going to come when God uses it as a place to give the

resurrected ungodly to burn in the fires of punishment forever and ever. That Valley of Ben-Hinnom has some history, doesn't it? Gehenna.

From the very beginning of the New Testament you are introduced to the promise of eternal punishment. The first preacher that ever arrives in the New Testament, who is it? Before the Messiah? John the Baptist. And what does John the Baptist say, he promises when the Lord comes He will burn up the ungodly with unquenchable fire, Matthew 3:12. Jesus follows John and in Matthew 5:22 Jesus warns of the fiery hell. And Jesus tells the parables in Matthew 13 and He talks about how the angels are going to gather the people from all across the world and they're going to sort out the righteous from the unrighteous and they're going to turn the unrighteous over to be burned. So is the angels in Matthew 13:40 to 42, and again in verse 50, gathering the ungodly for burning. And Jesus in Matthew 18:8 and 9 says the fire is eternal.

Darkness, gnawing, unrelenting guilt, the worm that never dies, an unquenchable fire of torment, and there's more. The lake of fire is also associated with some other things. It is associated with banishment. In Matthew 8:12, in Matthew 22:13 the term is used "cast out...cast out." The idea being that they are banished. Being cast out of a society or a city, a town, or a country meant you were banished. There's also the idea of separation. When they are banished they are banished into outer darkness, which implies that this banishment separates them completely. Luke 16:24 says they will be tormented.

And then there's one other phrase that is used many times, and that is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. And that indicates sorrow. The darkness, the worm never dying, the fire, in a place of banishment and separation and torment produces absolutely unbelievable and I'm certain immeasurable sorrow. And this is repeated a number of times in the record of the gospels, this idea of the undying sorrow. In Luke 13:28, all the evildoers are cast out. The Lord says, "I don't know where you're from, depart from Me, you evildoers, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. When you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God and you yourselves being cast out." You know what that says? That somewhere, somehow before they're cast out, they're going to get a glimpse of the glory of the saints as a last vision before they're cast into hell so that they will know exactly what they forfeited. And hence, the weeping and the wailing. You find it in Matthew 8, Matthew 22, Matthew 13, Matthew 25, Matthew 24.

What about gnashing of teeth? What is that? Well, I don't want to read anything into this but if you just look at the expression "gnashing of teeth" in the Bible, it is associated with anger. Back in Job chapter 16, verse 9 says, "His anger has torn me and hunted me down, he has gnashed at me with his teeth." It is an uncontrollable anger. You can see that expression, can't you? It is that grinding, gnawing anger and hatred and hostility...gnashing of teeth.

With whom are they angry? Perhaps with Satan, demons. In fact, in Acts 7:54 you remember the great sermon by Stephen. What was the reaction of the crowd after he preached? What emotion? Anger, right? What did they do? They were so angry they stoned him to death. But notice how they anger...they rushed on him with one impulse, verse 57, but notice how their anger is described, verse 54, "When they heard this they were cut to the quick." What does that mean? They were convicted, right? They were convicted of their apostasy and they began gnashing their teeth, anger. Anger over conviction. They'll be angry at anything that causes them to feel the...the conscience striking blows against them, any...every cause there ever is in eternal hell for their...for their remorse and their guilt and their shame will be a cause for anger. They'll be angry about everything.

And so, when you think about hell you think about banishment, separation, torment, sorrow, anger, there's one more thing. There's one more term and it's here in verse 15 of Revelation 20 and that is the word "thrown...thrown." And it's used back in chapter 19 verse 20 to speak of the beast and the false prophet who were thrown. And it's used in chapter 20 verse 10 and talks about the devil who was thrown.

Why does that term find its way? Because that is precisely what's going to happen. Hell is God's cosmic dump. It's where you throw the garbage, you don't place it there, you don't set it there. You throw it there. You stand on some higher place and throw it there. We even talk about that in the vernacular today, we say "throw out the garbage," or "throw out the trash." It has the idea of discarding it at a distance from where it's going to land. It speaks of its despicable quality. Hell is God's cosmic dump and all who go there will be the burning garbage of eternity.

Now all of this is not happy to think about but what it reminds us is that God is not always the God of immediately justice, but He is the God of ultimate justice. And Amos had it right when he said in Amos 4:12, "Prepare to meet your God...prepare to meet your God." Cause you're going to meet Him, you're either going to meet Him in the glory or you're going to meet Him at the great white throne. It's your choice.

Turn with me to Hebrews chapter 10, and we'll close. Hebrews chapter 10 verse 26. "For if we go on sinning," we could put it another way, "If we go on rejecting willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins." Did you hear that? If you have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, if you have heard the truth concerning judgment, and you reject the gospel and you reject that message, there is no other way to deal with your sins. Do you see that? There's no other sacrifice, other than the one that Christ made. If you go on sinning willfully, and what that means is rejecting the gospel, after you have heard the truth, there's nothing else that can offered to you to deal with your sins. So, verse 27 says, "What you have to look forward to is a certain, absolutely certain, terrifying expectation of...what?...judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries."

Make a choice. Say no to God and no to Jesus Christ, turn your back on the sacrifice that Christ has made, "There is therefore no sacrifice for your sins and with absolute certainty, you will be looking forward to a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries."

And then he says this, "Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses." Severe enough, you violate the law of Moses, you die without mercy. In other words, even in the Mosaic law there was capital punishment. When two or three witnesses stood and affirmed and you indeed had violated that law, you died without mercy, that was the law. You think that's severe? Verse 29, "How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which He was sanctified and has insulted the Spirit of grace?" You think it was severe to break the law of Moses. Wait till you see how severe it is to trample Jesus Christ, to ignore Jesus Christ, to step all over Him, to reject the blood of the covenant by which He, that should be a capital "H", by which Jesus Christ was set apart as the only Savior.

If you want to insult the Spirit of grace who offers salvation, insult the Son of God who was set apart as the only sacrifice, insult the One who gave His blood, insult the Son of God, then you can be sure that you will receive a severer punishment than anybody who broke the law of Moses.

You say, "Well who is going to exact that punishment?" The same God offered grace, verse 30, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," and again the Lord will judge His people. "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The judgment of the great white throne is coming. But only those who choose to be there will go because to be there you have to reject the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father, as we conclude this most serious, sobering portion of Scripture that shakes us to the very core, we just ask that Your Holy Spirit would help us, first of all, to examine our own lives, and, O God, if there's anyone hearing this message who does not know Jesus Christ, who is not genuinely forgiven, who is not genuinely redeemed, bought back out of sin, and headed for heaven, may they know that, may Your Spirit make it abundantly clear to them so that they aren't self-deceived and end up saying, "Lord, Lord," and hearing, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." And, Lord, if there's anyone who hears this message who is indifferent, who thinks you can just kick back and not take this seriously, Lord, may they be shaken out of such apathy and made to realize that they are dealing with their eternal destiny. And this is reality. And may they look at the future and make the only reasonable sane judgment that heaven is the place to be and not the lake of fire. And may they come to Christ and repent of their sin and turn from their wickedness and put their total trust and faith and

confidence in Jesus Christ to save them.

And, Lord, for those of us Christians who know this is true, and are apathetic toward the lost, forgive us and shake us and awaken us and help us not to kid ourselves about how we care unless we care enough to snatch people as brans from the burning. Lord, we thank You, too, finally that You've rescued us due to nothing which we have done and nothing in us worthy, by Your mercy and grace alone You have saved us from the great white throne, from the second resurrection and the second death, and we give You praise. And if our praise is genuine and our thanks is genuine, then it must show up in the way we live. True gratitude means obedience...obedience out of sheer thankfulness and a desire to love and honor the One who so graciously saved us from hell.

Father, I just ask that You work in every heart, whatever it is that You need to do in the light of this, save some, challenge others to a new and a fresh zeal for the lost and fill us with gratitude, overwhelming gratitude because we're in Christ, we'll never know this condemnation. We thank You and praise You for that. In our Savior's name we ask these things. Amen.

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