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SPECIAL REPORT



DOES HELL EXIST? IS IT ETERNAL?

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largely influenced by the ancient Greek belief in hades—believed to be a place of fiery torment inhabited and controlled by demonic forces. The principle demon of hades was Appolyon. In hades the unrighteous were consigned to live in eternal torment at the hands of those demonic forces.

It has been suggested that the Hellenistic influences of Greek culture played a large part in the early Church's development of doctrine, and that the Greek concept of hades took root where no parallel scriptural concept exists. Is this where the Roman Catholic Church got its concept of hell and passed it on to succeeding generations? Or is there a biblical concept that does parallel that of hades? If not, why did the writers of the New Testament use the Greek word haides to describe the nether world of which they wrote?

These questions cannot be answered in a tract as has been attempted by some. It takes an exhaustive searching and study of Scripture to come to the truth. This, in turn, requires an honest appraisal of the various Hebrew and Greek words translated hell in the King James Version of the Bible.

The only Hebrew word translated as "hell" in the Old Testament is sheol, which is also translated "grave," "pit" and "it" (once). Since "hell," "grave," and "pit" are different things, the question arises as to why the same word would be translated differently. By Hebrew understanding, sheol is the name of the underworld, or the place where departed spirits await the resurrection.

The Greek equivalent to sheol is haides, or "hades." It is from the Greek helan (hidden) that we get the English word hell. English dictionaries equate hell with hades as "a nether world in

which the dead continue to exist" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary).

Sheol was translated "grave" and "pit" in some instances because all relate to death. However, the characteristics of sheol, the grave and the pit are significantly different as to warrant a careful look at the verses translated as something other than hell. We will see how this applies as we first take each scriptural reference to sheol translated "the grave" into account. We will see that every instance could easily be translated as "hell," meaning the place of departed spirits where consciousness exists. We will then address the verses that translate sheol as "the pit" and as "hell." Finally, we will look at the New Testament Greek words that apply to the subject.

IS SHEOL THE GRAVE?

Jacob, when confronted with the false news that his son Joseph had been killed by a wild beast, lamented thus:

And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave [sheol] unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him. (Genesis 37:35)

In the same way, when Jacob's sons returned from Egypt telling him that Pharaoh's chief had demanded that they bring Benjamin to him, Jacob referred to sheol. He spoke of his fear of dying in sorrow should anything evil befall Benjamin:

And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

And he [Jacob] said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the

These questions have plagued both believers and non-believers alike for centuries. Christian tradition and orthodoxy insist that there is a literal place where the departed souls and spirits of the unredeemed will suffer eternal, fiery torment.

Yet throughout the centuries certain men and organizations have taught that hell does not exist as a place of eternal punishment. Some liken it to a metaphor for suffering here on earth; others say it is a temporary place of suffering, ultimately to be vacated in favor of a universal salvation; still others teach that hell is annihilation—a nothingness to the lost.

Which position does Scripture support? Would a loving God create such a place as hell and cast into it the billions of souls who have not known Christ because they never heard of Him? Will everyone eventually be saved (except Hitler, of course), because God's mercy and love will prevail upon their destinies?

To come to the truth we must put aside our presuppositions learned from religious institutions. Our trust must be in God's Word, not in the dictates or arguments of others, no matter how rational they may seem.

The concept of hell which has passed down through the ages is

way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave [sheol]. (Genesis 42:37-38)

In Genesis 44:29-31 Judah iterates this fear to Joseph:

And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave [sheol].

Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave [sheol].

If sheol is not the grave, why would the translators have rendered it such? Considering the idea of "hell" as a place of eternal torment where the wicked suffered at the hands of demonic beings, it would have been unconscionable for them to assign the righteous there. Certainly the Hebrew writers were wrong and they had to be corrected; they must have meant the grave, not "hell."

This is where mythology takes precedence over proper exegesis. Religious leaders are often infected with tradition; when they find something in Scripture that conflicts with that tradition they attempt to make things "right" by assigning their well-intentioned but erroneous understanding to the problem.

Jesus, in relating the story of the beggar Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31), revealed that the underworld (at least at that time) consisted of two compartments: one in which the righteous were held, awaiting the resurrection to eternal life with Christ, and another in which the unrighteous were held, awaiting their resurrection to judgment. We will deal with this in greater detail as we proceed. This is a vital truth that bears attention for the present.

(For the purpose of clarification, the terms "righteous" and "unrighteous" have less to do with one's actions than with one's faith in God. True faith means obedience to God's Word, and surrender to His terms for salvation through the shed blood of Jesus. True faith will result in righteous actions, but righteous actions without true faith are as filthy rags to God [Isaiah 64:6].)

That said, if we consider that sheol is the place where the righteous and unrighteous went to await resurrection, we see that Jacob was speaking of the underworld, not the grave. He did not say that he would live in sheol in sorrow, but that he would go down into sheol mourning for his son.

For this reason, and because of the connotation of "hell" as a place where demons torture the wicked, it would have been more clear to retain the terms sheol in the Hebrew and *hades* in the Greek. This would have avoided much confusion.

Other instances where sheol is translated "the grave" are just as easily translated "hell," or, better yet, should retain sheol.

Samuel's mother, Hannah, rejoicing that her son had been accepted by the Lord as His prophet, alluded to the resurrection, as recorded in I Samuel 2:6:

The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave [sheol], and bringeth up

When King David was about to die he charged his son Solomon with the following instructions regarding his enemies:

Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet.

Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave [sheol] in peace. (I Kings 2:5-6)

And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave [sheol] with blood. (I Kings 2:8-9)

Job, speaking of the finality of death, said:

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave [sheol] shall come up no more.

He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more. (Job 7:9-10)

Considering the gravity of his sorrow, Job besought God to kill him, but not to forget him in the resurrection:

So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave [sheol], that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! (Job 14:12-13)

These are just a few instances where sheol is translated "the grave." Yet they could just as easily have been translated as "hell," consistent with the rest of the uses of sheol. There is no description of sheol in these verses that conclusively require them to be translated as "the grave." Sheol cannot mean both the underworld and the grave.

There is another Hebrew word that is more properly translated as "the grave." That word is *qeber*, which occurs 67 times and, with few exceptions, refers specifically to a grave, tomb or sepulcher. Most properly, sheol means the underworld place of departed spirits, and *qeber* means the grave.

Nowhere in the Old Testament is reference made to an eternal, fiery state or place. The King James translators did use the term hell for sheol in several instances, but none of those instances describe "hell" as it has come to be known in English usage. This is seen in the following instances where sheol is translated as hell in the Old Testament. (All the Scriptures are to be found in Appendix A following this article.)

IS SHEOL A PLACE OF TORMENT?

As we look at sheol where it is translated as "hell," we will see that it describes a place of consciousness and sorrow. But does it say anything about torment?

I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

The sorrows of hell [sheol] compassed me about; the snares of

death prevented me; (2 Samuel 22:4-6)

Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell [sheol]; what canst thou know?

The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. (Job 11:7-9)

Hell [sheol] is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. (Job 26:6-7)

Praising God for deliverance, David spoke of death in using the word sheol:

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

The sorrows of hell [sheol] compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears. (Psalm 18:4-6)

Isaiah, speaking to the King of Babylon said:

Hell [sheol] from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. (Isaiah 14:9)

Isaiah, referred to sheol in speaking to Israel, who had fallen into idolatry:

And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell [sheol]. (Isaiah 57:9)

In his lament to the king of Tyre, which is often taken to have a secondary application to Satan as Lucifer, Isaiah states:

The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell [sheol] with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword. (Ezekiel 32:21)

And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell [sheol] with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their

bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living. (Ezekiel 32:27)

Though they dig into hell [sheol], thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: (Amos 9:2)

Isaiah uses the word sheol to mean that the king would die in spite of his prideful attitude:

Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell [sheol], to the sides of the pit. (Isaiah 14:15)

This same condemnation is spoken to rebellious Israel:

Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell [sheol] are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: (Isaiah 28:15)

And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell [sheol] shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. (Isaiah 28:18)

In all these cases, whether sheol is translated "hell," or "the grave," the word "hell" can be used without compromising the context. But, again, it would have been better to retain sheol due to the erroneous understanding of "hell" in English culture. Nowhere does sheol allow for any meaning other than the realm of departed spirits.

It is clear from all of these Scriptures, as well as many New Testament verses, that consciousness continues after death. The idea that at death consciousness ceases to function (a condition known as "soul sleep"), is found nowhere in Scripture. There are some verses that have been taken to mean this, and we must deal with them in their proper context:

The most common verse used to suggest that there is no consciousness in death is Ecclesiastes 9:5-10:

For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more

a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

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

In light of the preponderance of Scriptures that speak of consciousness after death, it would be a serious error to concoct a doctrinal position to the contrary on the basis of one passage. In this case, we must understand that the writer of Ecclesiastes (Solomon), was speaking proverbially. He was in essence saying that all that really matters is life as we live it today, because the time is coming when we will cease to live on the earth, and all contact with our present realm will come to an end.

When he says, "the memory of them is forgotten," he is not saying they have no memory (as evidenced by other Scriptures), but that the living eventually lose memory of them.

It's true that in sheol there is no work, device, knowledge or wisdom of anything pertaining to life on earth; the deceased do not know what is taking place on earth. The sole exception recorded in Scripture is Samuel confronting Saul after being summoned by the witch of Endor (1 Samuel 28:7-25). That Scripture addresses the spirit as that of Samuel, and that Samuel brings Saul a word from God is evidence that, in this case, at least, God did allow contact for His own reasons.

Other than this instance, however, there is no longer any contact between the living and the dead. Occult evidences of "ghosts," practices of necromancy, and paranormal, psychic encounters with "departed ones," are really encounters with familiar spirits—demons masquerading as humans—to achieve some particular deception. But this does not mean that there is a cessation of consciousness after death.

That there is consciousness after death is the only conclusion that can be drawn in view of the overwhelming number of Scriptures that speak of consciousness in sheol. No Scriptures can be cited for conclusive proof that death means absence of consciousness.

Regardless of whether sheol is rendered "hell" or "the grave," no instance describes "hell" or what takes place there other than sorrow. However, in some cases where the KJV translators rendered sheol as "the grave," sorrow is spoken of. This cannot be. For in the grave there is no sorrow, since the body alone occupies it.

This is further evidence that sheol is not the grave, but the underworld where departed spirits await their resurrection.

But is there torment in sheol? There is only one instance where pain is mentioned:

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell [sheol] gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.

Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. (Psalms 116:3-4)

While the psalmist acknowledges pain in sheol, he does not reveal the degree or duration of that pain. Nor does he say how that pain is inflicted, whether by fire, demonic spirits, or other means.

There is one Scripture passage where hell (sheol) and fire are mentioned together. God, speaking of Israel's idolatry, said:

They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell [sheol], and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. (Deuteronomy 32:17-22)

Here, God's anger is kindled as a fire which will burn not only in sheol, but will consume the earth. It is His anger, not literal fire that is spoken of. If we take this single incident to suggest that sheol means a place of torment called hell rather than merely a place of waiting for departed spirits, which would be consistent with all uses of the word, it still doesn't de-

scribe hell as a place of eternal torment of any particular degree. Thus we are left with no conclusive evidence from the Old Testament to support the traditional idea that "hell" is a place of eternal fiery torment for the unsaved. However, this lack of evidence does not necessarily disprove that idea.

Lacking any Old Testament evidence either way, we must move on to the New Testament for further understanding. But the New Testament, written originally in Greek and Aramaic, does not use the word sheol. The equivalent word to sheol is haides in the Greek.

HAIDES—THE GREEK SHEOL

There are many references to hell in the New Testament. But two words are translated as hell, which causes confusion. To sort this out, we must look at each New Testament reference to hell and see what is being spoken of.

The first Greek word translated hell is haides (hades), which denotes the place of departed spirits, corresponding to the Hebrew sheol. That both the Hebrew sheol and the Greek haides are the same, is proven by an Old Testament prophecy and a New Testament fulfillment of that prophecy:

The Old Testament prophecy is found in David's Psalm of Messiah:

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [sheol]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (Psalms 16:9-10)

The fulfillment is found in the Book of Acts with reference to Jesus:

For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [haides], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (Acts 2:25-27)

Knowing, therefore, that sheol and haides are the same, we may ascribe the same characteristics of sheol to that of haides: it is a place of departed spirits awaiting resurrection. Prior to Christ's resurrection, the righteous went to await His taking them captive

in His train. The unrighteous remain until they are resurrected to face their final judgment.

The references to haides as "hell" are found in the following Scriptures:

And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell [haides]: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. (Matthew 11:23-24)

Luke 10:15 is a reiteration of this statement by Christ, which was a condemnation of Capernaum for rejecting Him. In essence, He told them that, because they had the truth and rejected it, their judgment would be more severe than that of Sodom. What does this imply but that there will be further judgment and consignment to suffering than that encountered in sheol where the unrighteous await the resurrection to judgment?

An important Scripture that has been taken to mean something entirely different than what it should is Matthew 16:18:

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.

Because of ancient Greek influences on the concept of "hell," an entire false doctrine of dominion, and misunderstanding of the believer's position have permeated the churches. This verse has been taken to mean that we must storm the gates of hell and tear them down—that the gates are not offensive, they are defensive; therefore, we must be on the offense through so-called "deliverance" that employs unbiblical means to defeat Satan and his demons. Understanding that hades refers to sheol, or the place where departed spirits are awaiting the resurrection, the Lord was saying that the gates of hades or sheol would not prevail against His Church; they will not prevent our being resurrected to eternal life. We will be resurrected to new life on the new earth, wherein will dwell righteousness. His words were a prophecy of the resurrection, not a command to attack demons.

The idea that demons control hell (sheol or hades) is a fantasy born out of Greek mythology. We must learn to

separate myth from biblical truth. While the New Testament writers retained the word *hades*, their understanding of it and the understanding of the ancient Greeks differed. Both saw *hades* as the place of departed spirits. But whereas the Greeks believed that *hades* was controlled by demons who tortured the wicked, the New Testament writers understood it to be *sheol*.

Jesus Himself is the best witness to the existence of *sheol* or *hades*. Consider Jesus' description of the underworld where, prior to the Resurrection, all the souls of the dead—the righteous and unrighteous—awaited the resurrection:

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. (Luke 16:19-26)

We see that the underworld of which Jesus spoke is a place within the earth where the departed spirits await judgment. Notice four important elements:

1) Our Lord's own words prove that consciousness continues after death;

2) *Sheol* had two compartments, one for the righteous (the faithful), one for the unrighteous (the unfaithful);

3) The compartment for the righteous was a place of rest and comfort;

4) The compartment for the unrighteous is a place of torment "in this flame." (The word *flame*, Gr. *Phlox* when used apart from the word *pur*—fire—denotes heat. When used with *pur* it denotes a fiery flame. In this case, the flame denotes heat, but may or may not include fiery heat. The fact that the rich man could speak and reason would indicate that the heat is intense, but not so intense as to destroy him or render him incapacitated.)

It is in this description of Lazarus and the rich man that we learn for the first time that *sheol* or *hades* is, indeed, a place of torment for the lost.

We also learn elsewhere that the compartment known as Abraham's Bosom was emptied when Jesus rose from the dead. To accomplish this, He had to first descend into *hades*.

Jesus In Hades

When Christ died on the cross He went to *sheol* or *hades*. What took place in that three-day-and-three-night period is described to some degree in the following Scriptures:

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 Pet 3:18-20)

While in *sheol*, the Lord preached the truth to the disobedient in the days of Noah. It doesn't say that He preached to anyone else, but that is immaterial. The important thing is that He went into the underworld, thus proving its existence through the testimony of His apostles. There is no indication that He suffered while in *sheol*; He may have just as easily preached to them from "Abraham's bosom" as Abraham did to the unrighteous rich man.

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) (Ephesians 4:7-10)

We also see that He "led captivity captive." There are two diverse understandings of this phrase. One, made popular by the "word-faith" proponents, is that He destroyed the captors (Satan and his minions) and led them as captives, just as a conquering hero would lead his defeated foe behind him; the other meaning is that He led the captives as captives to Himself, out of *sheol* into the presence of His Father.

The problem with the first understanding is that Satan is not yet bound; he is still free to deceive and to test the hearts of men (Acts 5:9; 26:18; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 7:5; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14; 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 Timothy 1:20; 5:15; Revelation 12:9). Evidence for the second understanding, that Christ led the righteous in His train to heaven, is found in the following, which tells us that the Lord resurrected the saints that were held in the compartment of *sheol* known as Abraham's bosom:

And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. (Matthew 27:51-53)

So with the Lord's resurrection the compartment for the righteous was emptied. Now the righteous, when they die, are immediately in the presence of the Lord in Heaven:

Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. (2 Corinthians 5:6-9)

With all the evidence thus far, however, we still have nothing concrete to suggest that there exists an eternal, fiery "hell." With the new heaven and new earth, there is reason to believe that sheol will have served its purpose in holding the unrighteous in their compartment until they are resurrected to judgment, and hades will cease to exist. We know that the righteous will have their place in the new earth, but what of the unrighteous? What will be their final destiny? Is there a hell for them? Jesus' prophecy of the final resurrection offers a clue:

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [hades] and of death. (Revelation 1:18)

And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell [hades] followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. (Revelation 6:8)

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

And death and hell [hades] 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)

Here, in the latter verses of The Revelation, we find the first references to the lake of fire, which brings us closer to the idea of an eternal, fiery torment for the unsaved:

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. (Revelation 19:20)

We know for a certainty that, whatever the nature of the lake of fire, it will have at least two residents: the anti-Christ beast and the false prophet. What more do we learn of it?

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 [hades] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

And death and hell [hades] 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 20:10-15)

This is conclusive biblical evidence that everyone—man, fallen angels, demons—all who are not written in the book of life, will be cast into the lake of fire after the final judgment. Death and hades will be cast into the lake of fire, and so will exist no longer on earth. We are not told where the lake of fire will be, or whether everyone will be tormented forever, as the beast and the false prophet will be (verse 10). However, there are several other Scriptures that deal with the unsaved and their final condition. And this is where we address another word translated "hell." That word is *geena* from the Hebrew *ghehenah*. *Ghehenah* alluded to Jerusalem's valley of Gehinnom, where the refuse of the city was burnt in a perpetual fire. It came to represent the place or state of eternal punishment for the unrighteous. It was in this context that Jesus said to the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees:

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell [geena]? (Matthew 23:33)

It was about *ghehenah* that He warned those to whom He preached in the following Scriptures:

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 [geena] fire. (Matthew 5:22)

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell [geena].

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell [geena]. (Matthew 5:29-30)

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 [geena]. (Matthew 10:28)

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 [geena] than yourselves. (Matthew 23:15)

And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell [geena], into the fire that never shall be quenched:

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 [geena], into the fire that never shall be quenched:

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell [geena] fire:

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (Mark 9:43-48)

Would the Lord give such strong warnings if there were no reality of a place and state of eternal torment? Or did He not know of what He spoke? I would choose to believe Him and not those who attempt to preach comfort to the lost. There is definitely going to be a marked distinction between the eter-

nal state of the lost and that of the saved:

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

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 21:6-8)

CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that the term "hell" has been used carelessly by not only the average believer, but by biblical scholars. Without a clear understanding of the different Hebrew and Greek words that describe the afterlife, it is easy to fall into the trap of adopting myths and cultural or religious fallacies. The conclusion to which we have come after due consideration of all the terms associated with the afterlife is that sheol (Hebrew) and hades (Greek) are the same place in the heart of the earth to which, prior to the Resurrection of Christ, the souls of all the dead—the righteous and the unrighteous—awaited their resurrection. After Jesus' Resurrection, only the souls of the unrighteous go to sheol.

At the final resurrection of all the dead, the unrighteous will be cast into the lake of fire, as will sheol.

Sheol (or hades) is distinct from the lake of fire, which was created for Satan and his angels (Matthew 25:41). In the final analysis, sheol will come to its own end, but the lake of fire will continue. The lake of fire, then, may be considered "hell" as the end for all wickedness. This, the Bible calls "the second death."

IS "HELL" ETERNAL?

Some say that the "second death" means annihilation; there will be no consciousness after a time, depending upon the seriousness of the judgment. They say that the words "eternal" and "everlasting" do not always mean non-ending, but may also mean of long duration. But how do we know which meaning to ascribe?

The best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture itself. While the Old Testa-

ment has little to say about eternal punishment, it has much to say about the eternal God and eternal salvation. The New Testament also has much to say about all these things.

With minimal exception, the words translated "eternal," "everlasting," "forever," and "ever" come from the same root word *aion*. It is from this that we get the English word *eon*, meaning a very long period in world history. *Aion* is generally translated "ever." Its two primary derivatives, *aidios* and *aionios*, are translated "eternal," and "everlasting."

The following are just a few verses that speak of eternal or everlasting damnation. There are only two in which *aionios* is used:

But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal [*aionios*] damnation: (Mark 3:29)

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting [*aidios*] chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

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 [*aionios*] fire. (Jude 1:6-7)

More often, the word *aionios* is translated "everlasting" when speaking of eternal damnation:

Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. (Matthew 18:8)

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)

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. (II Thessalonians 1:7-9)

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

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)

For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. (Revelation 19:2-3)

These are the only Scriptures that allude to eternal damnation. The question is whether or not eternal means eternal or merely of long-lasting duration. The truth is that it could mean either. (See Appendix B for a complete discourse on the Greek words *aion*, *aionios* and *aidios* from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words.)

While it is possible that these words may mean of long duration, they are also used extensively to describe eternal life, the eternal God, and all that pertains to eternity as unending—without beginning and without end. If we wish to pick and choose which definition to apply to eternal damnation based upon what we think it should be, we may find ourselves straying significantly from the truth.

L. Berkhof, in *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939, 1941, 1974) states it this way:

In Matt. 25:46 the same word describes the duration of both, the bliss of the saints and the penalty of the wicked. If the latter is not, properly speaking, unending, neither is the former; and yet many of those who doubt eternal punishment, do not doubt everlasting bliss.

If the idea of eternal torment for the lost is repugnant to us, we must take that up with the Father. Who are we to counsel God? It is by His pleasure that all things exist; it isn't up to the creature to correct the Creator.

At best we may speculate that "eternal" does not mean without end as it is found in all instances. But one may not be dogmatic about it, as some have been. In view of the preponderance of Scriptures that speak of eternal life, the eternal Godhead, and all the things we want to be without end, using the same words to describe the fate of the lost, we would be going contrary to reason to insist that the condition of the lost is not eternal.

Whether we call that condition "hell" is of little importance. Technically, "hell" does not exist as it is characterized in English culture and tradition. If "hell" is sheol or hades, it will be cast into the lake of fire. It is the lake of fire that will continue for eternity, not sheol or hades or "hell." That both sheol and geena are translated "hell" indicates a lack of understanding of this biblical truth. But this is, again, where myth must give way to God's Word if we are to understand His truth.

THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

In addition to sheol and the lake of fire is the description of "the bottomless pit," mentioned only in The Revelation. The Greek words abussos and phrear, when used together, denote a bottomless (or extremely deep) abyss. Apollyon is named as the king of the pit. This indicates a close parallel between the Greeks' concept of Appollyon as the chief demon of hades, but Scripture suggests that the bottomless pit is distinct from hades, being a place where fallen angels and demons are held in chains until the time of the end:

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)

Another verse that speaks of this bottomless pit uses the word tartaro, which is another word for a deep pit, but it is translated "hell," which ignores the distinction between the two places:

For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be re-

served unto judgment.... (II Peter 2:4)

The Revelation speaks of demons being loosed upon the earth from the bottomless pit during the time of God's wrath, and of God chaining Satan and his hosts in the pit until the end of Christ's millennial reign on earth:

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power....

And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. (Revelation 9:1-3;11)

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. (Rev. 20:1-3)

Interestingly, the "beast" that wages war against the saints, and upon which Mystery Babylon rides, also ascends from the bottomless pit. This indicates the demonic power that will be behind the anti-Christ and the false prophet to deceive the nations (Revelation 11:7; 17:8).

An argument may be made for sheol, hades and the pit being one and the same. In fact, this may be what the Old Testament writers were alluding to:

Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell [sheol], to the sides of the pit [be'er]. (Isaiah 14:15)

O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave [sheol]: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit [be'er]. (Psalm 30:3)

Here, and in other verses, sheol and the pit are spoken of in the same context. The Hebrew word be'er applies to any type of a pit or well. It appears as if the pit (also referred to in The Revelation as "the bottomless pit" is the deepest recess of sheol or hades.

One need not be dogmatic either way, but if sheol, hades, and the pit are synonymous, then the lost share the same fate as the fallen angels. Yet even if Apollyon is the name of the king of the pit, it is unlikely that demons are in hades tormenting the lost since it is a place where fallen angels and demons are held in chains. Those not held in chains are on earth working to destroy souls.

The Second Death

Is the residence in the lake of fire the second death itself, or does it merely lead to the second death? The Lord's words are so definite that those who are lost will "go into hell [geena], into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:43b-44). If that doesn't speak of eternal torment, nothing does. But does it mean that everyone will suffer the same torment for eternity? Would those who have never heard of Christ suffer the same fate as those who reject Christ or who are willfully rebellious?

According to Scripture, the Lord's judgment will depend upon one's degree of culpability:

For there is no respect of persons with God.

For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another:)

In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. (Romans 2:11-16)

This leads us to our responsibility as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may think that it really doesn't matter whether someone hears about their need for Christ. The popular thing today seems to be to let people be. As some notable leaders in Christianity have said of late, it doesn't matter whether someone hears about Christ or not; they can still be members of His Body if they live good lives. This is a lie from the proverbial "pit of hell."

If Israel needed a Redeemer, so do we all. If we who have placed our faith in Christ need Him, why do not all men need Him? And if they don't need Him, why do we? And why would He commission His disciples to preach the Gospel to the lost throughout the world?

The Great Commission is being compromised today by men and women who assume the responsibility to lead God's people. But we are to follow Christ, not men.

And in the process, we are to be faithful in ministering the tasks to which we have been appointed:

But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? (Luke 12:45-49)

Whether this is speaking of believers or unbelievers has been debated long time. Since it is speaking of works done by His servants, it seems to indicate that it addresses believers and sin. Another Scripture that speaks of judgment for good works by believers lain on the wrong foundation is 1 Corinthians 3:11-17:

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (1 Corinthians 3:11-17)

Implicit in this warning is the idea that believers who destroy God's temple—their bodies—God will destroy. But the primary consideration for this study is that the believer will be judged according to the works that he performs in service to the Father. This has nothing to do with sin, but with works of service (building on the foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which was lain by the apostles).

Another Scripture that seems to deal with the unsaved, however, is Romans 2:11-16:

For there is no respect of persons with God.

For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another:)

In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Here Paul is telling us that those who obey the law of God will be justi-

fied, provided, of course, that their obedience is based upon faith and not confidence in the law alone. By grace we are saved through faith, not by works, lest any man boast (Ephesians 2:8). But he is also saying that the nations, ignorant of the law, are a law unto themselves, and must obey their own law with a good conscience. The problem is that the natural man is seldom able to live even by his own concept of righteousness, and must bear the consequences of his failures. But this does give us some understanding that not everyone will be judged as equally deficient, though all will bear the penalty for their deficiencies. It is only the blood of Christ, which cleanses us from our sins through faith in His redemptive work, that can qualify us for eternal life with Him.

That eternal fiery torment is the destination of the lost is certainly alluded to in Matthew 25:40-41:

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

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:

Everlasting fire was not created for man, but for Satan and his followers. However, men who do not follow Christ, regardless of their good intentions and ignorance, are, de facto, following Satan.

QUO VADIS?

The eternal destiny of those who die without trusting in the redemptive work of Christ to save them from judgment and condemnation is ultimately in the hands of our just and merciful Father. It isn't so important whether the torment of the unrighteous is eternal or seasonal; what is eternal for certain will be no less than separation from God.

Whether the state of the lost is without end or only for a season isn't the major issue. The major issue is that there is a state for the redeemed and a state for the lost. Now, into which do we wish to enter?

What is also important is that our Savior's blood does not only save us from out of the consequences of our sins, but also into the eternal Kingdom of His Father. This is the good news, or "Gos-

pel" which we have been commanded to preach to all men everywhere.

In spite of the scriptural evidence that there is a place of torment reserved for Satan and his followers, men will insist that a God of love will not allow such a horror. But they fail to perceive God's love manifested in His Son:

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8).

This is the love of God: that while we were yet sinners, He sent His only-begotten Son into the world to suffer the rejection and ridicule of men, and to shed His blood for our sins so that we may be justified before a holy God.

To reject Christ is to reject God's love. To reject God's love is to reject any claims to benefits provided by that love. One may say that he trusts that "God is love," but the only place we learn of that is in Scripture, which also reveals the consequences of rejecting the object of His love, Jesus Christ:

The same writer who revealed to us that God is love, and that His love is manifested in His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, reveals the end of those who reject Jesus:

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)

In its full context, Romans 5:8 is the essence of the Gospel:

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

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 5:1-11)

The skeptic might ask, "Why did Christ have to die? And why did He have to shed His blood in doing so?"

The answer is found in the Word of God:

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. (Hebrews 9:22)

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. (Leviticus 17:11)

It is because blood is the life of man that blood is required to purge man of his sins. All of man's attempts to reach God apart from pure faith in this atonement provided by Him for us is futile. Even Christian sects that develop other means besides this, such as sacramental systems, outward works of righteousness and even inward piety, are leading their flocks astray. Christ died once for all, there is no more sacrifice for sin—either from God or by our own efforts:

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

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

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

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

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which

they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

And having an high priest over the house of God;

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 9:11-10:22)

Regardless where you stand on the idea of a literal "hell," the question you must ask yourself is, "Am I saved from my sins through the shed blood of Yeshua, Messiah (deliverer) to God's people?" Are you content to live your life as you choose with the belief that, even if there is a fiery torment awaiting you, it won't last forever? How many years would you be content to endure a flame under your foot as payment for living as you choose today?

How much are you willing to bet against even that possibility?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

He also said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. (John 10:1-9)

As righteous as we may attempt to be, if we try to enter into salvation through any means other than faith in the final, atoning efficacy of Yeshua's shed blood, we will be counted with the thieves and robbers. What a great humiliation awaits those who trust in their own righteousness. Yet our Lord cautions us not to take lightly our commitment to Him. If we would follow Him we must first count the cost:

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26-33)

And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels. (Luke 9:18-26)

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (Mark 8:34-38)

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible. (Mark 10:17-27)

Yes, God can save even the most stubborn of sinners—and even the most religious of men. The latter are often the most difficult to save even above the wealthy, most of whom love the world and all it has to offer them. I was such a religious man, raised in the Roman Catholic Church, thankful of being a member of “the only true Church” and striving to serve God according to the dictates of that institution's religious leaders. But when I saw the futility of trying to please God on my own terms, and the necessity of surrendering to Him on His terms—when I saw that it is His righteousness and not mine that justified me—He did a work in my heart that set my course on the narrow way through the strait gate.

Like Paul, I count myself among the chiefs of sinners. My sin was not so much carnal but spiritual. And that can be the most difficult to set aside.

But by the grace of God I am what I am. And my prayer is that everyone who reads this treatise will recognize their own need to surrender all to Him. v

APPENDIX A

OLD TESTAMENT USE OF SHEOL 1-SHEOL TRANSLATED HELL

Regarding Hell Itself

Job 26:6-7

Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

Job 11:7-9

Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

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

The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

Psalms 139:8

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

Proverbs 7:27

Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Proverbs 9:16-18

Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

Proverbs 15:11

Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

Proverbs 27:20

Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Isaiah 5:13-14

Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

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

Regarding the Unsaved

Psalms 9:17

The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Proverbs 5:3-5

For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil:

But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword.

Proverbs 7:27

Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Isaiah 57:9

And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell.

Isaiah 5:13-14

Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

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

Ezekiel 32:27

And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads, but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.

Amos 9:2

Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:

Regarding Israel

Deuteronomy 32:17-22

They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

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.

Psalms 55:15

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

Isaiah 28:15

Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

Isaiah 28:18

And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

Habbakuk 2:5

Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people:

Isaiah 57:9

And thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase thyself even unto hell.

Regarding King David

2 Samuel 22:4-6

I will call on the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;

The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

Psalms 16:10

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

Psalms 18:4-6

The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid.

The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me.

In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and

my cry came before him, even into his ears.

Psalms 86:13

For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.

Psalms 116:3-4

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

Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

Regarding The King of Babylon

Isaiah 14:9

Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

Regarding Lucifer:

Isaiah 14:15

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

Regarding the Assyrian

Ezekiel 31:16

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 31:17

They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen.

Regarding Pharoah

Ezekiel 32:21

The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

Regarding Jonah

Jonah 2:1-2

Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

Regarding Salvation

Proverbs 15:24

The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

Proverbs 23:13-14

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

Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

2- SHEOL TRANSLATED "THE PIT"

Numbers 16:30-33

But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:

And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

Job 17:16

They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.

3-SHEOL TRANSLATED "THE GRAVE"

Gen 37:35

And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

Gen 42:37-38

And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead,

and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Gen 44:29-31

And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

1 Samuel 2:6:

The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

1 Kings 2:5-6

Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet.

Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.

1 Kings 2:8-9

And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.

Job 7:9-10

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

Job 14:11-14

As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up:

So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

Job 17:11-14

My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.

They change the night into day: the light is short because of darkness.

If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness.

Job 21:7-15

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?

Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.

Their bull gendereth, and faileth not; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?

Job 24:19

Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned.

Psalms 6:5

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

Psalms 30:3

O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

Psalms 31:17

Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.

Psalms 49:12-15

Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish.

This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.

Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

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

Psalms 88:1-3

O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee:

Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

Psalms 89:48

What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

Psalms 141:7

Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.

Proverbs 1:10-12

My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

Proverbs 30:15-16

The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough:

The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor

wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Song of Solomon 8:6

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

Isaiah 14:11

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

Isaiah 38:10

I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.

Isaiah 38:18

For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

Ezekiel 31:15

Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him.

Hosea 13:14

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

OTHER WORDS TRANSLATED "GRAVE"

qeber ^6913^, "grave; tomb; sepulcher." Qeber occurs 67 times and in its first biblical appearance Gen. 23:4 the word refers to a "tomb-grave" or "sepulcher." The word carries the meaning of "grave" in 5:16, and in 88:11, qeber is used of a "grave" that is the equivalent of the underworld.

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Examples of qeber as a literal grave:

And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. (Genesis 50:4-5)

Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. (II Samuel 19:37)

ANOTHER WORD TRANSLATED "PIT"

be'er ^875^, "pit; well." Cognates of this noun appear in Ugaritic, Akkadian, Arabic, Phoenician, Aramaic, and Ethiopic. This word appears 37 times in the Bible with no occurrences in the Old Testament prophetic books.

Be'er means a "well" in which there may be water. (By itself the word does not always infer the presence of water.) The word refers to the "pit" itself whether dug or natural: "And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away" Gen. 21:25. Such a "well" may have a narrow enough mouth that it can be blocked with a stone which a single strong man could move Gen. 29:2,10. In the desert country of the ancient Near East a "well" was an important place and its water the source of deep satisfaction for the thirsty. This concept pictures the role of a wife for a faithful husband.

A "pit" may contain something other than water. In its first biblical appearance be'er is used of tar pits: "And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits..." Gen. 14:10. A "pit" may contain nothing as does the "pit" which becomes one's grave 55:23, "pit of the grave". In some passages the word was to represent more than a depository for the body but a place where one exists after death 69:15. Since Babylonian mythology knows of such a place with gates that shut over the deceased, it is not at all unreasonable to see such a place alluded to (minus the erroneous ideas of the pagans) in the Bible.

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Be'er and other forms of the root word are properly translated as "well," "pit" and even "grave," depending upon the context.

Seldom are they used to address the underworld, although when appearing in the same context as sheol, one may reasonably assume that sheol is, or contains, a deep pit in the heart of the earth. The pit in that case is a place where escape is impossible without the aid of outside help, specifically God's help or that of His angels.

Indications from Scripture are that the pit is a part of sheol into which specific fallen angels have been cast to await their final judgment. As such it has come to symbolize the origin of all forms of evil and of religious heresies. A Christian cliché is to say that some evil is "from the pit."

APPENDIX B

ETERNAL/EVERLASTING/EVER

ETERNAL

1. *aion* ¹⁶⁵, "an age," is translated "eternal" in <Eph. 3:11>, lit., "(purpose) of the ages" (marg.), and <1 Tim. 1:17>, lit. "(king) of the ages" (marg.). See AGE.

2. *aionios* ¹⁶⁶ "describes duration, either undefined but not endless, as in <Rom. 16:25; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2>; or undefined because endless as in <Rom. 16:26>, and the other sixty-six places in the NT.

"The predominant meaning of *aionios*, that in which it is used everywhere in the NT, save the places noted above, may be seen in <2 Cor. 4:18>, where it is set in contrast with *proskairos*, lit., 'for a season,' and in <Philem. 15>, where only in the NT it is used without a noun. Moreover it is used of persons and things which are in their nature endless, as, e. g., of God, <Rom. 16:26>; of His power, <1 Tim. 6:16>, and of His glory, <1 Pet. 5:10>; of the Holy Spirit, <Heb. 9:14>; of the redemption effected by Christ, <Heb. 9:12>, and of the consequent salvation of men, <5:9>, as well as of His future rule, <2 Pet. 1:11>, which is elsewhere declared to be without end, <Luke 1:33>; of the life received by those who believe in Christ, <John 3:16>, concerning whom He said, 'they shall never perish,' <10:28>, and of the resurrection body, <2 Cor. 5:1>, elsewhere

said to be 'immortal,' <1 Cor. 15:53>, in which that life will be finally realized, <Matt. 25:46; Titus 1:2>.

"*Aionios* is also used of the sin that 'hath never forgiveness,' <Mark 3:29>, and of the judgment of God, from which there is no appeal, <Heb. 6:2>, and of the fire, which is one of its instruments, <Matt. 18:8; 25:41; Jude 7>, and which is elsewhere said to be 'unquenchable,' <Mark 9:43>.

"The use of *aionios* here shows that the punishment referred to in <2 Thes. 1:9>, is not temporary, but final, and, accordingly, the phraseology shows that its purpose is not remedial but retributive."

EVERLASTING

1. *aionios* ¹⁶⁶: see ETERNAL.
2. *aidios* ¹²⁶ denotes "everlasting" (from *aei*, "ever"), <Rom. 1:20>, RV, "everlasting," for KJV, "eternal"; <Jude 6>, KJV and RV "everlasting." *Aionios*, should always be translated "eternal" and *aidios*, "everlasting." "While *aionios*... negatives the end either of a space of time or of unmeasured time, and is used chiefly where something future is spoken of, *aidios* excludes interruption and lays stress upon permanence and unchangeableness" (Cremer).

EVER, FOREVER, EVERMORE

A. Adverbs.

1. *pantote* ³⁸⁴², "at all times, always" (akin to *pas*, "all"), is translated "ever" in <Luke 15:31; John 18:20; 1 Thes. 4:17; 5:15; 2 Tim. 3:7; Heb. 7:25>; "evermore" in <John 6:34>; in <1 Thes. 5:16>, RV, "alway," for KJV, "evermore." It there means "on all occasions," as, e. g., in <1 Thes. 1:2; 3:6; 5:15; 2 Thes. 1:3, 11; 2:13>. See ALWAYS.

2. *aei* ¹⁰⁴, "ever," is used (a) of continuous time, signifying "unceasingly, perpetually," <Acts 7:51; 2 Cor. 4:11; 6:10; Titus 1:12; Heb. 3:10>; (b) of successive occurrences, signifying "on every occasion," <1 Pet. 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:12>. Some texts have the word in <Mark 15:8>. See ALWAYS.

Note: The adjective *dienekes*, "unbroken, continuous," is used in a phrase with *eis*, "unto," and the article, signifying "perpetually, for ever," <Heb. 7:3; 10:1,12,14>.

B. Phrases.

The following phrases are formed in connection with *aion*, "an age": they

are idiomatic expressions betokening undefined periods and are not to be translated literally: (a) *eis aiona*, lit., "unto an age," <Jude 13>, "for ever"; (b) *eis ton aiona*, lit., "unto the age," "for ever" (or, with a negative, "never"), <Matt. 21:19; Mark 3:29; 11:14; Luke 1:55; John 4:14; 6:51,58; 8:35> (twice), <51-52; 10:28; 11:26; 12:34; 13:8; 14:16; 1 Cor. 8:13; 2 Cor. 9:9; Heb. 5:6; 6:20; 7:17,21,24,28; 1 Pet. 1:25; 1 John 2:17; 2 John 2>; (c) *eis tous aionas*, lit., "unto the ages," "for ever," <Matt. 6:13> (KJV only); <Luke 1:33; Rom. 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 16:27> (some mss. have the next phrase here); <2 Cor. 11:31; Heb. 13:8>; (d) *eis tous aionas ton aionon*, lit. "unto the ages of the ages," "for ever and ever," or "for evermore," <Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 13:21; 1 Pet. 4:11; 5:11> [(c) in some mss.]; <Rev. 1:6> [(c) in some mss.]; <1:18>, "for evermore"; <4:9-10; 5:13; 7:12; 10:6; 11:15; 15:7; 19:3; 20:10; 22:5>; (e) *eis aionas aionon*, lit., "unto ages of ages," "for ever and ever," <Rev. 14:11>; (f) *eis ton aiona ton aionon*, lit., "unto the age of the age," "for ever and ever," <Heb. 1:8>; (g) *ton aionon ton aionon*, lit., "of the age of the ages," "for ever and ever," <Eph. 3:21>; (h) *eis pantas tous aionas*, lit., "unto all the ages," <Jude 25> ("for evermore," RV; "ever," KJV); (i) *eis hemeran aionon*, lit., "unto a day of an age," "for ever," <2 Pet. 3:18>.

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