

December 1

JESUS PREACHED TO THE DEAD

1ST Peter 3:18-20 states...For Christ also has 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...1st Peter 4:6 states...For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit...Psalm 68:18 states...You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive: You have received gifts for men; yes, **for the rebellious also**, that the LORD God might dwell among them...

According to J. Preston Eby: "It was for this very reason that Jesus Christ, after His death and resurrection, went to PREACH to the spirits in prison, the spirits of the men who had been *disobedient* in the days of Noah. To them He carried the WORD OF RECONCILIATION, showing not only that Christ had died for their sins, but that He was risen for their justification. If perchance our minds are numbed with the glory of such a thought, let us consider the words from Weymouth translation. "Christ also once for all died for sins, the innocent One for the guilty many, *in order to bring us to God*. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in (by) the Spirit, IN (BY) WHICH HE ALSO WENT AND P-R-E-A-C-H-E-D TO THE SPIRITS THAT WERE IN PRISON, who in former times had been *disobedient*, when God's long-suffering patiently waited in the days of Noah during the building of the ark, in which a few persons - eight in number - were brought safely through the water" (I Pet. 3:18-20). Despite the crafty and deceptive efforts of some to twist and explain away the plain meaning of this passage, it reveals that Jesus, after His death and resurrection, went and preached, not to men in the flesh, but to SPIRITS in prison; not to angels, not to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob or any of the other Old Testament saints; but to those men who had been DISOBEDIENT to the preaching of Noah in the days preceding the flood. And what did He preach to these long-departed spirits? Well, I Pet. 4:6 certainly answers this question! This passage is only a few verses further on from the one under consideration, and as Peter continues speaking of the same subject we are informed, "For this cause was *the Gospel* preached also to *them that are dead*, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but *live according to God in the spirit*." The message is clear - though these were dead, and lived on in the spirit, but not in the flesh, THE GOSPEL WAS PREACHED unto them that they might be judged, or dealt with, the same as men who were alive in the flesh. Please notice, precious friend of mine, it was not doom or gloom or judgment that was preached to these, but THE GOSPEL, the GOOD NEWS WHICH IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION was PREACHED even to these spirits in prison, the disobedient ones! And what was the result of such a wonderful mission? "Wherefore He says, When He ascended up on high, He LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE ... now He that 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" (Eph. 4:8-10). Some suppose this leading "captivity captive" refers to the Lord at His ascension leading the Old Testament saints out of Paradise into the more immediate presence of God. The phrase

is a quotation from the Old Testament, and in the two places where it occurs, on both occasions it plainly refers to the leading captive of FOES. In Judges 5:12, in the song of Deborah as she was leading the strains of a victory song after subduing the armies of Sisera, we read of her prophesying to Barak, singing, "Arise, Barak, and lead your captivity captive, you son of Abinoam." What was she speaking of? Barak went out against the armies of Sisera - he captured of the enemy, taking dominion over them with the sword - and any that were captured alive were led back captive to his own land, thus he "led that captivity captive," parading back victoriously. Who were the captives? The armies whom he had conquered! So also in the passage from which the phrase is quoted in Eph. 4:8-10. The quotation is from Ps. 68:18 where we read, "You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive: You have received gifts for men; yea, FOR THE REBELLIOUS ALSO, THAT THE LORD GOD MIGHT DWELL AMONG THEM!" There is every suggestion here that the captives thus led were not the righteous but the unrighteous, for they are described as "rebellious." And Christ will dwell among the rebellious! What a word! What a work!" (Hell, J. Preston Eby)

Remember...NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD...

NOT EVEN DEATH!



December 2

THE COUNSEL OF MEN OR GOD

Acts 5:34-39 states...Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, You men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: But if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it; lest haply you be found even to fight against God...

It would do all of us good to meditate on this passage of scripture from time to time. It says one simple thing...RELAX! You don't have to try to prove God or His revelation truth to anyone. Truth can stand on its own. All it needs is a little time and it (truth) will manifest itself. A lie will come to naught, but truth cannot be overthrown. Kick back and relax, watch, and pray. THE TRUTH WILL RISE TO THE TOP! YOU DO NOT HAVE TO TRY TO FORCE IT ON PEOPLE! It does not matter whether someone believes you or not. TRUTH IS TRUTH! Let the day declare it. Let the God Who answers by fire be God!

It is not your responsibility to try to force someone to believe something that they do not believe yet. Religion (man's ideas about God) is known for trying to force itself on people, using

fear to persuade people to believe whatever that particular religion or denomination believes. GET AWAY FROM THAT MINDSET! GOD IS NOT LIKE THAT. He is patient with all of us. Just wait and watch. If it is of men, it will fail. If it is of God, YOU CANNOT OVERTHROW IT! We are far too quick to judge things, not waiting to see whether or not it is of God or men. STUDY, WAIT, WATCH, AND PRAY. Remember...If it is of God...

YOU CANNOT OVERTHROW IT!



December 3

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

2ND Timothy 2:24,25 states...And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth...

This passage of scripture gives us the definition of a true servant. It says that a true servant of the Lord must...

1. NOT STRIVE (fight)
2. BE GENTLE (placid, mild, easy, compliant)
3. BE APT TO TEACH (communicate by teaching)
4. BE PATIENT (to endure evil)
5. HAVE MEEKNESS (not weakness, but controlled strength)
6. BE INSTRUCTING (to train, chastise, chasten)

We must seek the face of God for these qualities. These qualities are part of God's divine nature that He will impart to us as we partake of Who He is. Notice the behavior that should accompany the servant of the Lord. It is a laying down of our lives, which results in us being a demonstration of the life of Christ. Most Christians pride themselves on their ability to debate, argue, and cram the gospel down the throats of their listeners. They never seem to realize that they are pushing people away. WE MUST LEARN HOW TO PRESENT THE REAL JESUS AND HIS TRUE GOSPEL TO THE WORLD! It is not so much what we say, but it is how we present and say what it is we are speaking.

Do not be conformed to the organized church and its methods of using fear, debating, force, impatience, pride (ego), and the traditions of men to reach people. BE A SERVANT OF THE LORD! As these attributes are developed in you, you will be able to lead people into the truth of God and into true repentance. What we need are more servants, not "hotshot" preachers out of Bible college who want to prove to the world how great they are. LET GOD CRUSH YOU!

BE A SERVANT!

December 4

WE ARE GOD'S WORKMANSHIP

Ephesians 2:10 states...For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them...

Let us grasp this great truth, for this is the purpose and plan of God. This truth is the theme of the entire Bible. Ephesians 2:10 is in harmony with Genesis 1:26, which states...And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth...

This is the very reason that God subjected the creation to vanity, not willingly. As a result of this, God is the potter, and we are His clay. **WE ARE HIS WORKMANSHIP!** He lowered us into this realm that He might work on us, causing us to learn of Him. The result is...**OUR LATTER END WILL BE GREATER THAN OUR FORMER!**

The word "workmanship" means handiwork. You must see yourself as the handiwork of God. **HE IS WORKING ON YOU AND IT IS A PROCESS!** It is called **salvation**. Why is He working on you? So that you might become like Him. For what? So that you might have dominion. For what? **TO SET THE CREATION FREE!** For what? So that God will become **ALL IN ALL!** This is the end goal of God...**THAT HE MAY BE ALL IN ALL** (1st Corinthians 15:22-28).

Most Christians are involved in "trying to do a work for God" rather than realizing that they are God's workmanship. You must come to the sobering fact that you cannot *do a work for God!* There is nothing that we can do for Him. **HE HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED HIS PLAN OF THE AGES. WE MUST GET IN WHAT HE IS DOING!** Get in the flow of what God is doing, which is to allow Him to work on you, changing your nature from Adam to Christ. Many people are so busy trying to *work for God*, looking for a position in "full-time ministry", that they are not even walking with God. Read the story of Cain and Abel. Cain offered God the work of his hands rather than letting God work on him. The Kingdom of God is not what work that you have accomplished for Him, but rather, it is allowing Him to work His righteousness, peace, and joy into your heart and life. Remember...As the clay is in the potter's hand...

SO ARE WE IN HIS HAND!



December 5

JOB

Job 1:8 states...The Lord said unto Satan, Have you considered My servant Job... Well...Have YOU considered the story of Job? There is much that we can learn from his story. This story shows us Who God is and who man is. It also shows us who Satan is. It gives us a sneak peek into the spirit world.

The story of Job could be looked at as a parable of God's dealings with the whole creation. We must see ourselves as Job. We must also see that God is the One Who initiated the testing of Job. Finally, we must see that the testing of Job was for a specific purpose. It was to cause his latter end to be greater than his former.

Notice Who was responsible for bringing all the evil upon Job. **IT WAS THE LORD HIMSELF! THE LORD SAID UNTO SATAN, HAVE YOU CONSIDERED MY SERVANT JOB...**As well, read Job 42:11. It speaks of...**ALL THE EVIL THAT THE LORD HAD BROUGHT UPON JOB...**It is imperative that we understand that **GOD IS IN CONTROL OF EVERYTHING! GOD CREATED GOOD AND EVIL (AND IS IN CHARGE OF IT)!** Most Christians think that God is fighting against Satan, not realizing that God created evil for a purpose. Once you understand that God is sovereign, you will mature tremendously in the Kingdom of God. We must grasp and understand that the story of Job parallels the story of the entire creation. The Lord has subjected the creation to vanity, exposing it to good and evil. This is done for the purpose of dealing with us. God uses good and evil to cause us to learn of Him. As well, He uses good and evil to chastise and correct us. The Lord has turned Satan loose on us, bringing evil on us. **WHY?** The answer is to be found in Job 42:1-12.

Job 42:1-12 states...Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that You can do every thing, and that no thought can be withheld from You. Who is he that hides counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech You, and I will speak: I will demand of You, and declare Yourself unto me. **I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear: but now my eye sees You. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.** And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against you, and against your two friends: for you have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job has. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that you have not spoken of Me the thing which is right, like My servant Job. So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted Job. And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also **the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.** Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: **and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him:** every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. **So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning:** for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses...

As we can see, the goal of God for the creation is to cause it to SEE (UNDERSTAND) HIM! God is not "out to get us", but rather, He is using good and evil to bring us to a higher place in Him. The latter end of the creation (every person and everything) shall be greater than its beginning.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!



December 6

FIRE - PART 1

FIRE: *heat and light evolved by ignition and combustion; intensity of feeling; ardor; spirit; severe trial and affliction.* (Webster)

According to Gary Amirault: “Let us see what the scriptures say about this fire which is both heat and light. Heb. 12:28,29 says, “Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; **for our God is a consuming fire.** Now a consuming fire is one that consumes or burns up something. And that is what our God is. Don’t forget it. Then is it any wonder that when He appears in His mighty messengers (myriads of Himself) He comes with consuming fire to destroy all flesh (carnality within us)? These mighty messengers of Himself are a part of that same fire. Heb. 1:7 says, “And of the angels He says, ‘Who makes His ministers a flame of fire.’” The original Greek renders it this way: “And with respect to the angels, indeed He says, ‘It is He Who makes His angels winds, and His ministering servants a flame of fire.’” (ed. note: I again corrected the English to the correct words of Benjamin Wilson, author of this Greek text. Another note, there is no “Original Greek.”) David said of God, “Who makes His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire.” Ps.104:4. Now we see that God Himself is a consuming fire, and His ministers are also like a fire. Let us now see what He says about the very Word He speaks. “Is not My Word like as a fire? says the Lord.” Jer. 23:29. Again He says, “Wherefore thus says the Lord God of hosts, because you speak this word, behold, I will make MY WORDS IN YOUR MOUTH FIRE, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.” Jer. 5:14. God is fire; His ministers are fire, and His Word is fire! With all this fire there must be something that needs to be burned before God can have a people after His own nature and likeness.” (His Coming In Flaming Fire, Gary Amirault)

How refreshing it is to let the Bible define fire for us. It is much better than listening to man’s ideas about what they think it means or represents. Our next effort will be to turn our attention to the difference between natural and spiritual fire, for there is a difference. Once we understand the spiritual fire of God we will no longer be afraid of God’s fire, but we will welcome it, for it is the very thing that...

MAKES US IN HIS IMAGE!



December 7

FIRE - PART 2

FIRE: NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL

According to Dr. Harold Lovelace: “Check again in your Concordance, and you will find that the verses that read “Holy Ghost and fire”, “hell fire”, “unquenchable fire”, “ministers a flame of fire”,

“fiery indignation”, “God is a consuming fire”, “lake of fire and brimstone” and “the overcomers stand on a sea of glass mingled with fire”. These terms are all from the same Greek word #4442, “pur”. **Therefore it is the same fire in all these places.** Now notice that in Mark 14:54 when Peter warmed himself by a fire, it is a different Greek word.” (Read And Search God’s Plan, Dr. Harold Lovelace)

This proves that the Bible makes a clear distinction between natural and spiritual fire. When the Bible speaks of God applying fire to the lives of people, whether now or in future ages to come, it is referring to a spiritual fire. This is speaking of God Himself, Who is a consuming fire! For example, when Peter spoke of going through fiery trials in 1st Peter 1:7 and 1st Peter 4:12 he was obviously teaching us about having the spiritual fire of God applied to our lives. It is common sense to know that when a person goes through a fiery trial that he or she is not literally on fire. As well, 1st Corinthians 3:13 tells us that God’s fire shall try the believers work of what sort it is. Once again, this fire is the (spiritual) consuming fire of God Himself. God does not need to or want to burn anyone in literal (natural) fire for the purpose of torturing them. THAT WOULD BE INSANE! As a matter of fact, IT HAS NEVER ENTERED HIS MIND! At a point in Israel’s history, they burned their children, making them pass through the fire unto the false god Molech. The scripture goes on to say that God did not command them to do that, NEITHER DID IT EVEN COME INTO HIS MIND, THAT THEY SHOULD DO THIS ABOMINATION, TO CAUSE JUDAH TO SIN (Jeremiah 32:35). This is concrete evidence that God is not interested in burning people in literal (natural) fire.

Our next effort will be to look at the purpose of this spiritual fire in our lives. If God is a consuming fire, and the Bible speaks so much about fire, then there is obviously something in man that needs to be burned before God can have a people after His own nature and likeness. It is actually impossible for man to become like God without going through His consuming fire. If God is a consuming fire, and His goal is to make us like He is, then we must go through the fire!

FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE!



December 8

FIRE - PART 3

THE PURPOSE OF FIRE

According to J. Preston Eby: “The word “BURN” means combustion, or to consume. To “consume” does not mean to annihilate, for there is no such thing as annihilation in the absolute sense. When fire consumes a log in your fireplace it does not destroy any of the elements within the log, it merely *changes their form*. “Combustion” is the process by which chemicals combine to form new chemicals. For example: a tree might be cut down, sawed into fire wood, and burned. When the wood is burning the heat causes the chemicals of which the wood is composed to vaporize, mixing with the oxygen in the air to form new chemicals, including water and the gas carbon

dioxide. So what was formerly a tree is no longer identified as the form of a tree, but the substance thereof is now simply CHANGED into a DIFFERENT FORM and exists in its new form within the atmosphere as water, carbon dioxide, etc. Thus, to “burn”, means to CHANGE. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that fire does not burn down; it always burns up; it seeks the highest level. And all that it consumes “goes up in smoke,” to exist in a new form in a higher dimension. Even if you take a pan of water and place it over a fire, before long the water will take on the property of the fire and will begin to go up in steam. To “burn” means to CHANGE, and the change is always UPWARD in its motion. “FIRE” is the heat and light that you feel and see when something burns. It takes heat to start a fire, but once the fire is started it produces heat that keeps the process going. Thus, fire is really HEAT and LIGHT.” (*The Lake Of Fire*, J. Preston Eby)

With this in mind, we are now able to see the purpose of God’s consuming fire in our lives. This spiritual fire (that comes from God) is for the purpose of consuming and destroying the man of sin that is within us. God’s fire works (within us) to consume our wood, hay, and stubble. He burns up our old nature (the propensity within us to sin) by the brightness of His coming (presence). In turn, HIS FIRE CHANGES US FROM ONE FORM TO ANOTHER. The more we begin to understand the purpose of God’s fire, the less we fear it. It is absolutely necessary for every person to go through GOD’S CONSUMING AND PURIFYING LAKE OF FIRE, for in the fire we are CHANGED from glory to glory. We are changed into...

THE IMAGE OF GOD!



December 9

FIRE - PART 4

THE FIERY LAW

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “In the case of the Great White Throne in Daniel and Revelation, God judges all men according to His own law. The “fire” that proceeds from the throne is the judgment of the divine law according to their works. A common view is that this “fire” is literal and that it will last forever on the grounds that the people will be immortal and fireproof, but will be able to experience pain. Others say that the fire is literal, but that it will simply “burn up” (annihilate) the sinners. In both of these views, God metes out punishment, but *justice* itself is not done. Our view is taken from the divine law itself, for this is how God defines justice. Nowhere does one find in the divine law a provision for burning anyone *alive* for ANY sin. The only use of fire found in the law is where a dead body might be burned (cremated) for the purpose of preventing an honorable burial. In Daniel 7, we see that the fire comes from the throne, which is a universal symbol of law and authority to judge the people. Deuteronomy 33:2, 3 (KJV) says, **And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints; from His right hand went a fiery law** [Heb. “*esh dath*”] **for them, Yea, He**

loved the people; all His saints are in Your hand; and they sat down at Your feet; every one shall receive of Your words. Note that it is not merely the law, but a “fiery law.” “*Esh*” is the Hebrew word for fire, and “*dath*” means decree, command, or law. Take special note also that this law is said to come from His right hand—and then it says that “*all His saints are in His hand*.” As we will show later, His saints are the ones called to administer the law, because they are the ones in whose hearts the divine law is written. That is why both the law and His saints are identified as being in the hand of God. But for now it is enough to see that the law itself is characterized as FIRE.” (The Judgments Of The Divine Law, Dr. Stephen Jones)

When we speak of the law, we are of course speaking of the spirit of the law that is being written on our hearts. This is being accomplished as we learn to partake of God’s divine nature. The letter of the law was kept and fulfilled alone by the Lord Jesus Christ. God’s law is now applied by His Holy Spirit to our hearts and lives. This is what is taking place in the believer’s life. This is what it means to be baptized with the...

HOLY GHOST AND FIRE (THE FIERY LAW)!



December 10

FIRE - PART 5

UNQUENCHABLE FIRE

According to Lloyd Ellefson: “In Mark 9:43-44, Jesus states, “...than having your two hands, to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.” An unquenchable fire is not an eternal fire; it is a fire which cannot be put out. It will continue to burn until it has accomplished its purpose. This fire will do the work it was sent to do! Jer. 17:27 says that God will kindle a fire in the gates of Jerusalem which will devour the palaces and it shall not be quenched. However, we know it is not burning in Jerusalem at the present time. It has done its work.” (Fire: Natural And Spiritual, Lloyd Ellefson)

According to Otis Skinner: “Unquenchable fire. This term is thus used by Jeremiah -- But if you will not hearken unto me, . . . then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.” -- (Jer. 17:27) Here we have the phrase -- *not be quenched*. But the fire to which it refers ceased to burn when the temple at Jerusalem was consumed. The term, therefore, does not imply endless burning. Worm dies not. Isaiah thus uses this expression -- “And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.” -- (Isa. 66:24) Here the prophet alludes to the worms which preyed upon the dead carcasses, that were left unburied in the Valley of Hinnom, when Jerusalem was destroyed. Those worms were not more than any of our own day; and were said to die not, because worms were always preying there. The expression, therefore, does not denote endless suffering.” (The Doctrine Of Endless Misery Not Taught In The Bible, Otis Skinner)

As we can see, “unquenchable fire” (whether in the natural or the spiritual) does not denote endless fire, but rather, it speaks of a fire which CANNOT BE PUT OUT “UNTIL” IT HAS ACCOMPLISHED ITS PURPOSE! This is the consuming fire of God. His fire is UNQUENCHABLE. The next time you find yourself in the midst of a fiery trial, please understand that your trial is the very unquenchable fire of Almighty God. It cannot and will not be put out “until” it has served its purifying purpose. Thank God for His...

UNQUENCHABLE FIRE!



December 11

FIRE - PART 6

THE LAKE OF FIRE

According to J. Preston Eby: “In my study of the lake that burns with fire and brimstone I was very much helped and impressed by the understanding given by Charles Pridgeon and I would like to quote from his scholarly work on the subject of “BRIMSTONE”. He says: “The Lake of Fire and Brimstone signifies a fire burning with brimstone; the word ‘brimstone’ or ‘sulphur’ defines the character of the fire. The Greek word “THEION” translated ‘brimstone’ is exactly the same word “THEION” which means ‘divine.’ Sulphur was sacred to the deity among the ancient Greeks; and was used to fumigate, to purify, and to cleanse and consecrate to the deity; for this purpose they burned it in their incense. In Homer’s *Iliad* (16:228), one is spoken of as purifying a goblet with fire and brimstone. The verb derived from “THEION” is “THEIOO”, which means to hallow, to make divine, or to dedicate to a god (See Liddell and Scott *Greek-English Lexicon*, 1897 Edition). **To any Greek, or any trained in the Greek language, a ‘lake of fire and brimstone’ would mean a ‘lake of divine purification.’** The idea of judgment need not be excluded. Divine purification and divine consecration are the plain meaning in ancient Greek. In the ordinary explanation, this fundamental meaning of the word is entirely left out, and nothing but eternal torment is associated with it” -end quote. I realize that the above thoughts define the subject very briefly, but let us summarize the meanings thus: “BURN” means combustion; to change the form of. “FIRE” means heat and light. “BRIMSTONE” means divine. Putting these three together can we not see that the lake burning with fire and brimstone is, actually, **DIVINE HEAT AND LIGHT PRODUCING A CHANGE!** Is such a process eternal? All the laws of nature shout that it is not! More than 2500 years ago the Holy Spirit warned the wicked inhabitants of Jerusalem that God would kindle a fire at Jerusalem’s gates which would devour her palaces. “But if you will not hearken unto Me... then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall *not* be quenched” (Jer. 17:27). Did not God say this fire “shall NOT BE QUENCHED?” This prophecy was fulfilled and the fire did occur a few years later and it did destroy all the houses of Jerusalem (Jer. 52:13). Since God said no person or thing would “quench” this fire, did that mean

that it would *burn for ever*? Since it accomplished the work it was sent to do, and since it is NOT BURNING TODAY, it obviously went out *by itself* after accomplishing its purpose! **Unquenchable fire is not eternal fire - it is simply fire that cannot be put out until it has consumed or changed everything it is possible for it to change! It then simply goes out, for there is nothing more to burn.** Yet I hear the preachers ranting and raving about poor souls being cast into hell fire where “their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched” and this, we are told, means eternal, unending torment. How foolish, illogical, and *deceptive*! Such a view contradicts the plain meaning of the term “unquenchable” and its use in the Word of God. Suppose a few filthy, vile men and a few immoral women from some house of prostitution were *forced to sit* in the midst of a large congregation of singing, shouting, worshipping saints. *This certainly would be torment to most of them.* They would be tortured in the flames of the blazing glory of God in that place! If they were not held in their seats *by force*, most of them would rush out of there. I have been in meetings where I witnessed three responses to the glorious manifestation of the Lord’s presence. First, the saints who loved the Lord rejoiced and adoringly worshipped. Some who were not Christians, but whose hearts were tender toward the Lord, came under deep conviction and, weeping and broken, gave themselves into the loving hands of Jesus. But others, filled with self, haters of righteousness, I have seen jump up and literally *run* out of a meeting - **TORMENTED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LAMB!** Sure, they would rush, even run to get away from the convicting power of the Holy Ghost! I have seen it, and so have you. **To the unsaved, HIS GLORY is a LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE - divine, cleansing, purging, purifying, consuming fire!** In ages yet unborn God shall expose ALL MEN to the sweet abiding presence of the Lamb. They will come under such severe processings, under such profound conviction that they will be tormented and have no rest day or night until they finally yield. And when they do, many fountains of tears will flow with weeping, praying, and calling upon the Lord.” (The Lake Of Fire, J. Preston Eby)

As we can see, the words “lake of fire and brimstone” mean: DIVINE PURIFICATION! Daniel saw it as a stream and John saw it as a lake. Can we now see that the words “lake of fire and brimstone” are to be understood symbolically, portraying a spiritual fire that is by nature corrective, and for the purpose of purification? This lake of fire speaks of God Himself and His ministers, for our God IS a consuming fire, making His ministers a flaming fire (Hebrews 12:29 and Psalm 104:4).

This experience of purification is to be for a period of time. IT IS NOT FOREVER! This can be discovered by studying the words “olam”, “aion”, and “aionios”, which words do show that God’s judgments are “of the ages”, but not to continue past the ages, for the ages shall come to an end, and God shall be ALL IN ALL! -OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE!-

THANK GOD FOR HIS GLORIOUS LAKE OF FIRE!



December 12

FIRE - PART 7

HIS MINISTERS A FLAMING FIRE

Psalms 104:4 states...Who makes His angels spirits; **His ministers a flaming fire...**

What beautiful words! The Lord describes His ministers as FLAMING FIRE! What a privilege it is to be referred to as flaming fire, for God Himself is referred to as a CONSUMING FIRE. The words "flaming fire" tell us that His ministers are becoming a part of the very consuming fire that HE IS. Remember...God is a consuming fire, His Word (law) is fire, AND HIS MINISTERS ARE A FLAMING FIRE!

Let us realize the importance of what this means. This signifies that His ministers are to play a part in BURNING UP the works of the flesh and delivering the entire creation. In essence, we become a part of His consuming fire. God's fiery love will flow through us for the purpose of reconciliation, judgment, and correction. This can be seen in 2nd Thessalonians 1:7-10. It states (The Emphasized Bible)...And, unto you that are afflicted, release, with us, - by the revealing of the Lord Jesus from heaven, with **His messengers of power, In a fiery flame**; holding forth vengeance - against them that refuse to know God, and them who decline to hearken unto the glad-message of our Lord Jesus, Who, indeed, a penalty, shall pay - age-abiding destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might - **When He shall come, to be made all-glorious in His saints**, and to be marveled at in all who believed, - because our witness unto you was believed, - in that day...

This tells us that it is God's goal to be revealed to the earth in FLAMING FIRE IN HIS SAINTS! The saints of God will actually be the ones to show forth the nature of Almighty God. His ministers will be as flames of fire, BURNING UP the powers of darkness, the works of the flesh, and the confusion of the organized church. They shall (through judgment) release the nations from the carnal mind, which has held them captive for so long. As well, they will execute judgment upon all, taking vengeance on them that know not God. This judgment and vengeance will be for the purpose of correction, not eternal banishment. Although this sounds bad to the carnal mind, as though God is mad at the world, IT IS ACTUALLY WHAT THE ENTIRE CREATION IS GROANING FOR! The apostle Paul referred to this event as the MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD! Because the creation itself also shall be DELIVERED from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the...

CHILDREN OF GOD (HIS FLAMES OF FIRE)!



December 13

THE TWO LIONS

The Bible teaches us that we are being pursued. Not only are we being pursued, but we are being pursued by a lion. In fact, we are being pursued by TWO LIONS. There is obviously no way to escape. Let us look at these two lions and try to pinpoint the purpose of each one.

1st Peter 5:8 states...Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary **the devil, as a roaring lion**, walks about, seeking whom he may devour...Revelation 5:5 states...And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold, **the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David**, has prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof...So...There you have it. There are two lions in pursuit of us. They are: THE ROARING LION (THE DEVIL) AND THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH (JESUS).

It is said of the roaring lion that he comes to devour. It is said of the Lion of the tribe of Judah that He has prevailed. Matthew 13:3,4 states...And He spoke many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and **devoured** them up...Matthew 13:19 states...When any one hears the word of the kingdom, and understands it not, then comes **the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart**. This is he which received seed by the way side...John 10:10 states...The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly...

So as we can see, the roaring lion comes to devour the life of God, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah comes to bring us into the abundant life of God. So...GOD HAS TRAPPED US BETWEEN TWO LIONS! As we come to an understanding of the purpose of evil, and that God created all things, we will see that the roaring lion is part of God's purpose. THE ROARING LION IS THE VERY THING THAT DRIVES US INTO THE HANDS OF THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH! No matter what man does he will come face to face with one of these two lions. One devours life and the other gives life. That which the roaring lion comes to devour is the carnality within man. That is his meat. When we learn not to depend on the carnal mind, we have passed from death to life. Hence, IT IS THE ROARING LION THAT CAUSES US TO SEE OUR NEED FOR THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH.

IN HIM (JESUS) WE PREVAIL!



December 14

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD - PART 1

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “When God led Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness and into the Promised Land, He instituted various holidays, or “feast days” to commemorate important events. The three main feast days are Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Passover commemorates Israel’s departure from Egypt; Pentecost commemorates the day God descended upon Mt. Sinai to give Israel the Law; Tabernacles commemorates the time Israel was supposed to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land. It is very important that Christians study these feast days in detail, because they reveal the plan of God for the entire earth on a grand scale. They also reveal the plan of salvation on the individual level. The story written by Moses is not only history, but also is a great allegorical novel by which we can know the mind of God.” (*The Barley Overcomers*, Dr. Stephen Jones)

It will be our goal in this short study to show that these GREAT FEASTS OF THE LORD symbolize and point to something FAR GREATER than just the feast itself. Exodus 23:14-17 states... Three times you shall keep a feast unto Me in the year. You shall keep the feast of unleavened bread: (you shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it you came out from Egypt: and none shall appear before Me empty:) And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of your labors, which you have sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when you have gathered in your labors out of the field. Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the LORD God...

There are actually seven feasts that the people of Israel celebrated. They are to be found in Leviticus 23:1-37. They are: THE FEAST OF THE SABBATH, THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (PASSOVER), THE FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS, THE FEAST OF WEEKS (PENTECOST), THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS, THE FEAST (DAY) OF ATONEMENT, AND THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

Each one of these feasts represents and symbolizes the **process** of salvation that God brings the individual through, as well as the entire creation. For the time being we will focus our attention on the three main feasts, which are PASSOVER, PENTECOST, AND TABERNACLES. These three great feasts portray the salvation of our spirit, soul, and body on the individual level, and also represent the entire creation coming to God in three harvests, which are to be described as: 1. A remnant in this age...2. The nations in the coming age...3. The rest of the creation (including all things) in the Age of the Ages (the dispensation of the fullness of times)...

THESE ARE GOD’S THREE GREAT LOVE FEASTS!



December 15

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD - PART 2

PASSOVER

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “On the personal level, the story of Israel in the wilderness gives us the three steps toward full salvation. Step one is revealed by the Feast of Passover. When a man’s faith is placed in God through Christ, the “Lamb of God,” he is said to become a Christian. He is “justified” by faith in the blood of the Lamb (Christ). This is why Jesus had to die on the cross at the Feast of Passover. He was the true Passover Lamb.” (*The Barley Overcomers*, Dr. Stephen Jones)

According to Easton’s Bible Dictionary: “**Passover:** The name given to the chief of the three great historical annual festivals of the Jews. It was kept in remembrance of the Lord’s passing over the houses of the Israelites (Exo 12:13) when the first born of all the Egyptians were destroyed. It is called also the “Feast of Unleavened Bread” (Exo 23:15; Mar 14:1; Act 12:3), because during its celebration no leavened bread was to be eaten or even kept in the household (Exo 12:15). The word afterwards came to denote the lamb that was slain at the feast (Mar 14:12; Co1 5:7). A detailed account of the institution of this feast is given in Ex. 12 and 13. It was afterwards incorporated in the ceremonial law (Lev 23:4) as one of the great festivals of the nation. In after times many changes seem to have taken place as to the mode of its celebration as compared with its first celebration (Compare Deu 16:2, Deu 16:5, Deu 16:6; 2nd Chr 30:16; Lev 23:10; Num 9:10, Num 9:11; Num 28:16). Again, the use of wine (Luk 22:17, Luk 22:20), of sauce with the bitter herbs (Joh 13:26), and the service of praise were introduced. There is recorded only one celebration of this feast between the Exodus and the entrance into Canaan, namely, that mentioned in Num 9:5. (See JOSIAH.) It was primarily a commemorative ordinance, reminding the children of Israel of their deliverance out of Egypt; but it was, no doubt, also a type of the great deliverance wrought by the Messiah for all his people from the doom of death on account of sin, and from the bondage of sin itself, a worse than Egyptian bondage (Co1 5:7; Joh 1:29; Joh 19:32; 1st Pet 1:19; Gal 4:4, Gal 4:5).” (Easton’s Bible Dictionary)

As was stated, this great Feast of Passover has a spiritual meaning for us today. It represents the first step in our salvation process. This feast is applied to our lives when we place our faith in God through Christ, “the LAMB of God”. It speaks of our CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD, BECOMING A CHRISTIAN, THE SALVATION OF OUR SPIRIT, AND OF OUR JUSTIFICATION.

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “Most Christians are aware that there is more to the Christian life than justification. Just as Israel had a long way to go before entering the Promised Land, so also the justified Christian has a long way to go before attaining to the full promise of God. And yet, the Christian life is too often explained purely as a New Testament teaching, without tying it to the foundation of the Old Testament which God carefully established in His dealings with Israel. For this reason, some teach that once they are justified by faith, there is very little more to do except to try to get others saved. This is comparable to an Israelite coming out of Egypt, and then remaining on the shores of the Red Sea trying to coax more people to come out of Egypt. While one should indeed witness to people, Christians must see that their justification does not mean that they are already in the Promised Land.” (*The Barley Overcomers*, Dr. Stephen Jones)

With this in mind, let us be thankful for the Feast of Passover, but let us not stop there. Let us go on to the...

FEAST OF PENTECOST!



December 16

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD - PART 3

PENTECOST

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “One must go beyond Egypt and beyond the Red Sea (baptism) to Sinai, where Pentecost is experienced. This is the place of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It is the place where we learn obedience and where the Law of God is written on our hearts. It is the place where we come to know God not only as Savior, but also as a King to be obeyed. Unfortunately, many who claim a Pentecostal experience seem to treat it purely as a New Testament phenomenon, not knowing that this feast has its roots in the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai. As a result, many who deem themselves Pentecostal by experience think they have been given a license to be lawless and can violate any of the divine laws with immunity, so long as their lawlessness is done in “love.” They often taught that love somehow replaced the law of God, instead of seeing that love is defined by the law and is therein expressed.” (*The Barley Overcomers*, Dr. Stephen Jones)

According to Easton's Bible Dictionary: “**Pentecost:** i.e., “fiftieth”, found only in the New Testament (Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor. 16:8). The festival so named is first spoken of in Ex. 23:16 as “the Feast of Harvest,” and again in Ex. 34:22 as “the Day of the Firstfruits” (Num. 28:26). From the sixteenth of the month of Nisan (the second day of the Passover), seven complete weeks, i.e., forty-nine days, were to be reckoned, and this feast was held on the fiftieth day. The manner in which it was to be kept is described in Lev. 23:15-19; Num. 28:27-29. Besides the sacrifices prescribed for the occasion, every one was to bring to the Lord his “tribute of a free-will offering” (Deut. 16:9-11). The purpose of this feast was to commemorate the completion of the grain harvest. Its distinguishing feature was the offering of “two leavened loaves” made from the new corn of the completed harvest, which, with two lambs, were waved before the Lord as a thank offering. The day of Pentecost is noted in the Christian Church as the day on which the Spirit descended upon the apostles, and on which, under Peter's preaching, so many thousands were converted in Jerusalem (Acts 2).” (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “What good is one's Pentecostal experience if the Christian refuses to be led by the Spirit and learn obedience? What good is the Pentecostal experience if the Christian refuses to have the law of God written on his heart? Jesus says that if the Christian remains lawless, He will tell them in the end, “Depart from Me.” There will probably be many surprised Christians in that day. This does not mean that those Christians will lose their salvation. But they will indeed lose the blessing of the first resurrection and will have to await the second at

the Great White Throne. Furthermore, many who have truly gone beyond the Red Sea and have experienced Pentecost are told that they have attained the “full gospel.” This view is comparable to Israel refusing to move away from Mt. Sinai to go to the Promised Land. There is really no “full gospel” until one goes beyond Pentecost and learns the principles of the Feast of Tabernacles.” (The Barley Overcomers, Dr. Stephen Jones)

Let us realize the importance of the personal...

APPLICATION OF PENTECOST!



December 17

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD - PART 4

TABERNACLES

According to Easton's Bible Dictionary: “**Tabernacles, Feast of:** the third of the great annual festivals of the Jews (Lev. 23:33-43). It is also called the “Feast of Ingathering” (Ex. 23:16; Deut. 16:13). It was celebrated immediately after the harvest, in the month Tisri, and the celebration lasted for eight days (Lev. 23:33-43). During that period the people left their homes and lived in booths formed of the branches of trees. The sacrifices offered at this time are mentioned in Num. 29:13-38. It was at the time of this feast that Solomon's temple was dedicated (1 Kings 8:2). Mention is made of it after the return from the Captivity. This feast was designed (1) to be a memorial of the wilderness wanderings, when the people dwelt in booths (Lev. 23:43), and (2) to be a harvest thanksgiving (Neh. 8:9-18). The Jews, at a later time, introduced two appendages to the original festival, viz., (1) that of drawing water from the Pool of Siloam, and pouring it upon the altar (John 7:2, 37), as a memorial of the water from the rock in Horeb; and (2) of lighting the lamps at night, a memorial of the pillar of fire by night during their wanderings. “The Feast of Tabernacles, the harvest festival of the Jewish Church, was the most popular and important festival after the Captivity. At Jerusalem it was a gala day. It was to the autumn pilgrims, who arrived on the 14th (of the month Tisri, the feast beginning on the 15th) day, like entrance into a silvan city. Roofs and courtyards, streets and squares, roads and gardens, were green with boughs of citron and myrtle, palm and willow. The booths recalled the pilgrimage through the wilderness. The ingathering of fruits prophesied of the spiritual harvest.” Vallings's Jesus Christ, p. 133.” (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

According to Dr. Stephen Jones: “After giving the Law to Israel, God sent them to Kadesh-Barnea, where they sent twelve men to “spy out the land.” When they returned, the spies unanimously agreed that it was a good land to inherit. However, ten of them brought a message of fear, insisting that they would be unable to conquer the land. Caleb and Joshua, on the other hand, had faith that God would give them the land and urged the people to cross the Jordan as God had commanded.

The people then wanted to stone them! Caleb and Joshua escaped being stoned only because the glory of God frightened the people. That “decision day” was the 50th Jubilee from Adam. (See our book, Secrets of Time.) It should have been a day of rejoicing and gladness, a day of blowing the trumpet as the signal for every man to come into his inheritance (Lev. 25:13). Because they refused to enter the land, having no faith, this day came to be commemorated as the Day of Atonement, a day of mourning, fasting, and repentance. If Israel had followed the recommendation of Caleb and Joshua, they would have actually entered Canaan five days later on the first day of Tabernacles. This festival was a seven-day period representing the time of the conquest of Canaan. (When Israel did finally cross the Jordan 38 years later, it took six years to subdue the Canaanites; in the seventh year the land was divided up among all the tribes and families of Israel. In other words, it was seven years from the Jordan Crossing to the Inheritance.)

A detailed study of the feasts leading up to the Feast of Tabernacles can be found in our longer book, The Laws of the Second Coming. Studying these things shows that there is more to salvation than just the spring Feasts of Passover and Pentecost. The fall feasts deal with the final perfection of man. It is meant to portray man’s true inheritance in the land.

The Promised Land: The Promised Land is NOT in heaven, but on earth. Canaan was a land filled with “giants” and “enemies” of God who had to be conquered and destroyed. It is common knowledge in many circles that these “giants” represent the carnal tendencies of our own flesh, which we are called to subdue and conquer. This is absolutely correct, but the obvious lesson is often missed. *Our bodies are our inheritance.* Like Canaan, our bodies are presently inhabited with lawless and ungodly desires that rule us. This has been the case ever since Adam, whose sin sold us all into bondage. God had formed Adam from the dust of the ground. His flesh was made of earth (Heb. adama), and hence he was named after the ground from which he came. This glorified flesh was his inheritance. But through sin, Adam incurred a “debt” that he could not pay. So he was sold into bondage to the earth (Gen. 3:17-23) until such time as a near Kinsman would come to redeem him. Adam lost the wonderful, glorified body which had been clothed in the light of God. After his sin, he was naked and ashamed, and God clothed them with coats of skins (Gen. 3:21). The whole idea behind God’s plan of salvation is to reverse the effects of Adam’s sin upon creation. The law and the prophets from Genesis to Revelation show us how man is redeemed and how he regains the glorified, immortal body that is his lost inheritance. The feast days inform us of the three steps toward receiving this full inheritance: justification, sanctification, and glorification. We are justified in our spirit, sanctified in our soul, and glorified in our body. The first major pattern of this process of full salvation is found in Israel’s wilderness journey under Moses. At Passover, Israel became “the church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38), for they were justified by faith. At Pentecost, Israel was given the Holy Spirit. However, they refused to hear His voice, so they were led, not by the internal witness of the Holy Spirit, but by an external pillar of cloud and fire. Even so, they had opportunity to learn obedience. Then if Israel had gone into the Promised Land on the 50th Jubilee, as Caleb and Joshua had recommended, they would have regained the inheritance that had been lost in Adam. That is, they would have been fully glorified, fully changed into His glory as they passed by the ark. They would have exchanged their coats of skins for the “*house which is from heaven*” (2 Cor. 5:2), as Paul put it. They would have been released at that Jubilee from the house of bondage, and every one of them would have returned to his inheritance. They would have inherited far more than a mere piece of real estate in Canaan. But this was not to be, for this

was only a pattern. It was not possible for them to inherit the glorified body that side of the cross. Ultimately, they had to settle for a parcel of ground, rather than true and ultimate inheritance. Israel's story tells us that our inheritance is not to be received in heaven as a spirit, but on earth in a glorified body. Our hope, the "Promised Land," is not to forsake the earth and go to heaven, but is "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). It is to receive the type of body that Jesus had after His resurrection. It is a body that is immortal and glorified. It is a body that has authority in both heaven and in earth, because it has the genes from both realms, even as Jesus Himself did." (The Barley Overcomers, Dr. Stephen Jones)

GLORY TO GOD!



December 18

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD - PART 5

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is imperative that we understand that the feasts of the Lord symbolize the GREAT SALVATION PROCESS as it pertains to individuals and the human race as a whole. In order for God to be all in all (everything to everyone) it is necessary for all to come to the saving knowledge of Who He is and what He has accomplished. This is our salvation. Remember...It is to be carried out in three phases. The failure of many Christians to see that salvation is a process is surely due to those in leadership positions in the body of Christ (for many ministers do not understand or preach that salvation is a process). Instead, they teach God's people to come to an altar to say a "sinner's prayer", after which they are told that they are completely saved, being (at that moment) in full possession of their salvation. All they have to do now is wait until they die and "fly away" to their mansion in the sky (in the sweet by-and-by), unless they happen to get "raptured" first. This type of teaching continually produces spiritual infants who never graduate to the meat of God's Word, but continually stay on the milk of the Word.

The apostle Paul encountered this very thing, which is recorded in 1st Corinthians 3:1-3. It states...And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are you able. For you are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men?...

To the degree that we do not understand the spiritual implications of the feasts of the Lord, to that degree will we remain in spiritual immaturity, not going into the fullness of God. Many Christians are content to remain in a thirtyfold (Passover) experience with God, but there are some with ears to hear that crave to press into the sixtyfold (Pentecost) and the hundredfold (Tabernacles). The scriptures also speak of these three standings in God in 1st John 2:13. It speaks of:

1. LITTLE CHILDREN
2. YOUNG MEN
3. FATHERS

1st Corinthians 4:15 states...For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have you not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel...Unfortunately, there are not many in Christendom who can be classified as spiritual fathers, but thank God for the few we have. Those who are fathers most certainly understand the implications of...

THE FEASTS OF THE LORD!



December 19

WISE AS A SERPENT

Matthew 10:16 states...Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves...

Those who are truly sent to preach the gospel are characterized as sheep going forth in the midst of wolves. As well, we are told to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Let us consider this metaphoric statement that comes from the lips of Jesus. Jesus speaks of: SHEEP, WOLVES, SERPENTS, AND DOVES.

The servants of the Lord who are truly sent forth with the message of truth in their mouths are characterized as sheep. They are to be seen as such, for they are to go forth in meekness, being willing to lay down their lives for the cause of Christ. This can be seen from 2nd Timothy 2:24,25 as the apostle addresses Timothy. It states...And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth...

As we go forth as sheep, we will find ourselves in the midst of ravenous, religious, and self-righteous wolves. These “wolves” are Christians who are ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. They point their fingers at others, constantly quoting scriptures to bring condemnation, having absolutely no idea of the true meaning of the scriptures that they quote. These are the very people that we must approach in meekness and in wisdom.

As we look at the times in scripture that Jesus found Himself dealing with the religious hypocrites of His day, we will see and understand why He told us to be wise as serpents. Jesus referred to the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes as SERPENTS. In order to deal with a serpent we must be as wise as that serpent. The only difference is that we are to be as harmless as a dove. Those who would be considered Pharisees in this day and age are no different. They mean to harm the people they are attacking with their venom of self-righteousness. They seek to make others look foolish, while they themselves look to gain the praises of men, especially in public.

On the other hand, the true servant of God is meek, being just as wise as the serpent that he is dealing with. He means the serpent no harm. His only true goal is to correct the serpent in love.

THAT IS THE TRUE LOVE OF GOD!

December 20

WISE WITH YOUR PEARLS

Matthew 7:6 states...Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you...

When sharing with people the mystery of the gospel it is absolutely critical that we strive to be led by the Spirit. Those who truly have insight into the purpose and plan of God must use wisdom in their dealings with others. If God has entrusted you with a knowledge of the mysteries of His Kingdom, then you must learn how and when to distribute these mysteries. To have the SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD is to be spiritually rich! How a person handles these riches is of extreme importance. We must discern when it is time to speak and when it is time to be silent.

1st Corinthians 4:12 states...Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful...So...As we can see, we have been given mysteries from God. These mysteries are holy and should be likened unto pearls or riches. There are some people who are ready to receive of these mysteries. OTHERS ARE NOT! We must (by the Spirit) discern where someone is at in the Lord, for there are definitely times and situations to hold back certain information from certain people. The person may not be ready for strong meat. In this situation, it would be the same as casting your pearls before swine, or taking that which is holy and giving it to the dogs. This is why the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves...

With all this in mind, this in no way means that we should be afraid to speak forth the message of the Kingdom of God, or that it is wrong to speak things that we know will be controversial to our listeners. It simply means that we are to use wisdom, being led by the Spirit of God. For example, you should not give your car keys to a ten-year-old and tell them it is alright to drive the family car. It is not wrong for you to desire for them to learn how to drive, but the timing is not right. They are not ready for obvious reasons. Let us be good stewards of the...

MYSTERIES OF GOD!



December 21

AVOIDING DEBATES

There are times when debating over doctrine and scripture is profitable, but for the most part it is not. Proverbs 26:21 states...As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife...The word “contentious” means: one who creates disagreement or is argumentative. The Bible teaches us to avoid these types of people and situations. 2nd Timothy 2:23

states...But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes...Titus 3:9 states...But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain...1st Corinthians 3:3 states...For you are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are you not carnal, and walk as men?...2nd Corinthians 12:20 states...For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as you would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults...

Unfortunately, there are people who love to debate. Their very purpose is to go about causing strife. The sad part is that they actually think they are doing something good for the Kingdom of God. This type of debating is not profitable, for it causes divisions (denominations). If the goal of your debating is to prove that you are right, then your debating is in vain. IT IS BASED ON A WRONG MOTIVE! Someone might ask the question, who is right? The answer is...NO ONE! GOD ALONE IS RIGHT! ALL WE CAN DO IS DISCOVER (OR HAVE REVEALED TO US) THAT WHICH IS RIGHT. When we approach our conversations with others with this type of attitude (humility), we will be much more effective in bringing across whatever aspect of the Kingdom of God that we are talking about.

This is not to say that it is wrong to debate or passionately discuss the scriptures, but it must be centered around a quest for truth. Those who constantly debate just to prove to others that they are right are NOT BEING LED BY THE LOVE OF GOD! People who have a contentious spirit do much more damage with their words than they do good. A contentious person also muddies the waters for those who are truly sincere in their efforts to rightly divide the Word of truth. It is much harder to convince people of the goodness and love of God after they have been turned off to it by IMMATURE Christians who use the sword of the Spirit (the Word of God) to chop people to pieces. LET US GROW UP IN GOD! Before people care what you know, they want to...

KNOW THAT YOU CARE!



December 22

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#1 - IT IS NOT TRUE

The Bible clearly teaches us to study to show ourselves approved (2nd Timothy 2:15). Unfortunately, VERY FEW actually take this advice to heart. Not only do most Christians not study the Bible, THEY DO NOT EVEN READ THE BIBLE! As a matter of fact, most would have a hard time trying to find Genesis 1:1. Most believers in Christ base their belief system off of what everyone else believes. In other words, THEY ARE GOING TO GO WITH THE FLOW! Since they do not study or even read the Bible, they are trapped into having to believe what others (pastors) tell them about God. Most that do study and read the Bible, study and read with their minds already made up, having been

deceived by their embracing of the traditions and doctrines of men. Christians, for the most part, are INTOXICATED with going to church, having church, and playing church. They are more concerned about what outfit they will wear, how big and pretty the building is that they are going to, how many members are in the church, how many degrees the pastor has, how good the singing is, if there is a children's program, how well the pastor preaches (performs), and where they are going to eat lunch afterwards. This cycle is repeated over and over again, causing Christians to remain in a trance, not being able to understand the truth about God.

When a person hears the voice of God and is awakened from the trance of organized religion, then, and only then, can he begin to discern for himself what is true and what is tradition. The Spirit of God then leads that person to study the scriptures. After that, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God begins to flood that person's spirit, soul, and body, leading and guiding them into all truth.

The teaching of eternal torture is a lie! IT IS THE GREATEST LIE EVER TOLD!!! For those who are still under the trance of playing church, they will surely be offended by these statements, but those with ears to hear will follow up on what is being said in this teaching. **IT WILL TAKE SOME COURAGE TO SEEK TO BE SET FREE FROM ORGANIZED RELIGION! AS WELL, YOU WILL BE PERSECUTED (BY CHRISTIANS)!** It will take many hours of study, prayer, and being honest with yourself and God. God will bring you to the place where you begin to pray for truth. He will have you to pray, asking Him to show you not what you want to see, but what is true. As you ask, seek, and knock, your Heavenly Father will give you what you ask for. He will give you...

THE TRUTH!



December 23

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#2 - THE BIBLE DOES NOT TEACH IT

It is not the goal of our Creator to torture any of His created beings forever. This will become clear as one reads and studies the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The "hell" that is taught by Evangelical Christianity IS NOT THE "HELL" OF THE BIBLE. The words "Sheol", "Hades", "Gehenna", and "Tartaroo" (the four words translated as "hell" in the King James Version) DO NOT in any way denote a physical location where God plans to quarantine people for the purpose of torturing them forever in literal fire. They do however speak of the grave, the fiery correction of God (spiritually speaking), and the corrective judgments of God, BUT THEY DEFINITELY DO NOT SPEAK OF A PHYSICAL LOCATION THAT IS PREPARED FOR THE PURPOSE OF TORTURING PEOPLE FOREVER!

In addition to this, the Bible teaches that man's torment (period of severe trial and testing) and God's judgments are age-lasting ("aionios"...of the ages), and that they are for the purpose of

CORRECTION. They are not eternal or everlasting. The King James translators did a very poor job in their translation of the words “olam”, “aion”, and “aionios”, which refer to the AGES OF TIME, but not eternity. These words (“olam”, “aion”, and “aionios”) speak of things that take place within the ages of time (God’s purpose of the ages), but they certainly do not mean or refer to eternity. **The strongest meaning that they can possibly have is one of belonging to eternity, but not lasting through it.** We must also understand that there is a difference between eternity and time. “Eternity” is not time that goes on forever, but it is TIMELESSNESS. Something that is eternal has no beginning and no end, such as God Himself. The Bible, when speaking of God, mainly refers to Him as the God of the ages (“aionios”). This in no way negates the fact that He is eternal, for He is the GOD OF THE AGES AND THE GOD OF ETERNITY. HE IS BOTH! HE BELONGS TO THE REALM OF TIME AND ETERNITY.

After studying what the Bible actually teaches about “hell” and the “ages”, a person will be well on their way to seeing right through the false teaching of eternal torture. The reason that most people do not know that this teaching (eternal torture) is false stems from: The negative power of the traditions and doctrines of men, the ability of the organized church to instill the fear of eternal torture in people, and that people (for the most part) do not read and study the Bible for themselves. In fact, most Christians are absolutely CLUELESS as to what the Bible actually teaches on many subjects.

It will take some courage to begin the journey of seeking to know the God of the Bible for yourself. You will most certainly be persecuted (especially by Christians) for this courageous effort, BUT FEAR NOT, for your reward is the assurance that...

GOD IS THE SAVIOR OF ALL MEN!



December 24

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#3 - IT GOES AGAINST THE CHARACTER AND NATURE OF GOD

According to J. Preston Eby: “When we speak of God’s attributes we may say, and many do, that God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. This is a very beautiful definition; but it largely defines only God’s attributes, whereas the text, “God is Love,” tells us WHAT HE HIMSELF IS. This text reveals His nature, His state of being. For instance, in speaking of justice, we know that God has justice as one of His attributes, but He is not justice; God IS love. This fact gives us a revelation of GOD’S VERY NATURE. This brings us face to face with the great central message of the Bible which is a message of love. We need to remember that the Personage about whom the Bible is written IS LOVE - a Being Whose very nature is love.” (God Is Love, J. Preston Eby)

The teaching of eternal torture goes against the character and nature of God. If God is love, then how can we so confidently teach that he is going to torture billions forever? How could we not

call Him a hypocrite for doing such a thing? JESUS TOLD US TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES, BUT HE IS GOING TO TORTURE HIS FOREVER??? He taught us that we must learn to forgive, yet He will never forgive anyone who has rejected Him in this life???

According to J. Preston Eby: “Even the hardest, cruelest, most brutal men cannot *torture* their fellow men for more than two or three hours without growing weak, faint, and sick (see Fox Book of Martyrs). However, Christian leaders teach that our Lord will *torture* His victims through endless ages. The scripture reveals that Christ Jesus is the *kindest, the most tender-hearted and merciful Person* this world has ever known. His mercy endures forever, or to all generations of time. The doctrine of eternal torment pictures Him to be the *most horrible monster, the most beastly, brutal, cruel, vicious Person* this world has ever known. The governments of this world, ruled by unregenerated men, put their rebels in prisons, and the very worst offenders they put to death. But our Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of the world, will mercilessly *torture* those who offend Him to the most hideous and incomprehensible degree. Surely, this pagan and Romish doctrine of eternal torture does NOT glorify HIM!” (The Law Of Circularity, J. Preston Eby)

As you begin to meditate on the love of God, you will see in your heart that the TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE IS NOT TRUE! IF IT WERE TRUE, THEN JESUS IS A MILLION TIMES MORE VICIOUS AND VINDICTIVE THAN HITLER! It is impossible for God to torture someone forever, for it goes against His character and nature. It is contrary to Who He is, for...

GOD IS LOVE!



December 25

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#4 - IT DECLARES THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST AS AN ABSOLUTE FAILURE

According to J. Preston Eby: “It is estimated that about one hundred and sixty billions of human beings have lived on the earth in the six thousand years since Adam departed from Eden. Of these, the very broadest estimate that could be made with reason would be that less than five billion were saints of God. This broad estimate would leave the immense aggregate of one hundred and fifty-five billions (155,000,000,000) who went down into death without faith and hope in the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. Indeed, the vast majority of these never knew or heard of Jesus, and could not believe in Him of Whom they had not heard. What, I ask, has become of this vast multitude, of which figures give a wholly inadequate idea? What is, and is to be, their condition? Did God make no provision for these, whose condition and circumstances He must have foreseen? Or did He, from the foundation of the world, make a wretched and merciless provision for their hopeless, eternal torment, as many of His children claim?” (The Law Of Circularity, J. Preston Eby)

If what Evangelical Christianity teaches about eternal torture is true, then that means that almost every person (well over 95%) who has ever lived will be tortured forever. What does it say

about God if 155,000,000,000 of the 160,000,000,000 people who have ever lived will be tortured forever? Could we call this a victory? Could we still call God all-powerful? Could we still say that God is love? Could we still call Jesus the Savior of the world? NO! NO! NO! NO!

THE HORRIBLE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE IS A SLAP IN THE FACE OF THE LOVE AND POWER OF GOD! This teaching would cause us to come to the conclusion that the saving effort of the Lord Jesus Christ (His death, burial, and resurrection) WAS AN ABSOLUTE FAILURE! We know that Satan was able to deceive Eve, causing Adam to fall, bringing down the entire human race. If the Lord Jesus Christ was only able to save about 3% of the human race, then who would be declared as the winner? Well...SATAN OF COURSE! Most people have never thought about what was just said. They just keep on believing something (eternal torture) that does not glorify God and is not scriptural. BUT THANK GOD THAT THIS HORRIFIC TEACHING IS NOT TRUE!

The scriptures declare to us in 1st Corinthians 15:22-28...that in Adam ALL DIE, even so in Christ shall ALL BE MADE ALIVE. **BUT EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN ORDER...THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL!!!** The power of God's love is eternal! Its glory is supernal! HIS LOVE GOES BEYOND THE HIGHEST STAR...

AND REACHES TO THE LOWEST HELL!



December 26

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#5 - THE MAJORITY OF THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS DID NOT TEACH IT

(The following is an excerpt from: The Power Of Life And Death In A Greek Four Letter Word--Aion, Gary Amirault)

According to Gary Amirault: "Many orthodox Christian historians acknowledge that the majority of the early church did not teach eternal torment. A couple of examples: Geisler- "The belief in the inalienable capability of improvement of all rational beings, and the limited duration of future punishment was so general in the West, and among the opponents of Origen, that it seems entirely independent of his system." (Eccles. Hist., 1-212). (Origen has been accused of bringing into the church the heresy of the salvation of all. Geisler points out the belief was prevalent even apart from Origen's influence.) The German theologian and historian Johann Christoph Doerderlin writes: "In proportion as any man was eminent in learning in Christian antiquity, the more he cherished and defended the hope of the termination of future torments." Professor and historian Henry Oxenham informs us that the, "Doctrine of endless punishment was not believed at all by some of the holiest and wisest of the Fathers, and was not taught as an integral part of the Christian faith by any, even of those who believed it as an opinion." Historian Pfaff says:

“The ultimate restoration of the lost was an opinion held by very many Jewish teachers, and some of the Fathers.” Dietelmaier: “Universalism in the fourth century drove its roots down deeply, alike in the East and West, and had very many defenders.” Reuss: “The doctrine of a general restoration of all rational creatures has been recommended by very many of the greatest thinkers of the ancient church, and of modern times.” (Hist. De la Theol. Apost.). **Prior to Augustine in the 5th century, the vast majority of Christians, including the leadership, believed in the Salvation Of All Mankind through Jesus Christ.** St. Basil the Great (c. 329-379) in his *De Asceticis* wrote: “The mass of men (Christians) say that there is to be an end of punishment to those who are punished.” St. Jerome (342-420): “I know that most understand the story of Nineveh and its King, the ultimate forgiveness of the devil and all rational creatures.” The Christian leader most instrumental in bringing in the damnable heresy of eternal torment, Augustine, admits himself that “There are very many (imo quam plurimi, which can be translated majority) who though not denying the Holy Scriptures do not believe in endless torments.” (*Enchiridia*, ad Laurent. c.29) Imagine, the champion of the doctrine of eternal torment admitting out of his own mouth that as late as the 5th century many or the majority of believers did not believe in eternal torment and he said they did not deny the scriptures in believing so. **Of the six theological schools known to the early church, 4 taught the Salvation Of All, one taught annihilation, and only one taught eternal torment.** The Greek word *aion* was not used to mean eternal in the early church writings. The President of the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople in 381, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, was an outspoken Universalist, that is, he believed in the Salvation Of All Mankind Through Jesus Christ. Would the church designate a heretic as its head at such an important meeting? When Emperor Justinian finally declared the teaching of the Salvation Of All as heresy, he used the word “ateleutetos” to describe “eternal punishment,” not *aionion* which is the Biblical term. If *aionion* meant “eternal” why didn’t he use it? He didn’t because it didn’t mean eternal! Many writings are still preserved from the early Christian bishops which clearly show they did not teach eternal torment. To mention just a few: Clement Alexandrinus, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Ambrose, Titus of Bostra, Diodore of Tarsus, Isidore of Alexandria, Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, etc. When studying the lives of the early leaders, **those embracing the Salvation Of All clearly showed much more love and fruit in their lives than those who taught eternal torment.** Compare Origen and St. Gregory of Nyssa with Tertullian and Cyprian. If the doctrine of the Salvation Of All was heresy, why didn’t the church declare it as such until the church entered the dark ages? **Could it be that when the pagan doctrine of eternal torment entered the church, this very doctrine brought about the gross darkness which the church plunged into?** It was not until the church left the Greek text and went to the Latin Vulgate Text that large numbers began to believe in eternal torment. That was because Jerome mistranslated those very words we have just been talking about. The Latin Vulgate perpetuated the error. As long as the church primarily used the Greek Text, it taught the Salvation Of All Mankind. As late as the 16th century lexicographers such as Phavorinus knew that *aion* was just a time word. But he also noted where the idea of changing the meaning came from. He writes, “*Aion*, time also life, also habit, or way of life. *Aion* is also the eternal and endless as it seems to the theologian.” **Here we see where the deception came from, the theologian!**” (Gary Amirault)

So...If you believe in the Salvation Of All Mankind through Jesus Christ...

YOU ARE IN GOOD COMPANY!

December 27

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#6 - THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THE SALVATION OF ALL MEN

The Bible is the story of the fall and rise of the human race. It depicts all as going into Adam. As well, it depicts all as going into Christ in the dispensation of the fullness of times. Many are not aware that the Bible teaches that the same ALL that went into Adam will eventually go into Christ. As you approach the Bible with this mindset you will begin to see this theme from Genesis to Revelation. The teaching of the salvation of all men (through the Lord Jesus Christ) will literally jump off the pages of the Book (the Bible). It has always been there, but many are not able to see it due to the fact that their consciences have been seared with a hot iron by the teaching of eternal torture. It is difficult to see the truth when we approach the Bible with our minds already made up.

According to Hannah Whitall Smith: Hannah Whitall Smith testified in her book ([The Christian's Secret Of A Happy Life](#)) how that she came to understand this great truth... "Immediately the whole Book seemed to be illuminated. On every page the truth concerning the "times of restitution of all things," of which the apostle Peter says "God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began," shone forth and no room was left for questioning. I turned greedily from page to page of my Bible, fairly laughing aloud for joy at the blaze of light that illuminated it all. It became a new Book. Another skin seemed to have been peeled off every text, and my Bible fairly shone with new meaning. I do not say with a different meaning, for in no sense did the new meaning contradict the old, but a deeper meaning, the true meaning hidden behind the outward form of words. The words did not need to be changed; they only needed to be understood; and now at last I began to understand them." (Hannah Whitall Smith)

There are actually hundreds of scriptures that testify of THIS GREAT TRUTH. Here are a few to consider:

Genesis 12:3 / Genesis 18:18 / Psalm 22:27-29 / Psalm 65:2 / Psalm 66:3,4 / Psalm 72:8-11 / Isaiah 25:7,8 / Isaiah 45:22-25 / Luke 2:10 / John 12:32 / Acts 3:21 / Romans chapter 5 / Romans 11:26-36 / 1st Corinthians 15:22-28 / 2nd Corinthians 5:18-21 / Ephesians 1:9-11 / Philippians 2:10,11 / Colossians 1:16-20...

KEEP DIGGING!

YOU WILL FIND HUNDREDS MORE!



December 28

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#7 - IT POINTS TO A VICTORIOUS DEVIL,
AND TO SIN AS FINALLY TRIUMPHANT OVER GOD

According to Thomas Allin: "THE question of Universalism is usually argued on a basis altogether misleading, i.e., as though the point involved was chiefly, or wholly, man's endless suffering. Odious and repulsive to every moral instinct, as is that dogma, it is not the turning point of this controversy. **The vital question is this, that the popular creed by teaching the perpetuity of evil, points to a victorious Devil, and to sin as finally triumphant over God.** It makes the corrupt, nay, the bestial in our fallen nature to be eternal. It represents what is foulest and most loathsome in man, i.e., the most obstinate sin as being enduring as God Himself. It confers the dignity of immortal life on what is morally abominable. It teaches perpetual Anarchy, and a final Chaos. It enthrones Pandemonium as an eternal fact side by side with Paradise; and, gazing over its fetid and obscene abysses, is not afraid to call this the triumph of Jesus Christ, this the realization of the promise that God shall be "All in All" (Christ Triumphant, Thomas Allin)

Could we come to any other possible conclusion than this? How could it be said that God is victorious over the Devil, sin, death, hell, and evil if the majority of all the people ever born will never be delivered from these vices? How can these things co-exist as long as God Himself in light of the plain declaration of scripture that declares that **God shall be all in all (everything to everyone)**? We would be left with no other conclusion than to declare evil as victorious over good. THE POWERS OF DARKNESS WOULD BE ABLE TO FOREVER GLOAT DUE TO THEIR VICTORY! They would be able to claim that they were able to take over 97% of God's creation, bringing them into an eternal nightmare of torture.

SEARCH YOUR HEART! SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES! If you are honest with yourself and the scriptures you will surely begin to see the ABSOLUTE STUPIDITY of the teaching of eternal torture. THERE IS NO WAY TO DECLARE THAT GOD IS BOTH ALL IN ALL AND THE GOD OF ETERNAL TORTURE AS WELL. These two thoughts drastically oppose one another. It is not possible for both of these statements to be true. Either the apostle Paul was lying when he said that God would be all in all (1st Corinthians 15:28), or Evangelical Christianity is lying in declaring that the vast majority of the human race will be tortured forever. I would rather believe the inspired words of the apostle Paul than to side with the lie of Evangelical Christianity. If this teaching (eternal torture) is a lie, which it is, then we should reject it no matter how many people believe it.

THAT SETTLES IT!



December 29

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#8 - ETERNAL TORTURE IS UNJUST!

THE PUNISHMENT DOES NOT FIT THE CRIME!

According to George Hawtin: The following words by George Hawtin are most challenging: “The established visible church has preached its multiplied sermons seeking to prove its tradition that the vast majority of God’s human creation will be LOST, finally, irrevocably, and eternally, and not only will they be lost to God forever and ever, but they will be given up to the most sadistic, inhuman, ungodly torments that could be devised only by the vilest fiends. According to the tradition of the church this hellish torment is to fall upon all who do not believe. It matters not a whit whether they had opportunity to believe or not. It matters not at all if they were born in the darkest jungles of Africa, the swamps of Borneo, or the deserts of India or China. The fact that they never heard there was a God will be no excuse whatever. The fact that they never heard that God had a Son will not impede their dreadful destruction. Heathen who never heard that God had a Son are, according to this teaching, faced with the same dreadful doom as men who heard the gospel from their birth and yet rejected it. To add to the stupidity of their teaching they make pitiful attempts to prove that this is the justice of God and that God is manifesting His love in the punishment of sin. The doctrine of eternal punishment is based on a literal interpretation of some of the metaphors of scripture, to the complete neglect of many other scriptures. No doctrine has ever been propounded with more confidence and greater bitterness nor with a grossness and coarseness more hideous and repugnant, and, in the face of the love and kindness of God, more inconceivable and incredible.” -end quote (According To The Purpose, George Hawtin)

To eternally punish a person for 70, 80, or even 100 years of crimes (sins) is an UNJUST PUNISHMENT. Not only is it unjust, but it is INSANE! Not only is it unjust and insane, but it is also a punishment that WOULD NEVER SERVE ANY PURPOSE other than to be **vindictive, spiteful, and barbaric in nature**.

The scriptures teach that THE JUSTICE OF GOD IS FOR THE SINNER, INSURING HIS SALVATION, NOT AGAINST HIM, DEMANDING HIS CONDEMNATION. Exodus 22:5 states...If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man’s field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution...This law, when applied spiritually to the entire creation, makes God responsible to make a restitution of all things, FOR GOD MADE THE BEAST (THE SERPENT OF GENESIS 3:1), setting him in the field (the Garden of Eden, the world, or the beast nature that is in man) to feed (devour). This is why God was responsible to send the best of His own vineyard (His only begotten Son) to make a restitution of all things (Acts 3:21).

IT WOULD BE UNJUST FOR GOD TO ETERNALLY TORTURE THE VERY HUMAN BEINGS THAT HE CREATED! IT WOULD BE UNJUST ACCORDING TO HIS OWN LAW (Exodus 22:5)! It would especially be unjust due to the fact that God created all things (good and evil) and subjected the creation to vanity (**not willingly**). As a result of this we are all born with a nature (the sin nature) that is contrary to the nature of God. This does not mean that man is not

accountable to God for his actions, but it surely does mean that it would be extremely unjust for God to torture him (man) forever.

THANK GOD FOR HIS JUSTICE!



December 30

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#9 - IT PRODUCES IMMATURE CONVERTS WHO ARE MOTIVATED TO SERVE GOD OUT OF FEAR RATHER THAN LOVE

The false teaching of eternal torture is a message of fear. IT IS NOT ONE OF LOVE! Not only is that teaching a message of fear, but it breeds fear in the lives of all who embrace it. In other words, it causes a person to continually live in fear of eternal torture at all times. I guess you could call it...“the good news of fear”...It is ironic, but nevertheless, Christianity refers to their message as good news. How could it be good news to tell someone...You better get right or God is going to torture you forever??? HOW IS THAT GOOD NEWS? WELL...IT’S NOT! IT IS BAD NEWS! IT IS VERY BAD NEWS! IT IS NOT THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! IT MAY BE THE GOSPEL OF CHRISTIANITY, BUT ONCE AGAIN, IT IS NOT THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST!

The Bible does speak of the “fear of the Lord”, but this “fear” pertains to a reverence and awe for God, not a fear of being tortured forever. 2nd Timothy speaks of the fear that Evangelical Christianity promotes. It is referred to as “the spirit of fear”. 2nd Timothy 1:7 states...For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind...Does the teaching of eternal torture produce power, love, and a sound mind? NO! IT PRODUCES WEAKNESS, HATE, AND CONFUSION. Modern day Christianity could be characterized as weak, hateful, and confusing. It is unfortunate to have to say these things, but nevertheless, they are true.

Now...Are you ready for some GOOD NEWS? 1st John 4:18,19 states...There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us...THIS IS THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! Jesus did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. He did not come to bring condemnation, but to bring redemption. He did not come to bring hate, but love. He is not the author of eternal torture, but of eternal salvation.

Man must understand that he was born (placed) into vanity, a perished condition, and death (the carnal mind). When the scriptures declare that God is not willing that any should perish, it is this that is being spoken of. He is not willing that any should remain in their fallen condition. IT IS THIS CONDITION THAT HE CAME TO SAVE US OUT OF. As we come to understand this, we should not serve Him because we are afraid of eternal torture, BUT BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US, SAVED US, FORGAVE US, AND DELIVERED US FROM...

THE WAGES OF SIN!

December 31

TEN REASONS NOT TO BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE

#10 - THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, NOT ETERNAL TORTURE!

It is AMAZING that the majority of Christians continue to teach eternal torture. This is done despite what the Bible teaches about the **love** of God. Romans 6:23 states...For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord...I thought that the wages of sin was eternal torture? Well...Isn't it? That is what Evangelical Christianity teaches...doesn't it?

Preachers have gotten so comfortable with teaching eternal torture that they do not even use the scriptures to do so. When they do use the scriptures, they quote a scripture and then teach something else that does not line up with the scripture that they just quoted. For example, how many times have you heard someone use Romans 6:23 (the wages of sin is death) to support their belief in eternal torture. This scripture has nothing to do with being tortured in a literal hell or flying off to a mansion in the sky after you die. People have become masters at TWISTING SCRIPTURES TO MAKE THEM FIT THEIR DOCTRINAL BELIEFS. Someone who is interested in rightly dividing the Word of truth will not do that. The correct approach is to use the Holy Scriptures as the guideline for forming correct and proper doctrinal beliefs, not trying to make the scriptures fit your doctrinal beliefs.

If the wages of sin is eternal torture, then Jesus would have to be eternally tortured to pay the price for the sin of the world. THIS ONE THOUGHT IN AND OF ITSELF IS PROOF THAT THE TEACHING OF ETERNAL TORTURE IS A LIE! If the wages of sin is death, then Jesus did pay the price for the sin of the world in being made flesh, overcoming all things, dying on the cross, and being raised again on the third day. He experienced the spiritual aspect of death (the carnal mind) and the physical aspect of death (His crucifixion).

Thank God that the wages of sin is not eternal torture, for if it were then our Lord Himself would need to be tortured forever in order to deliver the human race. Can you begin to see how ridiculous that teaching (eternal torture) is?

In conclusion, let us summarize the reasons that the teaching of eternal torture is to be discarded as false...It is not true.../ The Bible does not teach it.../ It goes against the character and nature of God.../ It declares the cross of Jesus Christ as a failure.../ The majority of the early church did not teach it.../ The scriptures teach the salvation of all men.../ It points to a victorious Devil, and to sin as triumphant over God.../ It is unjust.../ It produces immature converts who are motivated to serve God out of fear rather than love.../ The wages of sin is death, not eternal torture...

It has been my privilege to serve all who have taken the time to read this daily devotional. May the Father give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him! Remember...GOD IS LOVE! HE LOVES ALL! GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL! HE CANNOT FAIL! HE WILL NOT FAIL! HE IS...

THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD!

Thomas Kissinger

The following people are quoted in this daily devotional. The days on which they are quoted are listed after their name. If the quote came from a specific book, article, or work it is listed after the quote.

Abbott, Louis: April 2, September 3, November 27
Adams, A. P.: January 15, March 17, 19, April 2, September 9, 10, 23, October 2, November 28
Addair, George: February 21, September 24, October 3
Allen, Dr.: August 5
Allin, Thomas: January 2, 12, December 28
Amirault, Gary: January 20, 22, February 6, March 21, April 15, June 10, August 4, 7, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, November 29, December 6, 26
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Burgess, Robert: July 21
Burrows, Millar: June 11
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Campbell, Dr.: August 6
Chapman, Dr.: August 5
Clarke, Dr. Adam: August 3
Clement of Alexandria: January 2
Coverdale, Miles: March 25, June 11
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Fox, Emmet: May 20
Gavazzoni, John: April 10, September 29, November 10
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Stuart, Prof.: August 5
Telford, Andrew: September 27, 28
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Thayer, Thomas B.: November 5
Universalist Christian's Association: June 19
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