



HELL: ETERNAL TORMENT OR SECOND DEATH?

By George Lujack

There are two prevailing Scripture-based beliefs concerning the everlasting destiny of condemned sinners: eternal torment in hellfire or the second death. This article will examine and present both possibilities and argue that condemned sinners will ultimately cease to exist and die a second death in hell. Satan and the demons will be tormented forever in hell prison.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

The theological belief in hell as a fiery place of eternal torment, where unrepentant sinners will be judged to burn in a lake of fire and flames forever, comes primarily from a parable that Yeshua (Jesus) told.

LUKE 16:19-31 (NKJV):

“There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

“Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’

“Then he said, ‘I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father’s house, for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ Abraham said to him, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ But he said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.’”

parable:

A simple *story* used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Yeshua (Jesus) in the gospels.¹

MATTHEW 13:10-11 (NKJV):

And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

He answered and said to them, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given...”

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus should not be viewed as a literal account in every detail, but as a story told to illustrate a spiritual lesson. Yeshua (Jesus) was asked why He spoke in parables by His disciples and He explained that it was to withhold the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven from the multitudes (Matthew 13:2-11).

PROVERBS 25:2 (NKJV):

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings* is to search out a matter.

*And wise men.

God reveals His mysteries to those who earnestly seek them, in spirit and truth, and will later on reveal His truths plainly to all humanity.

The lesson that Yeshua (Jesus) imparted from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus was that if people would not listen to Moses and the prophets, to repent and obey the commandments, then they would likewise not listen to one (Himself) even if He were to rise from the dead (Luke 16:31).

Yeshua (Jesus) said that He did not come to destroy the law, but came to fulfill the prophets prophecies of the Messiah who would suffer and die to atone for the sins of mankind. (Matthew 5:17). Those who turn away from hearing the law, even their prayers are an abomination (Proverbs 28:9).

Yeshua (Jesus) illustrates in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus that people would not be persuaded to believe in God and live righteously, even if one (Himself) were to rise from the dead. Evidence of God already exists and we should listen to Moses and the prophets, repent, keep the law, and live righteously.

The following reasons are why the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, concerning torment in hell, should not be considered literal:

1. Yeshua (Jesus) stated, “No one has ascended to heaven” (John 3:13). H-22 Abraham therefore is not in heaven, but is in the grave awaiting the resurrection, as are all men who have died (John 11:24).
2. Abraham is not a giant kangaroo with a pouch to hold the righteous dead near his chest. When righteous people die they do not get carried away by storks (or angels) and then get dropped off in Abraham’s bosom (Luke 16:22). H-24 “In Abraham’s bosom,” of course, is a metaphor meaning, “in Abraham’s company.” Similar metaphors to describe close friends are “bosom buddies” and friends who are “joined at the hip.”
3. If the rich man were flesh and blood, constantly being burned and regenerated so as to be continually burned and tormented eternally, H-26 then a drop of water on the tip of Lazarus’ finger brought to the rich man’s tongue wouldn’t do anything to relieve his torment from the flames (Luke 16:24).
4. In the very parable itself, Abraham says, “between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us” (Luke 16:26). There is a great gulf that exists between the living and the dead. We cannot communicate with the dead. There is also no communication between those in God’s kingdom and those condemned to hell. Believers dwelling in God’s kingdom will not be communicating with people condemned to hell. Those condemned to hell will die and be forgotten (Ecclesiastes 9:5).

MARK 9:43-48 (NKJV):

“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, TO GO TO HELL, INTO THE FIRE THAT SHALL NEVER BE QUENCHED – WHERE ‘THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.’

And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, TO BE CAST INTO HELL, INTO THE FIRE THAT SHALL NEVER BE QUENCHED – WHERE ‘THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.’

And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire – WHERE ‘THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED.’”

Many have misunderstood Mark 9:43-48 to mean that people who are cast into hell will be kept alive; that worms will continually feed off their flesh and they will be tortured eternally with fire that will not burn out. Yeshua (Jesus) is once again speaking in descriptive figurative language in Mark 9, referring to Scripture prophesy of Isaiah 66.

ISAIAH 66:23-24 (NKJV) [CONDENSED WITH INTERPRETATION]:

For as the new heavens and the new earth, says YHWH (the Lord), “It shall come to pass that ... all flesh shall come and worship before Me,” says YHWH (the Lord).

“And they shall go forth and look upon the CORPSES OF THE MEN who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their [HELL] fire [GRAVE] is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

Those cast into hell will be corpses, dead bodies, not eternally tormented sinners kept alive for immortal worms to eat and for fire to burn in everlasting torment. The reason their worms will not die is because after the worms (maggots) consume the flesh of the decomposing corpses, they will transform into flies and fly away.

THE CORRUPT HUMAN SOUL MUST BE MADE INCORRUPTIBLE BEFORE THE MORTAL HUMAN SOUL TAKES ON IMMORTALITY

destroy:

Put an end to the existence of (something) by damaging or attacking it.²

death:

The action or fact of dying or being killed; the end of the life of a person or organism.³

GENESIS 2:16-17 (NKJV):

YHWH (the Lord) God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely DIE.”

Satan’s original lie, that we really don’t die when we die, continues to be believed by the multitudes to this day. Most people generally believe that the soul does not die, but instead goes to straight to heaven, H-36 or that the soul will be judged to hell and live in eternal torment there immediately after the death of the body. Death is the cessation of life, not the instantaneous continuation of life in soul-spirit form.

PROVERBS 19:16 (NKJV):

He who keeps the commandment KEEPS HIS SOUL; but he who is careless of his ways will DIE.

EZEKIEL 18:4,20 (NKJV):

The SOUL who sins shall DIE.

CONDEMNED UNREPENTANT SINNERS WILL BE DESTROYED,
CAST INTO HELL, AND DIE; HELL IS A PLACE OF DEATH FOR
HUMANITY

PSALM 55:15 (NKJV):

Let DEATH seize them; let them go down alive into HELL.

PROVERBS 5:3-5 (NKJV):

For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil, but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to DEATH; her steps lay hold of HELL.

PROVERBS 7:27 (NKJV):

Her house is the way to HELL, descending to the chambers of DEATH.

PROVERBS 9:18 (NKJV):

But he does not know that the DEAD are there, that her guests are in the depths of HELL.

PROVERBS 15:9-11 (NKJV):

The way of the wicked is an abomination to YHWH (the Lord), but He loves him who follows righteousness. Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, and he who hates correction will DIE. HELL and DESTRUCTION are before YHWH (the Lord).

PROVERBS 15:24 (NKJV):

The way of LIFE winds upwards for the wise, that he may turn away from HELL below.

ISAIAH 14:9 (NKJV):

HELL from beneath is excited about you, to meet you at your coming. It stirs up the DEAD for you.

MATTHEW 10:28 (NKJV):

“Do not fear those who KILL the body but cannot KILL the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY in hell.”

LUKE 12:4-5 (NKJV):

“And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, *after* HE HAS KILLED, has power to cast into HELL; yes, I say to you, fear Him!”

THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE MARK OF THE BEAST WILL BE JUDGED IN THE FLESH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

REVELATION 14:9-11 (NKJV):

Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be **TORMENTED** with **FIRE AND BRIMSTONE** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their **TORMENT** ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

Many have read and misunderstood Revelation 14:9-11 to mean that anyone who receives the mark of the beast will be cast into hell and be tormented there forever. This is not actually the case. Whoever receives the mark will be tormented on Earth, through the judgment of the Lamb (Yeshua / Jesus).

Those who receive the mark will be judged on Earth, through various fire and sulfur plagues (nuclear annihilations carried out by the Antichrist and other world armies). The smoke of the torment of the earthly flesh and blood bodies of those who have received the mark, after being incinerated, will ascend forever.

CONDEMNED UNREPENTANT SINNERS WHO ARE CAST INTO HELL WILL BE BURNED UP AND WILL DIE THE SECOND DEATH

REVELATION 2:11 (NKJV):

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies (churches). He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the SECOND DEATH.”

REVELATION 20:6 (NKJV):

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the SECOND DEATH has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Messiah (Christ), and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

REVELATION 20:14-15 (NKJV):

This is the SECOND DEATH. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

REVELATION 21:8 (NKJV):

“But the cowardly, unbelieving, untrustworthy, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, drug sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the SECOND DEATH.”

The second death awaits condemned unrepentant sinners, not eternal torment in a torture chamber known as hell. Condemned unrepentant sinners will have died the first death in their flesh and blood bodies, and then in judgment their bodies and souls will be thrown into hell where they will die the second death.

SATAN WILL BE BOUND FOR ONE THOUSAND YEARS IN HELL PRISON, RELEASED, AND WILL THEN BE CAST INTO HELL PRISON FOREVER. SATAN AND THE DEMONS WILL NOT DIE THE SECOND DEATH

torment:
severe physical or mental suffering.⁴

REVELATION 19:19-21 (NKJV) [WITH INTERPRETATION]:

And I saw the beast [ANTIMESSIAH (ANTICHRIST)], the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast [ANTIMESSIAH (ANTICHRIST)] was captured, and with him the false prophet [FINAL CATHOLIC POPE] who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two [THE ANTIMESSIAH (ANTICHRIST) AND FALSE PROPHET] were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone [AND WERE KILLED]. And the rest [OF THE WORLD'S ARMIES] were killed* with the sword, which proceeded from the mouth of Him [YESHUA (JESUS)] who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their [THE CORPSES OF THE WORLD'S ARMIES] flesh.

**And the rest were killed (Revelation 19:21) indicates that the Antimesiah (Antichrist) and the false prophet were killed after being cast alive into the lake of fire, as were the rest of the world's armies who were also killed.*

REVELATION 20:1-3 (NKJV):

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Satan, as a spirit being, will not die when he is cast into hell and he will reemerge from the bottomless pit, hell, after the Millennium Kingdom reign of Messiah (Christ). The Antimesiah (Antichrist) and the false prophet (final Catholic pope), as human beings cast alive into hell, will die and will not reemerge from hell with Satan after the Millennium Kingdom reign of Messiah (Christ).

REVELATION 20:7-10 (NKJV) [WITH INTERPRETATION]:

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his PRISON and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the [REMAINS OF THE] beast [ANTIMESSIAH (ANTICHRIST)] and the false prophet [FINAL CATHOLIC POPE] are. And they [THE DEVIL AND THE DEMONS] will be TORMENTED day and night FOREVER AND EVER.

SATAN WILL NOT RULE IN HELL; HE WILL BE HELL'S PRISONER

JUDE 1:6 (NKJV):

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in EVERLASTING CHAINS UNDER DARKNESS for the judgment of the great day.

Satan will be imprisoned during the thousand year Millennial Kingdom reign of Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), and after the thousand years he will be released to deceive the nations in one final rebellion against God. After the final rebellion, Satan will be confined to hell prison forever. Satan and the demons will not be killed, but will be imprisoned and mentally tormented, as they will mentally torment each other forever in hell. As spirit beings, the flames of hell will not torture the spirit bodies of Satan and the demons, but being confined to a dark prison for eternity will be mental torment for them forever and ever. The remains of the beast (Antimesiah / Antichrist), false prophet (final Catholic pope), and all condemned sinners will be in hell with Satan and the demons, but they will not be in torment, as they will have died the second death.

WHY DOESN'T GOD KILL SATAN?

A theological question arises as to why God doesn't kill Satan and the demons in hell, as He will judge condemned unrepentant human sinners to the second death hell.

LUKE 20:35-36:

“But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; NOR CAN THEY DIE ANYMORE for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

God granted Satan and the angels eternal life *before* they rebelled against Him. Since God is holy, once He gives His word, He keeps it.

TITUS 1:2 (NKJV – CONDENSED):

God ... cannot lie.

God can do all things and He is capable of killing Satan, but He will not kill Satan. Why? God is holy. God's holiness takes precedence over God's mercifulness. God cannot kill Satan and the angels, who became demons, without breaking His promise of granting Satan and the angels eternal life *before* they rebelled. The angels, who became demons, were promised eternal life by God, and thus cannot die. If God killed Satan and the demons He would have to break His promise of eternal life to them and then He would not be holy. Therefore, God will imprison Satan and the demons in hell forever instead of judging them to eternal death, keep His holiness, while executing judgment against Satan and the demons, as mercifully as possible.

GOD DESTROYED ALL LIFE ON EARTH WITH A GLOBAL FLOOD

An analogy can be made with the promise of God to never again destroy life on Earth *by the waters of a flood*. God promised to never again destroy the earth *by flood*, but God did not promise to never destroy the earth *by fire*.

GENESIS 7:4 (NKJV):

“I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.”

GOD PROMISED TO NEVER AGAIN DESTROY THE EARTH WITH A GLOBAL FLOOD

GENESIS 9:11 (NKJV):

“Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off BY THE WATERS OF THE FLOOD; never again shall there be A FLOOD TO DESTROY THE EARTH.”

GOD HAS PROCLAIMED THAT THE EARTH WILL BE DESTROYED BY FIRE IN JUDGMENT, THEN RESTORED AS A NEW EARTH

2 PETER 3:7 (NKJV):

The heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are RESERVED FOR FIRE until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

REVELATION 21:1 (NKJV):

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

Satan will be bound in hell prison for a thousand years, released for a while, and then will be bound once again in hell prison with the demons for all eternity. Scripture proclaims that Satan and the demons will be *tormented* forever, but this does not mean that they will be burning in agonizing searing torture forever. Being bound in a spirit hell prison in everlasting chains under darkness forever will be their torment. Satan and the demons do not exist in flesh and blood bodies that are capable of burning in agonizing pain. God is merciful and therefore He will neither burn mankind nor Satan and the demons in a perpetual state of unthinkable agonizing physical torture for all eternity, but He will imprison Satan and the demons forever.

WHERE IS HELL?

The center of the Earth, the Earth's core, is where hell is located. Earth's core is dark and hot, estimated to be 5,430 °C (9,800 °F), as hot as the surface of the Sun. Earth's center core has no bottom, and thus it is referred to as the bottomless pit.

Journey to the Center of the Earth? That might make for a good Hollywood sci-fi movie, conjured up by the imagination of novelist Jules Verne, but in reality you don't want to go there.

JOB 28:5 (NKJV):

As for the earth, from it comes bread, but underneath it is turned up as by fire.

Planet Earth's core turns up fire continually. The Earth's core, the fires of hell, will burn eternally, just as God has lit countless stars throughout the universe that burn without quenching. The corpses of condemned sinners will be cast into the center of the Earth, where the fire of hell is never quenched.

PSALM 55:15 (NKJV):

Let death seize them; let them GO DOWN alive into hell.

PROVERBS 5:3-5 (NKJV):

For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil, but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet GO DOWN to death; her steps lay hold of hell.

PROVERBS 7:27 (NKJV):

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

PROVERBS 9:18 (NKJV):

But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are IN THE DEPTHS of hell.

PROVERBS 15:24 (NKJV):

The way of life winds UPWARDS for the wise, that he may turn away from hell BELOW.

ISAIAH 14:9 (NKJV):

Hell FROM BENEATH is excited about you, to meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you, ...

REVELATION 20:1-3 (NKJV):

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the BOTTOMLESS PIT and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the BOTTOMLESS PIT, ...

EARTH IS YESHUA'S (JESUS') FOOTSTOOL

ISAIAH 66:1 (NKJV):

Thus says YHWH (the Lord): Heaven is My throne and earth is My footstool.

When the Earth is burned in the day of judgment of ungodly men (2 Peter 3:7), the Earth and all unrepentant sinners will be burned in judgment and their remains will afterward be swept and absorbed into earth's core. The Earth is Yeshua's (Jesus') footstool, and when His enemies: Satan, the demons, Antimesiah (Antichrist), the false prophet, and all unrepentant sinners are cast into hell (Earth's core), then it will come to pass that His enemies will be made to be His footstool. Yeshua (Jesus) will literally be walking over His enemies in hell (Earth's core) when walking on the new restored earth, for all time.

HELL, THE EARTH'S CORE, IS YESHUA'S (JESUS') FOOTSTOOL

PSALM 110:1 (NKJV) [WITH INTERPRETATION]:

YHWH (The Lord) [GOD THE FATHER] said to my Master (Lord) [YESHUA (JESUS)], "Sit at My [GOD THE FATHER'S] right hand, till I [GOD THE FATHER] make Your [YESHUA'S (JESUS')] enemies Your footstool."

*See also: Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:43; Acts 2:35; Hebrews 1:13, 10:13.

GOD IS JUST AND MERCIFUL

torture:

The action or practice of inflicting severe pain on someone as a punishment or to force them to do or say something, or for the pleasure of the person inflicting the pain.⁵

EZEKIEL 18:32, 33:11 (NKJV):

“For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says YHWH (the Lord) GOD. “Therefore turn and live!”

...

“As I live,” says YHWH (the Lord) GOD, “I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die...?”

PSALM 116:5 (NKJV):

Gracious is YHWH (the Lord), and righteous; yes, our God is merciful.

*See also: Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 4:31; 2 Chronicles 30:9; Nehemiah 9:17,31; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Hebrews 2:17).

Our God is a merciful God, not a torturer. Torture is evil and sadistic. God is not one who receives pleasure from torture. God, in His mercy, will not keep condemned mankind alive and burning in unimaginable torture for eternity. God will have mercy on condemned humanity by destroying them in the second death and putting unrepentant sinners out of their misery forever. God is holy and He keeps His word, therefore, having granted angels who became demons eternal life, He will not kill them in judgment. God will not even inflict torture on Satan and the demons, who surely deserve it, but will keep them imprisoned forever. Satan and the demons will torment each other for eternity. Hell is the place of eternal death for the beast (Antimesiah / Antichrist), the false prophet (final Catholic pope), and all condemned mankind. Hell is the eternal prison for Satan and the demons.

¹ Oxford Dictionaries, ‘parable,’ Oxford University Press,
< http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/parable >.

² Oxford Dictionaries, ‘destroy,’ Oxford University Press,
< http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/destroy >.

³ Oxford Dictionaries, ‘death,’ Oxford University Press,
< http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/death >.

⁴ Oxford Dictionaries, ‘torment,’ Oxford University Press,
< http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/torment >.

⁵ Oxford Dictionaries, ‘torture,’ Oxford University Press,
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