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Holiness Writers

ENDLESS RETRIBUTION

By

H. H. Hooker

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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Author of
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DEDICATION

To the ministry who yet believe the Bible from the beginning to the end, is this booklet sincerely dedicated by the **AUTHOR**.

FOREWORD

This is perhaps the most solemn doctrine of the whole system of Christian theology. It has been assailed from every side by many groups of people, some of whom are as much opposed to every other doctrine as they as a whole are to this doctrine. Shall we cease to preach and teach a doctrine because it is repugnant to the feeling and thinking of certain classes? If so, we shall cease to preach and teach every cardinal doctrine of our glorious Christianity. In spite of the attacks of its enemies, this doctrine like all others in the Christian system stands impregnable.

It is not our purpose to present an exhaustive treatment of this subject, but to present the truth in simple language understandable to the masses. It has been said that any doctrine neglected as long as a decade becomes lost to the church and the world. This was true of the doctrine of justification by faith which was restored by the Reformation headed by Martin Luther. The same can be said of the doctrine of sanctification by faith which was restored in the mighty revival under John and Charles Wesley.

We send forth this little message hoping that it may make a contribution toward awakening the laity to demand of the ministry more definite and often preaching on this basic doctrine which Jesus had as much to say about as He did repentance, the new birth, or heaven, and which the Holy Spirit has always blessed to the salvation of souls. If this is accomplished the goal will have been reached and the writer will have been paid.

THE AUTHOR

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INTRODUCTION

The author has given to the public, in this booklet, a logical and biblical treatise on "Endless Retribution." He states that it is a neglected theme, and all the reader has to do to agree with him on that point, is to recall when he has heard a sermon on this truth, or read an article which would prove that there is such a doctrine taught in God's Word. He will see that he has heard or read very little which would establish such teachings. Why this is neglected we do not altogether know, unless modernistic teaching is against it as well as there are several movements which are very progressive in spreading their propaganda against everlasting punishment by the printed page, radio, pulpit, and other places of public meetings, and the average preacher does not have enough moral courage to try to counteract such teaching. It is to be hoped that this volume will create more interest and study and give courage to many to give to the public something on this needful theme.

The scrutinizing critic may question the quotation from the book of Job and will be ready to say that Bildad, who made such a statement was not inspired, therefore the writer is giving to the public a statement from one who is not inspired. It should be well understood that the Holy Spirit inspired the sacred writer to record what Bildad said, and there was a purpose in recording it. Bildad spoke that which is a truth, but misapplied it. His conclusion was wrong, he concluded that Job was a sinner and applied it to Job as such. The statement is true, and is applicable to a sinner as is used in this booklet.

The public should read this publication in the same spirit and purpose for which it is written. I have known the author for a number of years and know him to be a sincere, conscientious and earnest preacher of the gospel. He has given this subject with many other Bible subjects thorough study. I take pleasure in recommending this booklet to the reading public, and hope that it will be read by many thousands. Let those of us who feel that it should prove a blessing to many help send it forth invoking the blessings of God upon it.

C. E. HARDY

ENDLESS RETRIBUTION

By
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CHAPTER I

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25:46.

"And if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." Eccl. 11:3.

Everything seems to have its antithesis. This is seen in both the spiritual and material realms. Some that are seen in the universe were made by God, and others were not by Divine fiat. Some of the opposites well known to man are God against Satan, holiness against sin, virtue against vice, joy against sorrow, and heaven against hell.

The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew deals with some important biblical antitheses. First there is the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, in which both their preparation and destinies are contrasted. Following this is the parable of the servants, two of whom were faithful and the third unfaithful. The antithesis is seen in their destinies. The faithful ones received commendation and were welcomed into the eternal joys of their Lord, while the unfaithful one was condemned and cast into outer darkness where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. The last scene given in the chapter is the final judgment and the nations of the earth standing before the judge, the righteous on His right hand and the wicked on the left. The judgment revealed the contrast in their living. The righteous fed the hungry, gave water to the thirsty, visited the sick and imprisoned, clothed the naked and took in strangers. The other class were so taken up with pleasure that they had no time to visit the sick and imprisoned; they were too selfish to make a sacrifice to clothe the naked and feed the hungry; and, too, they could not afford the inconvenience of taking strangers into their homes. The contrast is further shown in their places of destiny for Jesus said that in doing this, or failing to do so, it was for or against Him. His condemnation of their failure was in contrast to His commendation of the faithful as He said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

First, I believe in endless retribution because it is the utterance of Jesus Christ. He, who was born in a manger, suffered agony in the garden, endured the scoffing in the judgment hall and bore the sins of the world on the cross, announced this appalling truth. He, who preached eternal life for the righteous, proclaimed eternal death and punishment for the wicked; He, whose life was blameless and whose heart beat with loving compassion for lost men and who endured the greatest suffering for them, said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." If what He said about destiny be not true, what He said about the virgins is not true, what He said about the servants is not true; what He said concerning the judgment is not accurate; what He has declared about heaven cannot be depended upon; and what He said about repentance and the New Birth cannot be relied upon. To discard this doctrine of endless retribution is to raise a question regarding all other doctrines of Christianity and to destroy the only hope of humanity.

The Gospel is as a two-edged sword, it liberates from sin all who yield to it and is a repelling force to all who reject it; it is a fire which refines the heart of those who accept but it becomes a fire of condemnation to those who reject it. The Gospel blesses the saint, but at the same time has a tone of authority in reproving the soul not in harmony with God. It is bread to the hungry child of God and an arrow to the heart that is not right with God. The same Gospel that pictures a beautiful heaven also depicts an awful hell. If I would not preach what the Bible says about hell then I could not preach definitely what it says about heaven; if I do not believe what it says about hell then I raise a question about the authority of all its statements. To be consistent, I would take the Bible from my home, forbid my children to read it and I would start out, like Voltaire of France and Ingersoll of America, to destroy it. In the place of writing on the mistakes of Moses, like Ingersoll, I would write and lecture on the mistakes of any person that would have a Bible in his home, or read it, or allow the children to read it.

Jesus the man of sorrows and the One who was acquainted with grief, the loving Son of God, the man of Galilee, whose heart throbbed with compassion for lost men, used the same words, in the same shade of meaning, to describe both the eternal punishment of the wicked and the eternal bliss of the righteous. If hell ends, then heaven will end; if heaven, inhabited by joyful redeemed souls, lasts forever, then hell filled with despondent damned souls, will continue forever. Hell is eternal, or the Bible is untrue and its language does not mean anything.

The main argument against this doctrine is that it would be unjust to punish a soul forever. Time is not a factor in the case. Perhaps it took the kidnapper, or kidnappers, of the Lindbergh baby a short time to steal it from its crib and the care of its parents and to murder it, but who would dare say that a punishment of a same length of time, as it took to commit this awful deed, would be sufficient for the crime. No, they sinned not only against Charles Lindbergh, Jr., and his noble parents, but also against all society, against all fathers and mothers and against God. All people rise to say that people guilty of such a terrible crime would not be unduly punished by life imprisonment in a strong penitentiary or even death in the electric chair. Society demands that such fiends be brought to judgment and punished for a much longer duration of time than it took to commit the crime.

The kidnappers of Charles Lindbergh, Jr., have not treated him and his parents as cruelly as the person treats God, when he rejects Jesus Christ and lives in rebellion to His will. A person who does this would do so despite the love of God and crucify Christ afresh. Paul taught this in the words "He even that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing." Surely, if the person, or persons, who sinned against society by kidnapping the Lindbergh baby deserve and inherit punishment for the rest of their lives, people who reject Jesus Christ and live in rebellion to His teaching, merit and deserve eternal punishment. Every man who is damned is self damned and that not because of God, but in spite of all a good God, a loving and compassionate Savior and a wooing Holy Ghost could do to save him from such a fate.

If a person can be found that God has not loved, or one for whom Christ did not die, or one with whom the Holy Spirit has not striven, then such a person could say that eternal punishment would be unjust for him. But such a person cannot be found, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation

hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Grace has appeared to all men, so God is no more responsible for a person going to hell than the judge is for the criminal going to the penitentiary. In the administration of justice the law of man declares that if a person commits a certain crime a life's sentence in the penitentiary would be the penalty. Knowing this the individual committed the crime, and since no sacrifice had been made to atone for the broken law, the execution of the law must be carried out. But after God, in His law, had plainly declared that the soul that sinneth shall surely die, then the maker of the divine law gave His Son to provide atonement for the broken law in order for the prisoner to escape the inevitable penalty. Also He sent His servants to warn and entreat men to take advantage of this provision. Now a man who sins willfully, knowing the penalty, and also refusing the sacrifice that Jesus made to atone for his sins, chooses sin and hell of his own volition. Thus choosing to go to this place of punishment and rejecting all efforts and methods used to prevent him, man cannot object to the eternity of punishment that awaits him.

Like Judas, when he dies he will go to his own place. Why call it "his own place"? A person who allies himself with the devil is not only his servant, but also his child. Jesus said of one class, "Ye are of your father, the devil, and his will ye do." A child is an heir of all his father possesses. Hell is a place prepared for the devil and his angels, and since a sinner is a child of the devil, hell belongs to him as much as it does to the devil, so in dying a sinner goes to "his own place." He goes to hell because it is the only place suited to his nature. He selected his own place and may have felt the atmosphere of it in this life. A wicked young man died in Alabama some years ago. A friend of mine who witnessed his death said, "It was the most terrible thing that one could see. His screams before he died were awful." The young man said, "You think me demented, but I am not. My mind was never clearer. Do not tell me that there is no hell. I am in it now. The flames, they cover me." With an awful scream of horror he cried, "Pull me out! Pull me out!" He died begging for help, but none has reached him yet, and none will ever reach him. As long as effect follows cause and as long as men reap what they sow, that long will hell follow a life of sin.

Secondly, I believe in eternal punishment because of the price Jesus paid for man's redemption. When a small boy I remember a conversation that took place between my father and a neighbor. They had not been involved in any lawsuits but were talking of some cases in the court. They were discussing the ease with which some men could deviate from the truth in a lawsuit to save a friend a few dollars. The remark that made such an impression on my childish mind was one the neighbor made to my father. "John, if you had a case in court I could not afford to lie to save you money or even a jail sentence." People are practicing the same policy today. They are very free to question the fundamental principles of the Bible to please their own selves. By doing so they deny the whole Christian system and make the atonement meaningless. Why the forsaking of the glories of heaven, the humiliation in human flesh, the poverty of earth, the rebuff of wicked men, the agony of the garden and the shame of the cross? Why the death of the Son of God if there be no eternal issue at stake? If the punishment of the sinner be not eternal the death of Jesus on the cross was a mark of divine fanaticism. A groaning God, a dying Son, a darkened heaven, a convulsing earth, for what? To save a sinner from annihilation or to enable him to take a purification trip through purgatory? Nay Verily, nay! Christ's stupendous suffering and dying say that the eternal destiny of man was at stake.

God created man in His own image and to share His glory Forever, but Satan deceived man and brought him into a state of rebellion to God. Man lost his innocence and moral likeness to God but not his immortality. His sin brought physical death to the race, so that man could not remain on the earth forever, and since he had forfeited his relationship with God, he could not be admitted to heaven. If he had been permitted to enter heaven, sin would have spoiled heaven as it did the earth. The only place he could be put was in hell, which had been prepared for the devil and his angels. God saw this and in order to save man from the endless punishment that he had brought upon himself, in love He gave His Son to provide an atonement whereby man could escape the eternal penalty of sin. The person who rejects or refuses this remedy, "shall go into everlasting punishment."

Thirdly, I believe in endless punishment because of the laws of time and the laws of eternity. There are two in each realm to which I call your attention. These will be given in contrast. The first set of laws to which I call your attention is the laws of mutability of time and of the immutability of eternity. These laws are brought out in the text, "In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be." These laws are inflexible and unchangeable. The law of this world is change, therefore changes will come, and no man can prevent them. When springtime comes and the sun kisses the earth with resurrection power, who could prevent the sleeping millions of seeds from responding to its call? All the universe is filled with resurrected life, but in a few months all will turn brown and die and no power can prevent it.

The tree that is spoken of in our text illustrates this truth. Let us suppose that it was one hundred years old. When the tree has been felled, the circles of growth are readily seen, each circle representing one year of growth. There was a change in the tree every year until the last circle was added, then change ceases forever. The seasons continue, but there is no rising sap, budding leaf, and ripening fruit. Thus it is with man. The days of our years are three score and ten, life beginning in the center of seventy annual circles, each year pushing us one circle outward until the last is added and change ceases forever. For man death does not end all but it does end all probationary change. Beyond death all agencies of change are abolished. This was God's last message to man, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Here change is the law and no person can prevent it, but as a person dies, so he will remain throughout eternity.

The second set of laws to which I call your attention is the law of the revolution of time and the law of the progression of eternity. The law of progression of eternity begins in time and runs to all eternity but the law of revolution ceases with time. Time is the measured part of eternity. Nature operates in circles and revolution is the law. The earth is a sphere and God made it to revolve; the atmosphere corresponds to the circular sphere of the earth; the oceans are the great waters in ceaseless revolution lashing the shores of earth; the heavenly bodies move in circles; the seasons chase each other in circles. Day and night are running a circle constantly and man lives in circles. Time is revolution. Time is the eddy in the stream. The eddy may whirl and whirl, but the stream moves on. While revolution is the law of time, progression is the law of eternity. With the tree there was a change every year and a new circle was added, but in falling change ceased and it will never add another circle to its trunk, will never unfold its buds to the breath of spring or move its green foliage to the zephyrs of the wind. It goes from decay to decay. It progresses only in the state in which it fell.

When time is no more, the history of man on earth is completed, and redeemed humanity ascends to God, this earth will be refined by the fire of God. The machinery by which the earth kept up its rounds will be destroyed, and the law of revolution shall cease forever. The sun will be darkened and the moon will cease its circuit, the stars will put out their light, and the heaven and earth in their present conditions shall pass away. Peter said, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Peter 3:10,11).

The sinner, having lived in sin and rejected the gospel, will pass from time, where change is the law, into eternity where immutability is the law, and enters into an eternal progression of the state in which he died. He had been growing in sin, hardening his heart in sin, ripening his life in sin, with his back to God, and going from Him all the days of his life. Spurning all efforts of God to turn him, he chose to have his back to God and to go from Him, so at last God lets the sinner have his own way, and says, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." In spite of all the restraining power of the laws of God and man, sinners produce hell for themselves and others. What will it be when these laws are removed? It means that they will progress with a speed that is unbelievable in wretchedness and misery throughout all eternity.

The child of God will enter upon an eternity of progression in life, happiness, and bliss. Think of the happiest moment of your life, and then think that eternity will begin better than that and will increase as the ages roll on. No alternating of day and night, no ebb and flow of the tide, no revolution of the seasons, but eternal springtime and perpetual health and youth with onward sweeps toward grander heights as he explores the boundless expanse of eternity.

Two facts should be considered in closing this chapter. You can tell which way the tree will fall by the way it leans. You can tell which way your soul will go on leaving your body by the way your character leans. If it is toward truth, honesty, virtue, holiness, and God, your eternal flight will be toward heaven, God and glory; but if you delight in shading the truth, hiding the facts, practicing vice and evil thinking, that is unknown to your closest friends and loved ones, then your flight will be toward hell, the devil, and eternal wretchedness. The leaning of the tree determines which way it will fall, and the leaning of your character which way you will go out into eternity.

Lastly, you have your choice in time, while change is possible, to decide on which side you will stand in the day of judgment and which way you will go out; whether you will go with those who go away into "everlasting punishment," or with those who go into "life eternal." The uncertainty of life and the certainty that no change comes after death makes it imperative that you decide now.

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CHAPTER II **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SINNER DIES**

"He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world." Job 18:18.

What happens when one dies depends upon what happened while he lived. Tell me how a person lived and I will tell you how he died. Some one says, "This is not scriptural because the thief lived a thief and according to the New Testament and the words of Jesus, he died a Christian." Jesus had been in the world just a little over thirty-three years and in the public ministry about three years, and not many of the world had heard of Him, and fewer still had met Him. The reason that the thief was saved in his dying hour was because it was his first time to come in contact with the Savior. The reason the eleventh hour workers received the same wage as those that went early in the morning was because they went at their first opportunity. This law still operates in the economy of God.

But consider a person who is born of Christian parents. His first recollection is grace at the table and family prayers. He grew up in a home of Christian teaching and influence; he was a member of the Cradle Roll of the Sunday school and grew up in the Sunday school and church, but when he reached young manhood, he chose voluntarily to go into sin. He ceased his attendance at Sunday school and church and took the ways of the world. He said, "I got all of that I wanted as a child." He waded through mother's prayers, disregarded father's counsel, said, "No" to every call of the Spirit, spent his days in sin and open rebellion to God, and has come to the end of life. Can that man be saved in his dying hour? Proverbs 1:23-31 gives the answer: "Turn you at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." If this is God's answer to the last cry of a man who has lived without God and in open rebellion to Him all the days of his life, tell me what happens when he dies? Judging from the funeral sermons we hear and the epitaphs on the tombstones, wicked people have ceased to die. A foreigner going through an American cemetery, reading the epitaphs on the tombstones, asked the sexton, "Where do they bury the wicked people in this country?" The Bible is a wonderful Book and, sad as the truth is, tells exactly what happens when a sinner dies.

I. All Hope Dies

The wise man said, "When the wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of the unjust man, perisheth" (Prov. 11:7). Expectation means looking forward to and the text infers

that the expectation of the wicked is to get saved, or to have the mercy of God take care of them in some manner. Men do not expect to go to hell. Paul reasoned with Felix on the subjects righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. It had a good effect on him. He was convicted and wanted to yield to God, but he thought that he had plenty of time and he would do it at some later time. He said to Paul, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Poor Felix had good expectation, but the convenient season never came, and he did not send for Paul again. As far as we know, he died without God. He expected to get saved but his expectation failed.

The belief of an infidel is that man dies like a beast and is no more. As long as he has health and plenty he likes to believe this so that he may flaunt himself in his infidelity and go unrestrained in his sins and blasphemous attacks on God and the Bible. When Voltaire felt the stroke that was to bring him to death, he was overpowered with remorse. He sent for a minister and wanted to be reconciled to the Church. His infidel friends hastened to his bedside to prevent this, but it was only to witness his agony and to be cursed by him. He said, "Be gone! It is you that have brought me to this condition. Leave me, I say, be gone! What a wretched glory is this that you have produced for me." His infidel associates had promised him great wealth, honor, and glory to champion their cause. His hope, honor, wealth, and glory had perished and he was face to face with the God whose name he had blasphemed. Now, a mere fancy would not do away with the facts. Hoping to allay his fears by a written recantation, he had it prepared and signed it before witnesses, but to no avail. He had given his life to destroy the Bible and the hope of heaven, and God would not accept the last smoke of his life after he had burned the candle out in opposition to Him. For two months before he died he endured such agony that at times he would rage on God and man. At other times he would plead, "O Christ! O Lord Jesus!" Then turning he would scream, "I must die abandoned by God and man." His condition was such that his infidel associates were afraid to approach his bedside, however they guarded the door to keep others from knowing how an infidel dies. His nurse said, "For all the wealth of Europe, I would not see another infidel die." He had a master mind, excellent education, great wealth, and much earthly honor, but they had vanished and his frightened soul went unprepared to meet God.

II. All Light Goes Out in His Soul

Job said, "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him." Job 18:5, 6. To be lost is bad, but to be lost in darkness is indescribable. Some time you have gotten up in a room to turn on the light, and you were uncertain of the location of the switch and could not find it. This was unpleasant, and though you knew where you were, if this had lasted for months you would have become a raving maniac. The Bible teaches that the wicked shall be cast into a place of darkness. When the king came in to see the guests that were assembled for his son's wedding, he found a man who had not on a wedding garment. He asked him why he was there without a wedding robe. He knew better, and thus had no reason for so dishonoring his son, so he was speechless. The king said to his servants, "Take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." This shows that hell is a place of darkness and a madhouse. Jude writes that the soul will go into darkness, "They are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."

The noted infidel Edward Gibbon's last words were, "All is now lost; finally lost, irrevocably lost; all is dark and doubtful." All his expectation was lost, all his hope was lost, all his light was lost and lost forever. His sun was setting to rise no more. The educated atheist Hobbes flaunted himself in his atheism and for years went unrestrained in his attacks on God, the Bible, and Christianity, but the day came when his candle was going out and his tabernacle was being clouded in utter darkness. As he drew near to death, he said, "I am about to take a leap into the dark. I would be glad to find a hole to creep out of this world through." He was entering the domain of darkness from which he has never found a door that leads to light and God.

III. He Is Chased Out of This World

If it were possible to see the spirit visitors around the bed of our dying loved ones and friends, the scene would be beautiful or awful; beautiful as the child of God takes his leave for the Better Country, and awful as the sinner departs for realms of outer darkness. A boy had been saved only a short time and was nearing the end with a dreaded disease. One morning just at the break of day the family was aroused by his shouting aloud. He said, "I am happier in one moment than in all my life previous to being converted." He became quite exhausted and was advised to rest. He said, "I am resting in the arms of my Savior, glory to His name for what He has done for me." About two hours before he died he turned to his mother and said, "There is Mary standing at the foot of my bed." Mary was his little sister who had died in the faith some months previous. She said, "No, son, Mother does not see her." He said, "You must see her. She is so beautiful." Then he exclaimed, "She is gone." About fifteen minutes before he died, he said, "There she is again, and so beautiful. Mother, can't you see her?" The reply of the mother was, "No, son, I do not see her." Just as his soul took its flight, he raised both hands and said with a smile, "Here she is again with two angels; they have come for me," and with that statement his happy spirit departed with this heavenly trio. While angels have come to conduct saints to their heavenly home, there is a different picture in the dying of a sinner. The text says, "He shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world." A young man in a Georgia town was warned by his parents and others to turn from his wicked ways, but he did not heed their warnings. He was taken ill and went from bad to worse. When he saw the end approaching, he began to scream, "Oh, drive these devils away with their chains! They drag me down to hell before I die!" Then he became an exhorter and pleaded, "Oh, brother, sister, take warning! Don't come to hell. This is hell enough." While he was dying there was an unseen power binding and dragging him down.

During the Civil War two brothers were soldiering in the same company. One was a beautiful Christian and the other a hardened sinner. Every effort of the Christian brother to get the other to surrender to Christ was in vain. One day the unsaved brother was badly wounded and the other brother was detailed to look after him. He was carried to an abandoned house near the battlefield. For three days this brother did his best to save the life of his wounded brother and to get him to give his heart to God, but his efforts were fruitless. On the night of the fourth day the wounded brother was unconscious, but seemingly was sleeping, so the other brother laid down to rest and soon fell off to sleep and dreamed that his brother died with his mouth wide open and he saw his soul as it came out. The devil was waiting by the bedside to seize it, but it dodged the devil and tried to hide in the wood behind the stove, however the devil followed it and seized it like a spider does a fly and rushed out of the door with his brother's soul screaming, "Lost! Lost! Lost!" The brother said, "Just

then I awakened, and looked across the room and my brother was dead with his mouth wide open." Doubtless he saw in his dream what really took place when his brother died. "They shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of this world."

IV. He Goes to His Own Place

"Judas by transgression fell that he might go to his own place" (Acts 1:25). By one's own choice he is either a child of God, or a child of the devil. Jesus on one occasion said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his will ye do." A child is an heir of all that his parents possess. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, but since man allies himself with the devil he is both his child and servant, so hell belongs to the sinner as much as it does to the devil. The Bible rightly says, "Judas [went] to his own place." And every sinner does the same when he dies. He could not go to heaven because it is a prepared place for a prepared people, for Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Sin is barred from heaven, so a sinner cannot go there. He cannot remain on earth as the devil, sin and all effects of sin are to be removed from this earth, and there will be a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, which God is to give to His children as a part of their eternal inheritance. Hell is the only place suited to the nature of the sinner, so in dying he goes to "his own place."

V. Real Suffering Just Begun

"And in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments and seeth Abraham afar off; and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:23, 24). Jesus used material things and earthly incidents to illustrate spiritual truths, but He never used things that could not be. He saw a sower scattering his seed, and said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened to a sower." He saw some fishermen pulling in their net and said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened to a net cast into the sea." To let us know the reality of life beyond death He told about two people who had lived and died, and disclosed their condition in the unseen world to let us know the contrasts between the future state of a Christian and a sinner. He said, "There was a certain rich man . . . and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus." They were as truly realities in the unseen realms as they had been while on earth. When Jesus said "there was," it excludes all unreality.

Notice that the narrative says, "being in torments." That means that torment was coming from more than one angle. What might have been some of the causes of the torments? First, in the society of hell. "But the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and the murderers, and the whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). This is the motley crowd that even respectable sinners will have to associate with in the eternal world. No wonder the rich man was having torments with this society. The beast and the false prophet are the only human beings to be cast into the lake of fire until after the white throne judgment, but the wicked of all ages are incarcerated in hell, which is a place of torment, awaiting the judgment, after which all the wicked ones will be cast into the lake of fire.

Some claim that the wicked will be burned up as stubble. They base their claim on the scripture. "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do

wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall leave them neither root nor branch." This could have reference to the wicked who line up with Satan after he is loosed from his prison to attack Jesus and His Bride who are reaching the climax of the millennium reign in Jerusalem, and Jesus calls fire down from heaven and devours them. It is their bodies that are devoured, but after this the second resurrection takes place in which both the good that have died since the first resurrection and the wicked of all ages are raised. "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:25-29). Just after this resurrection all nations will stand before Christ to be judged. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

The second source of torment will be the fact that there is no mercy in hell. Dives was praying for mercy, but prayer is never answered in hell. The third aspect from which torment arises in hell is that there are so many regrets and so much remorse. "Better for thee to enter into life maimed than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:43,44). The worm that never dieth is memory. The rich man remembered every opportunity that had been his. He remembered righteous Lazarus, covered with sores, who lay at his back gate desiring to be fed with the food that was thrown to the dogs. He regretted that he had not given him better food and comforts. He remembered his five brothers and was concerned lest they also come to the place of torment. His remorse must have been great when he became conscious of the fact that his opportunity of getting to God had forever passed, and that his case was hopeless. Not one time did he ask to be delivered from hell. The fourth source of torment is that there is no rest in hell. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever" (Rev. 20:10). The fifth cause of torment in hell is that it is a place of fire. The rich man said, "I am tormented in this flame." This could not be the grave as there is no fire in the grave, and if so, there would be fire in the grave for both the righteous and the wicked. He begged for Lazarus to come and dip the tip of his finger in water that he might cool his tongue. From these sources and others torment arises to make miserable the captives in hell and it is to this place that a sinner goes when he dies.

VI. This Suffering Is Eternal

Jesus, in speaking of those who stand on His left side in the day of judgment, says, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." If they were burned up as stubble it could not be "everlasting punishment." John says, "And these shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." There is no annihilation in this statement. Eternity and forever mean duration without limit, and they are never used in a limited sense in the Bible. The same term is used to describe the punishment of the wicked, the bliss of the righteous, and the existence of God. If the term breaks down in its application to the

punishment of the wicked, it also breaks down in application to the bliss of the righteous and to the existence of God. The only sane conclusion to make is that God will live on, the righteous will shout on, and the wicked will suffer through all eternity.

Eternity is an infinite time. Some one has said, "The strongest angel that cleaves the air might track it forever and he could no more find the end than he could find the cradle of God, or the grave of God." All languages beg at the footstool of eternity for words to describe it, but none are given. God has wound up the clock and it will never run down. Its ticking and tocking are heard by the lost in hell and it says, "Forever! Forever! Forever!" No promise of escape; no remedy is offered; no words to say it will soon be over; it is eternity's night.

"O sinner, remember though fair be life's day,
There is only one step to the tomb;
Thy life like a vapor will soon pass away,
Then cometh eternity's gloom.

"On the edge of perdition now blinding you tread,
Its fires how fearful they gleam;
Oh, soon you will be with the numberless dead,
Where Jesus can never redeem.

"Oh, eternity's darkness its gleam doth affright,
No star beams of hope from on high;
No morning shall dawn on the gloom with its light,
There cometh no sweet by and by.

"Oh, eternity's darkness now falls on the shore,
The twilight begins to appear;
Soon there will be mercy, sweet mercy no more,
But darkness and death draweth near."

Men who have been lost on the mountains, or on the desert for days, food gone, no water to be had, feet sore and blistered, tongues swollen out of their mouths, say that there is no way to describe their feelings. Every effort to bring themselves out would mock them and they would be brought into deeper perplexity as they would hear the wolves howl and mountain lions scream nearby. About the only hope for such is to be rescued by another. As awful as such a plight might be it is not to be compared to those who are lost in eternity's night:

"To be lost in the night, in eternity's night,
To sink in despair and in woe!
But such is thy doom, if thou turn from the light;
God's mercy refusing to know."

When one is thus lost, no light will ever penetrate the darkness, no rescue party will ever reach his shore. He is lost to day, light, mercy, love, and God forever. The ages of eternity will put him

farther from God, and in more dense darkness, as greater remorse sweeps his pain-racked soul. You that are without Christ should thank God that you have been kept from eternity's night, and should lose no time in accepting the invitation of God.

"The Savior is pleading, there's mercy today,
This Jesus invites you to come;
Oh, flee to His bosom and walk in His way,
'Twill lead to the heavenly home."

Then with sins gone, burdens lifted, and darkness banished you will help swell the second chorus:

"To be saved from the night, from eternity's night,
And to walk 'mid the splendors above;
To dwell in His grace, and abide in His light;
Enjoying His mercy and love."