

HELL, WHAT AND WHERE IS IT?

MT. ZION REPORTER

From letters and literature I have been receiving at my desk, it seems that reports are being circulated among certain classes that the Reporter and its staff does not believe in hell. One minister recently wrote a very sarcastic letter, deriding us considerably, because he said we did not believe in "Hell Fire". His remarks indicated that by removing the fear of "Hell Fire", we were encouraging people to sin and lead ungodly lives.

This minister, however, should understand that it is not fear, but love that leads people to repentance and to salvation. When people are taught fully about our loving Creator, what He has prepared for such creatures as us, and all about His beautiful character and attributes of goodness and love, this brings people to genuine repentance and salvation. Notice the following texts.

"The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance".-
Romans 2:4.

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation ."-
II. Cor. 7:10.

"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous." I John 5:3.

During a testimony meeting, while I was engaged in evangelistic work in the U.S.A., I remember well of a woman rising in the audience, and saying, — "I thank God that I am a Hell scared Christian." This woman like thousands of others taught by ministers ignorant of the foregoing scripture has missed the joy of real salvation prompted by the knowledge of the goodness of our loving Creator. To know Him best is to love Him most. And when one learns of having disobeyed Him, and walked in sin, contrary to His will, they are sorry for their past life of disobedience, and thus — "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation." -II. Cor. 7:10. The Reporter and its staff all believe in heaven and hell, which we will tell you about later.

THE TRUE CHARACTER OF OUR CREATOR

In more han 200 scripture we are told that our Creator is a merciful being. - - "Be ye therefore merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful." - Luke 6:36. He is rich in mercy. -Eph. 2:4. His mercy is great above the heavens. -Psalms 108:4. See also Psalms 130:7; 90:14; and 118:64, etc., etc. This page could be covered with similar scripture. That He is a merciful, loving, compassionate

being. The definition to the word "Mercy", as given in Websters dictionary is, - "Pity, favor. A refraining from harming or punishing offenders, enemies or persons in ones power. Kindness in excess of what may be demanded as fairness."

If I were standing before this great audience of Reporter readers, and should ask you all to raise your hands who believed that the Creator is a merciful being, I am sure you would all quickly raise your hands. Every person who believes in the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures would do so in view of the hundreds of texts repeating over and over that He is merciful loving and good.

Here in Jerusalem we often see donkeys pulling carts filled with vegetables from the market, and suppose one of these donkeys would become unruly, and run away. scattering vegetables down the street. Then in punishment the owner would tie the animals head to a post and stretch out his hind feet to another post, then put fire around its feet and gradually singe and burn it to death Would this man be described in the papers as a loving merciful man, or would he be considered as a base, cruel savage?

The donkey might live a day or so in this slow torture, but death would finally end its suffering. Then for intelligent men and women to put our loving Creator down even lower and more brutal and cruel, because they say He has power to keep unfortunate boys, girls, men and women alive in a lake of fire torturing them forever. How can this be when He is repeatedly spoken of all through the Bible as a God of LOVE, a compassionate, merciful Father?

I have received a number of tracts recently with pictures of a lake of fire, a place they call "Hell" with children and people of all ages wreathing in pain and agony, crying for mercy, and being thus torured, fried and singed month after month, year after year, day and night throughout all eternity. The Bible does not teach any such doctrine, as we shall prove later. Minsters should be ashamed of themselves to lower the character of our Creator below that of the most debased, cruel fiend or savage that ever lived. What does the Almighty think of such men calling themselves preachers, and leading millions of people to consider our Loving , Merciful Creator, a depraved inhuman savage villain lacking mercy or pity, who delights Himself in the pain, misery, torture and endless suffering of human beings of His own creation?

Should there be such a place as they delight in picturing to scare people into their churches and make them

dutiful in paying the preachers salary and keeping up the expenses of the church the Creator is responsible for it. He made it, planned it, and fashioned it, because of a cherished hate and savage desire for vengeance, and craving for such heathenish amusement as wails and cries of millions upon millions of these unfortunate creatures. This devilish teaching stems from remote heathenism, invented for the one purpose of gain, prompted by the "love for money."

This writing in defence of the character of our Heavenly Father came very definitely to the writer one whole night here on my bed in Jerusalem. My sleep broke from me, and all of these horrible and unjust accusations, with which the minds of the whole world are poisoned, weighed so heavy on me, that I could not sleep. I was impressed over and over that I must do something in His defense, and remove this infamous and disgraceful slander against His majestic, noble and loving character as set forth in the Bible.

PURGATORY

Purgatory a supposedly lake of fire where sinners and others are declared to go for purification, etc., and their length of stay depends on the prayers of the priests, who claim to have the power to pray them out, and get them through to the other side safely. The priests of the Roman Church charge immense sums from the rich for getting their loved ones out quickly and thus lessening their suffering.

The Protestant Clergy, teach also that "Hell" is a lake of fire where conscious people suffer, but instead of these clergymen praying the sinners out for a price, they frighten the people by preaching "Hell Fire Sermons", to increase their congregations, and keep the people supporting their ministry. If they do not, and lose interest and their membership in the church, they are sure to go to Hell and suffer the pangs of torment forever. In both cases this devilish, erroneous and unscriptural doctrine is used for mercenary interests. Many of the clergy care little for thus defaming and debasing the character of the Almighty, putting Him lower than the most depraved and savage villain of mankind. There is no human scoundrel so cruel and pitiless as to burn and torture another human with fire for 30 days and say nothing about eternity. Remember the scriptures teach us that it is the goodness of God that leads people to repentance, and the Love of God that prompts obedience, and not the emphasis of a brutal monster more depraved than our worst criminals.

ROBERT INGERSALL

In the "Life of Ingersall's Early Days", the story is told of what made him one of the most notorious infidels the world has ever known..... The Sunday School teacher told the class of children, that if they were not good children they would go to the lake of Hell Fire, and be tormented and tortured forever He asked the teacher what that word meant, "Forever", and how long it would be. She gave this illustration. She said, "suppose a little bird would come from one of the stars, down here and take a pebble of sand and carry it up there once every year. You will be in Hell just as long as it would take that bird to carry this whole world up there to that star. Then he asked her who made this place of torment. She said it was God the Creator.

Little Robert, it is said, resolved to be an enemy to that God, and to His Book the Bible, as long as he lived, and he was. His books against the Bible are everywhere, and in many tongues. Thus this unscriptural defamation of our loving Creator has in this one case destroyed the faith and robbed countless thousands of their eternity.

It's a doctrine of lying deceitful robbery. Used to swindle widows and orphans to feather the nests of priests and clergymen. It is made to thrive on the wrong interpretation of certain texts or scriptures, which when so interpreted involves the whole Bible, in direct contradictions, also destroying the faith of honest intelligent souls, giving birth to thousands of infidels.

Frightening people to join the church, and remain loyal to the work of the Master is just the opposite to His teaching, and gives birth to church members, but not to born again Christians. . .

THE FATE OF THE WICKED

Here are just a few of the many scriptures describing the final fate and end of the wicked. "But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs. They shall consume into smoke, shall they consume away." -Psalms 37:20.

"While they are drunken as drunkards they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry." -Nahum 1:10.

"All the proud and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD OF HOSTS, and shall leave them neither root nor branch They shall be ashes under the souls of your feet." Malachi 4:1-3.

"Yea, they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been." -Obadiah 1:16.

"They shall be punished with everlasting destruction." -II. Thes. 1:9.

"No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." I John 3:15.

I wonder what these "Eternal Torment Preachers", who claim to believe all of the Bible, are going to do with such scriptures as these? Why do they never use them in their sermons? The answer is obvious. They teach that the wicked have eternal life in Hell, which many of them know is a lie. Eternal life only comes through the presence of the Holy Spirit in the person. Life and death are opposite terms. Eternal life for the righteous and death for the wicked, stated over and over, throughout the scriptures, hundreds of times.

A correct understanding of this subject is almost a necessity to Christian steadfastness. For centuries it has been the teaching of "orthodoxy," of all shades, that God, before creating man, had created a great abyss of fire and terrors, capable of containing all the billions of the human family which he purposed to bring into being and this abyss he had named Hell; and that all of the promises and threatenings of the Bible were designed to deter as many as possible (a "little flock") from such wrong-doing as would make this awful place their perpetual home.

Christian people have so long been taught that the foundation of this awful blasphemy against God's character and government is deep laid and firmly in the Word of God — the Bible — and consequently, to whatever degree their belief in Hell is shaken, to that extent their faith in the Bible, as the revelation of the true God, is shaken also, but the Bible does not teach any such thing when rightly understood.

"HELL" IS AN ENGLISH WORD!

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Hebrew and Greek. The word Hell is an English word sometimes selected by the translators of the English Bible to express the sense of the Hebrew word sheol and the Greek words hades and gehenna, and tartaros.

The word Hell in old English usage simply meant to conceal, to hide, or to cover; hence the concealed, hidden or covered place. In old English literature records are found of the helling of potatoes — putting potatoes into pits; and of the helling of a house — covering or thatching it. The word Hell was therefore properly used synonymously with the words grave and pit, to translate the words sheol and hades as signifying the secret or hidden condition of death.

The Hebrew word sheol occurs sixty-five times in the Old Testament. In the King James Version it is translated hell thirty-one times, grave thirty-one times, and

pit three times. If the translators of the Revised Version had been thoroughly disentangled from error, they would have done more to help the English student than merely to substitute the Hebrew word sheol and the Greek word hades as they have done. They should have translated the words. But they gave us sheol and hades untranslated, and thus permitted the inference that these words mean the same as the word Hell has become perverted to mean. Yet anyone can see that if it was proper to translate the word sheol thirty-one times grave and thirty-one times hell, it could not have been improper to so translate it in every other instance.

A peculiarity to be observed in comparing these cases, as we will shortly do, is that in those texts where the torment idea would be an absurdity the translators of the King James Version have used the words Grave or Pit; while in all other cases they have used the word Hell and the Reader long schooled in the idea of torment, reads the word Hell and thinks of it as signifying a place of torment, instead of the grave the hidden or covered place or condition. For example compare Job 14:13 with Psa. 86:13. The former reads; "O, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave (sheol)," etc. while the latter reads, "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell (sheol)." The Hebrew word being the same in both cases, there is no reason why the same word grave should not be used in both. But how absurd it would have been for Jeb to pray to God to hide him in a hell of eternal torture!

As before noted, the word hell occurs thirtyone times in the Old Testament, and in every instance it is sheol in the Hebrew. It does not mean a lake of fire and brimstone, nor anything at all resembling that thought; not in the slightest degree! Quite the reverse; instead of a place of blazing fire, it is described in the context as a state of "darkness" (Job 10:21); instead of a place where shrieks and groans are heard, it is described in the context as a place of "silence" (Psa. 115:17); instead of representing in any sense pain and suffering, or remorse, the context describes it as a place or condition of "forgetfulness." (Psa. 88:11,12). "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, in the grave (sheol) whither thou goest." — Eccl. 9:10.

The meaning of Sheol is, "the hidden state," as applied to man's condition in death, in and beyond which is all hidden, except to the eye of faith; hence, by proper and close association, the word was often used in the sense of grave — the tomb, the hidden place, or place beyond which only those who have the enlightened eye of the understanding can see resurrection, restitution of being. And be it particularly noted that this identical word she-

ol is translated grave thirty one times and pit three times in our common Version by the same translators — more times than it is translated hell; and twice where seemed so absurd, according to the present accepted meaning of the English word hell, that scholars have felt it necessary to explain in the margin of modern Bible that it means grave. (Isa. 14:9 and Jonah 2:2). In the latter case, the hidden state, or grave, was the belly of the whale which Jonah was buried alive, and from which he cried to god.

THIRTY-ONE TEXTS IN WHICH SHEOL IS TRANSLATED HELL

Duet. 32:22 — "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn in the lowest hell." (A figurative representation of the destruction, the utter ruin, of Israel as a nation — "wrath to the uttermost," as the Apostle called it, God's anger burning that nation to the "lowest deep," as Leeser here translates this word sheol — I Thess. 2:16.)

II Sam. 22:6 — margin — "The cords of hell compassed me about." (A figure in which trouble is represented as hastening one to the tomb.)

Job 11:8 — "It (God's wisdom) is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell (than any pit); what canst thou know?"

Job 26:6 — "Hell (the tomb) is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering."

Psa. 9:17 — "The wicked shall be (re) turned into hell (the condition of death), and all the nations that forget God." (That the application of this text belongs to the coming Age is evident, for both saints and sinners go into sheol or hades now. This scripture indicates that in the time when it applies, only the wicked shall go there.)

In further proof of this, we find that the Hebrew word shub, which in our text is translated turned, signifies turned back, as to a previous place or condition. Those referred to in this text have been either in sheol. If then they are wicked, they, all who forget God, shall be turned back or returned to sheol.

Psa. 16:10 — "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (This refers to our Lord's three days in the tomb. — Acts 2:31; 3:15).

Psa. 18:5 — margin — "The cords of hell compassed me about." (As in II Sam. 22:6, trouble is represented as hastening on to the tomb.)

Psa. 55:15 — Let them go down quick into the "hell"-margin, "the grave".

Psa. 86:13 — "Thou shalt deliver my soul from the lowest hell." - Margin says the "grave".

Psa. 116:3 — "The sorrows of death compassed me, and trouble art the figurative hands of the grave to and the pains of hell gat hold upon me. I found

Psa. 139:8 — "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (God's power is unlimited; even over those in the tomb he can and will exert it and bring forth all that are in the grave. — John 5:28.)

Prov. 5:5 — "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell" (i.e., lead to the grave).

Prov. 7:27 — Her house is the way to hell (the grave), going down to the chambers of death."

Prov. 9:18 — "He knoweth not that the dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell." (The harlot's guests are represented as dead, diseased, or dying, and many of the victims of sensuality in premature graves from diseases which hasten their posterity to the tomb).

Prov. 15:11 — "Hell and destruction are before the Lord." (Here the grave is associated with destruction and not with a life of torment)

Prov. 15:24 — "The path of life (leadeth upward for the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath." (This illustrates the hope of resurrection from the tomb.)

Prov. 23:14 — "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (i.e., correction will save a child from vicious ways which lead to premature death.

Prov. 27:20 — "Hell (the grave) and destruction are never full: so the eyes of man are never satisfied."

Isa. 5:14 — "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure." (Here the grave is a symbol of destruction.)

Isa. 14:9 and 15 — "Hell (margin, grave) from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming" "thou shalt be brought down to hell" (the grave — so rendered in verse 11).

Isa. 28:15-18 — "Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell (the grave) are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore saith the Lord . . . Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell (the grave) shall not stand." (God thus declares that the present prevalent idea, by which death and the grave represented as friends, rather than enemies, shall cease; and men shall learn that death is the wage of sin, and that is in Satan's power (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 2:14) and not an angel sent by God.)

Isa. 57:9 — “And didst debase thyself even unto hell.”
(Here figurative of deep degradation.)

Ezek. 31:15-17 — “In the day when he went down to the grave . . . I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit . . . They also went down into hell with him, unto them that be slain with the sword.” (Figurative and prophetic description of the fall of Babylon into destruction, silence, the grave.)

Ezek. 32:21 — “The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him.” A continuation of the same figure, representing Egypt’s overthrow as a nation to join Babylon in destruction — buried.)

—Ezek. 32:27 — “And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to hell with their weapons of war: and they have laid down their swords under their heads; but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living.” (The grave is the only hell where fallen ones are buried and lie with their weapons of war under their heads.)

Amos 9:2 — “Though they dig into hell, hence shall mine hand take them.” (A figurative expression, but certainly pits of the earth are the only hells men can dig into.)

Jonah 2:1 and 2 — “Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God, out of the fishes belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou hearest my voice.” (The belly of the fish was for a time his grave - see margin.)

Hab. 2:5 — “Who enlargeth his desire as hell (the grave) and as death, and cannot be satisfied.”

THIRTY-ONE TEXTS IN WHICH SHEOL IS TRANSLATED GRAVE, AND NOT HELL

Gen. 37:35 — “I will go down into the grave unto my son..”

Gen. 42:38 — “Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.” (See also the same expression in 44:29, 31. The translators did not like to send God’s servant, Jacob, to hell simply because his sons were evil.) Therefore he put the word grave, for Sheol.

1 Sam. 2:6—“The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.”

I Kings 2:6, 9 — “Let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace . . his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.”

Job 7:9—“He that goeth down to the grave.”

JOB 14:13 — "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me" (resurrect me!).

Job 17:13 — "If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness." (Job waits for resurrection — "in the morning.")

Job 21:13 — "They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave."

Job 24:19 — "Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned." (All have sinned, hence "Death passed upon all men," and all go down to the grave. But all have been redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ"; hence all shall be awakened and come forth in God's due time— "In the morning.") — Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.)

Psa. 6:5 — "In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?"

Psa. 30:3 — "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." (This passage expresses gratitude for recovery from danger of death.)

Psa. 31:17 — "Let the wicked be ashamed; let them be silent in the grave."

Psa. 49:14, 15—margin—"Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them: and the upright (the saints—Dan. 7:27) shall have dominion over them in the morning (the Millennial morning); and their beauty shall consume, the grave being an habitation to every one of them. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave."

Psa. 88:3 — "My life draweth nigh unto the grave."

Psa. 89:48 — "Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?"

Psa. 141:7 — "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth."

Prov. 1:2 — "Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit" (i.e., as of an earthquake, as in Num. 16:30-33).

Prov. 30:15, 16 — "Four things say not, it is enough: the grave," etc.

Eccl. 9:10 — "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

Song of Solomon 8:6 — "Jealousy is cruel as the grave."

Isa. 14:11 — "Thy pomp is brought down to the grave."

Isa. 38:10 — "I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years."

Isa. 38:18 — "The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit can-

not hope for thy truth."

Ezek. 31:15--"In the day when he went down to the grave."

Hosea 13:14 --"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction. Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (The Lord did not ransom any from a place of fire and torment, for there is no such place; but he did ransom all mankind from the grave, from death, the penalty brought upon all by Adam's sin, as this verse declares.)

THREE TEXTS IN WHICH SHEOL IS TRANSLATED PIT

Num. 16:31 to 33 -- "If . . They go down quick into the pit, then shall ye understand. . . The ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them; and they perished from among the congregation."

Job 17:16 -- "They shall go down to the bars of the the pit (grave) when our rest together is in the dust."

The three lists given foregoing include everyone of the sixty-five occurrences of the Hebrew word sheol in the Old Testament. From this examination it must be evident to all readers that God's revelations for four thousand years contain not a single hint of hell, such as the word is now understood to signify.

HELL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament, the Greek word hades corresponds exactly to the Hebrew word sheol. As proof see the quotations of the Apostles from the Old Testament, in which they render it hades. For instance, Acts 2:27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (hades)," is a quotation from Psa. 16:10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol)." And in I Cor. 15:54 and 55, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave (hades), where is thy victory?" is an allusion to Isa. 25:8, "He will swallow up death in victory," and to Hos. 13:14, "O death I will be thy plagues; O grave (sheol), I will be thy destruction."

Those who love the Creator, and wish to remove from Him a slanderous stain of merciless cruelty, will gladly change their poisoned minds, and accept a

more reasonable explanation, which also clears the Bible of otherwise numerous contradictions.

The foregoing is a plea in defense of the character of our Creator, and we humbly beg that all of these preachers, and everyone who reads the following, will, because of their love for God be willing and happy to receive our interpretation and thus remove this dishonorable and infamous slander from our Creator.

The Holy Scriptures being the product of the Holy Spirit, speaking through inspired men, there cannot be contradictions involved in the testimony. If so the Holy Spirit would be impeached as a dependable witness from heaven, and all testimony thrown out as commonly practised in our courts of justice when any witness contradicts his own testimony.

We ask the reader to prayerfully bear in mind these texts previously given in (Malachi chapter 4), that the wicked will be left neither root nor branch, but will be ashes under the souls of the righteous feet. Also Obadiah 1:16, that they will be as though they had not been, and II Thes. 1:9, that their punishment will be "everlasting destruction". Many more similar texts can be found.

THE CORRECT EXPLANATION OF APPARENT CONTRADICTORY TEXTS

While in America I have held many public discussions with ministers on this subject, and here is a text that everyone of them have ignorantly used in these debates. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saint and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Revelation 20:9,10.

They always told the people that this was the wicked sinners thus tormented, when it says plainly that it was the Devil that deceived them.

Here is my answer. Notice in verse nine in speaking of the wicked people it says; "FIRE CAME DOWN AND DEVOURED THEM." It does not say this fire preserved them alive or tormented them forever, but "DEVOURED THEM." The definition to "DEVOUR", is to "DESTROY AND MAKE A FULL END." Hence this scripture is in full harmony with all of the others relative to the ultimate fate of the wicked.

As to the "Devil", however this phrase, "Forever and Ever", in Hebrew has a limitation. It refers to the time the thing itself lasts. I might give some one a knife. They would say, "How long may I keep it?" I would say, "O, keep it forever." That means as long as the knife lasts.

This is the same meaning of the text regarding the Devil. But remember, it says that fire devours the wicked people which is in full harmony with the scripture.

Daniel 12:2, reads as follows: — "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt". This verse does not say everlasting torture, or everlasting suffering, as modern preachers interpret it. It says "everlasting contempt". Websters Dictionary gives the following definition for the word "Contempt" — "The feelings or actions of a person toward something he considers low, worthless, or beneath notice". This simply means the feelings and actions of people toward the wicked, and has nothing to do with torture, or endless suffering of these wicked people. Let us leave it just as it is and believe just what it says, and not try to add something different, that defames the character of the Almighty.

Matthew 25:45 reads, — "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal". If the wicked were tormented and suffering forever in a Hell, they would also have eternal life. The reward to the righteous is "eternal life", but never was such a statement applied to the wicked. To the contrary we are told that: — "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him". I John 3:5. Eternal life comes to the person only through the abiding presence of the indwelling of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, which no wicked person possesses, and they do not therefore have eternal life anywhere.

This text tells us that the wicked will have everlasting punishment, but it does not tell us what that punishment is. Other scripture, some of which has already been given tells us what this punishment is, and over and over tells us it is death.

If our courts had the power to kill a man and leave him dead for five years and then bring him back to life, his punishment would be five years. If they could sentence him to death for 50 years and then bring him back, his punishment would be fifty years. The wicked go into this kind of punishment forever. It is everlasting. They are to be "As though they had not been". —

Mark 9:47,48, — "If thine eye offend thee pluck it out, it is better for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched".

If you have a Bible with references along the margin as many Bibles have, you will notice that there is a small figure by the word "Hell", which you trace to the margin, where it says "Gehenna". All Bible Diction-

aries will tell you that the word "Gehena" is the name of the valley joining Jerusalem on the South. Known also as the valley of "Hinnom". It was in this valley where the garbage of the city was dumped, and also the bodies of Donkeys and camels, etc. Fires were constantly kept burning to consume them. While around the edge where the fire did not burn all of the flesh the maggots or worms were constantly eating that which remained. Look up the word "Gehenna" also in "Webster's New World Dictionary". Here is what it says: — "The valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem where refuse was dumped and fires were kept continually burning to prevent pestilence hence a place of burning".

This is exactly what Christ referred to, and nothing more or less. He said: "Gehenna", and that is what you find in the Greek from which our English was translated.

When I lived in Jerusalem thirty years ago, the fires were still burning in this valley. Since that time, however, trucks have taken the place of the donkey and camel, which for thousands of years previous were used, and owing to the ground being so full of rock it was impossible to bury the carcasses of these animals, therefore they were disposed of in this way., in this very deep valley.

Luke 16:19 to 31, — "The rich man and Lazarus". This is the scripture used most by the "Hell Fire Advocates", to put fear into the hearts of the people of eternal torment, thus lowering the character of the Almighty who is declared all through the scriptures to be a merciful, loving Creator.

They claim that this account of the rich man and Lazarus is a literal fact, and that it applies therefore to all of the righteous and the wicked people, who are all to be treated thus, but there is not a word said here about good or bad, or one being righteous and the other wicked, only one was rich and the other poor. Consequently if this is a literal fact, and not a parable, as it is set forth to be, this will be the fate of all rich men and the future of all poor men.

Futhermore if this describes the future for all of the righteous and the wicked as they claim, then Heaven and Hell are in seeing, and in speaking distance, and the unfortunate people in Hell will recognize their acquaintances in Heaven and beg them to come to Hell and help them. (verse 23). It says the rich man SAW Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. Hence Heaven and Hell will be in seeing and speaking distance, surely Heaven would not be a pleasant place when the people that knew you here would be begging you to come

down and cool their tongues in the flames. Futhermore Abraham told Lazarus that those who would go from Heaven down to Hell to help them could not go there because a gulf was fixed between them. (Verse 26), So there would not be satisfaction or contentment in Heaven, because of the agony of the unfortunate people in Hell, Abraham said: — "They that would go cannot," hence people in Heaven wanted to go to Hell, but could not go.

This is a parable of the Jew and the Gentile as we shall here-in prove, and it is not a literal fact to cast reproach on the character of a wise and merciful Creator, and also destroy the pleasures of life eternal for the righteous, who would be called on by their acquaintances in Hell to come and help them. ,

To prove it is a parable, ch. 15:1, says: — "Then drew near unto him all the publicians and the sinners to hear him". In Matthew 13:34, we are told that he only spoke to the multitude in parables. Hence this was a parable for he was speaking to the multitude. In the beginning of ch. 16 we have the parable of the "Unjust Steward", which is generally understood and admitted to be a parable of the Jewish nation whose stewardship was taken from them. (Verse 3) says of this steward: — "I cannot dig, and to beg I am ashamed." The Jews in their dispersion all over the world after having lost their stewardhip have not been diggers, that is farmers, neither have they been beggars, but they have dealt in merchandise, and made friends of the mammon of riches, just as this parable sets forth.

Likewise in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man who died, spiritually was the Jewish nation, and the poor man Lazarus, represents the Gentiles, and this we shall prove. The stewardship was taken from the Jewish nation, and they were: — "Led away captive into all nations". (Luke 21:24). They have been under the fires of persecution, plundered and murdered. Destroyed in gas chambers, shot and imprisoned, during this whole period of Gentile times. The Lord said: — "I will scatter you among your enemies, and draw out the sword after you, punish you seven times more for your sins. (Lev. 26:21 to 31). In (Ezra 9:7), He said that they would be given "to the sword, to captivity, to the spoil, and to confusion". In (Deut. 32:24), it reads concerning the Jews: — "They shall be burnt with hunger and devoured with burning heat and with bitter destruction". This has all happened to them. They truly went into a world of punishment, just as stated in the parable.

The poor man — the Gentile. (Ephesians 2:11;12), — "Wherefore remember that ye being in times past Gentiles in the flesh That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world".

Here we have Israel spoken of as wealthy (the rich man) and the Gentiles having no hope and without God. The next verse (Verse 13) says they are made nigh by the blood of Christ. In (Romans 6:10, 11), it speaks of the Gentiles as follows: — "For in that he died, he died unto sin once . . . Wherefore reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God. This is how the poor man, (the Gentiles), died, and then they are received into the family of Abraham. (Gal. 3:27 to 28) reads: "For as many of you as have been baptised unto Christ, have put on Christ And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Hence when the Gentiles die in this way they are received into the bosom of Abraham, as was the poor man, who in this parable ate the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, the Jewish table, "for to them were committed the oracles of God". (Rom. 3:1, 2).

In (Eph. 2:14), we read of the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile, just as it is spoken of here in (Luke 16:26), as a gulf fixed so that one cannot pass to the other, in the parable. Also the rich man, the Jew, says he has five brethren (Verse 28), which refers to the five religious sects among the Jews at that time, viz. the Pharisees, Saducees, Herodians, Essenes and Nazarites.

The last two verses of this parable again show that it pertains to the Jews and that these five brethren were Jews, for it says, "because they would not hear Moses, neither would they be persuaded if one rose from the dead, and they were not persuaded after the resurrection, of Christ who did rise from the dead.

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