

Devotional Thoughts :: Hell and Everlasting Punishment, Part 1: Abiding Wrath**Hell and Everlasting Punishment, Part 1: Abiding Wrath - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/6/15 11:39**Hell and Everlasting Punishment
Part 1: Abiding Wrath

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth no the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). This verse says that the wrath of God abides on the sinner right now and if he dies unsaved God's wrath will abide on him forever. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God; But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath." (Romans 2:5,8).

"Let this awful word Wrath, settle into the conscience of every soul; for God hath spoken it!" And every Preacher, and every prophet of God has warned of it: Enoch, Noah, Moses, the Psalmists, Isaiah, John the Baptist with his 'flee from the wrath to come;' the Apostles - from Romans to Revelation; and the great Preachers and Evangelists of the Christian centuries, - the men who have won souls - the Reformers, the Puritans, the Wesleys, Whitefields, Edwardses, Finneys, Spurgeons, Moodys, - all have told of man's guilt and danger, of the coming judgment, and of the wrath of God upon the impenitent and unbelieving."

-William R. Newell

"There are the black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God, for the present, stays His rough wind. Otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present. They increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given. The longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose...

And consider here more particularly whose wrath it is. It is the wrath of an infinite God... It is the fierceness of His wrath that you are exposed to. Thus we read of 'the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.' (Rev 19:15). The words are exceedingly terrible, if only it had been said, 'the wrath of God', the word would have implied that which is infinitely dreadful. But it is said, 'the fierceness and wrath of God'. The fury of God! The fierceness of Jehovah! Oh, how dreadful that be! It is everlasting wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it for all eternity. There will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery...

How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul that has not been born again. However moral and strict, sober and religious, they may otherwise be. Oh, that you would consider it, whether you are young or old! Therefore, let everyone that is out of Christ now awake and flee from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over every unregenerate sinner."

-Jonathan Edwards

Hearing such solemn admonitions about the reality of an abiding wrath must make us stop and consider how we are living our lives, the soul that God has given us to be accountable for. How short is time, how long is eternity! May we do violence to our normal thinking and actions and place our thoughts firmly on these eternal subjects that will be life to us if we allow them to be.

Re: Hell and Everlasting Punishment, Part 1: Abiding Wrath - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/6/15 16:54

This saying that Spurgeon told his audience once is very sombering to add to this article: " The Puritans tell a story of a woman convinced of sin on her death-bed, who lived near Cambridge, who was visited by several ministers, all of whom had great skill in comforting seeking souls. When five or six of them had spoken gently and comfortingly to her, she opened her eyes upon them with a glare, and all she said was this, "Call back the time, call back the time, for otherwise I am damned." And so she died."

What an encouraging thought that we right now can ponder on these things with reverence and fear still having "time" and as believers being able to "redeem the time" for truly these days are evil in which we live. May none of us say at our death beds "call back the time!"

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/6/17 12:31

"Our dear Redeemer, whose lips are as lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, in great tenderness of heart warned men of the sure result of their sins; and none used stronger or more alarming language than he did concerning the future of ungodly men. He knew nothing of that pretended sympathy which will rather let men perish than warn them against perishing. Such tenderness is merely selfishness excusing itself from a distasteful duty."

-C.H. Spurgeon

"Go and sin no more lest something worse befall you."

-Jesus Christ

Re: Hell and Everlasting Punishment, Part 1: Abiding Wrath - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/6/17 13:39

bro greg

i'm following this thread and as i look around me i've been shown that the majority of people will repent after a taste of the wrath of God. there is a despair i feel which just won't leave me alone and it is the grief that God is feeling over having to pour the judgement out. it didn't have to be this way. the way of the world is such that sin for the most part is passed off as "lifestyle" or "i'm only human" and it is tolerated. if we had more of a sense of the consequence of sin, it would be less appealing. in short, the consequence of sin will remain an abstract thing until the judgement is made manifest for all to see, then all men will know yet some may remain in denial of the wages of sin and the anger of God at sin.

For too long the holiness of God has been trampled on by us all. We are experiencing and will experience further the Holiness of God by way of His wrath. it seems we only respond to God or seek Him in earnest in times of adversity. i see God raising up many many mighty men and women during this time because many people will look earnestly for Him in those days.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/6/17 16:55

Thank you brother,

I do feel these messages are timely and I do encourage you to follow along and let the Lord appropriate the severity of the message to your heart. Lord teach us what it is to live eternally conscious in time!

Re: Hell and Everlasting Punishment, Part 1: Abiding Wrath - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/6/17 19:14

bro greg

James and I had been talking some time ago and found it surprising that with the increase in ungodliness all about, that it is a wonder that God HASN'T poured out His wrath already. i suppose this has sort of lulled the majority into writing off the wrath of God as something of the O.T. so when it does come it will be doubly harsh, shock and awe for real...God has been laying that on me lately but also the importance of praising and worshipping Him in spirit and truth and spending time in His presence.

Re: Hell and Everlasting Punishment, Part 1: Abiding Wrath - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/10 18:45

I hope to learn more about this subject of hell because I don't think I've ever studied it in a focused way. Plus, when I read about Larry King's question concerning if Muslims will go to hell, I felt like, "Yes, obviously", but then I couldn't think of any Scripture's to prove it.

Quote:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). This verse says that the wrath of God abides on the sinner right now and if he dies unsaved God's wrath will abide on him forever."

Does it really say that? I see that it says that the wrath of God abides on the unbeliever right now, but I don't see how it speaks about it abiding on him forever if he dies without Christ.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/10 19:03

Brother Todd, this is great, I am very glad that you are benefiting from this study and look at the theme of Hell. It is a very serious and at times mind numbing topic to even meditate on. I am very prayerful and weary as I post these articles. Do check here: Hell and Everlasting Punishment (article series), often because I am posting articles daily as I can. I estimate there will be over 30 articles on all the different facets of hell and information from past speakers on the subject.

I think that's a great question that you are pondering on, the Scriptures definitely speak more of the "eternal" (everlasting life) rather than the "eternal" perishing. John 3:15 is a good frame work for this: "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

I do think if we take all the gospels in context that Jesus refers to over and over again to an eternal suffering where the worm dieth not. A place where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The wicked will have their reward.

Keep thinking and sharing scriptures brother, this is great. Till we all reach unto the perfect man in Christ.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/10 20:45

Here's one thing I'm thinking about.

John 17:3

"And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Eternal life is not just something we experience after we die, we can taste of it now.

I wonder if eternal wrath, hell, etc. is like that. It's not only an experience after death but it is experienced even now. That place of weeping and gnashing of teeth, outer darkness, and the furnace of fire. I wonder if these are like qualities of experience that can be tasted of, in part, now and will be more fully experienced later on for some.

I guess what I'm getting at is this. Is it possible that those who die without Christ will go to a place of eternal torment, but they might not remain there forever? This may seem like a paradoxical statement, unless we look deeper at that word "eternal" (aionios, #166). Could it be that they experience eternal punishment, destruction, hell, but aren't necessarily stuck there forever?

Jude 7 says that Sodom and Gomorrah experienced "eternal" (aionios) fire. But is it still burning there?

In the same way, could it be that unbelievers will be punished with "eternal" destruction for a season (some more, some less), but then get saved and live forever in Heaven?

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/11 5:21

Quote:

-----Jude 7 says that Sodom and Gomorrah experienced "eternal" (ainios) fire. But is it still burning there?

Indeed, and ezekiel 16 speaks of Sodom's future restoration -v55 When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou (Jerusalem) and thy daughters shall return to your former estate.

A very good book on this subject is Jan Bonda's "The one purpose of God" available through Amazon.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/11 10:49

taco,

Thanks for the insight and reference. I put it on my wishlist. I also added "Four Views of Hell" on my wishlist. I know 2 of the authors names- Clark H. Pinnock and John F. Walvoord.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/11 17:24

Hi Todd,

I just ran across this and it might be of some help?

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THE ETERNITY OF HELL

The most terrifying aspect of all about hell is its length or duration. Hell is eternal. Hell will last forever. Can you comprehend eternity? No mathematical equation or formula can explain it. Your mind cannot conceive of eternity, but it is none the less real. This aspect of hell alone should cause men to cry out in repentance. It is not surprising that skeptics of all ages have attacked the eternal nature of hell, substituting doctrines like the annihilation of the wicked in its place. Let us look at the Scriptures to verify the eternal nature of hell and to try and understand eternity better. Then we will explore why hell must be eternal.

"And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10). This verse clearly gives us the duration of hell. Hell is forever and ever. How could a stronger, more certain expression be used? If the Spirit of God wanted to communicate the eternal nature of hell to men what could communicate it better than the expression "forever and ever?" The Scripture has no higher expression which is used to denote eternity than "forever and ever" for it is the very phrase used to tell us of the eternal existence of God Himself, as in Revelation 4:9: "to him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever." Does anyone doubt that God will live to all eternity? How then can you doubt that hell will not last to all eternity when the same expression is used for both?

"We can conceive but little of the matter; but to help your conception, imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven, or a great furnace, where your pain would be as much greater than that occasioned by accidentally touching a coal of fire, as the heat is greater. Imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, and all the while full of quick sense; what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace! and how long would that quarter of an hour seem to you! And after you had endured it for one minute, how overbearing would it be to you to think that you had to endure the other fourteen! But what would be the effect on your soul, if you knew you must lie there enduring that torment to the full for twenty-four hours...for a whole year...for a thousand years! Oh, then, how would your hearts sink, if you knew, that you must bear it forever and ever! that there would be no end! that after millions of millions of ages, your torment would be no nearer to an end, and that you never, never should be delivered! But your torment in hell will be immensely greater than this illustration represents."7

Christ, describing the great day of judgment, tells of the separation of the wicked and the righteous using these words: "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46). Is there anyone who would deny that heaven exists eternally? Will the lives of the blessed in heaven be brought to an end one day? Of course not. But the same Greek word is used here in this verse to speak of the eternal life of the righteous and the everlasting punishment of the wicked. Hell will last as long as heaven does.

In hell there will be different degrees of torment appointed to men as indicated by a number of Scriptures. Luke 12:47-48

says: "And that slave who knew his master's will and die not get ready or act in accord with his will, shall receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few." Christ says in Matthew 11:24: "Nevertheless I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you." The verses in Matthew indicate that the people in Capernaum will receive a greater punishment on judgment day than those who had lived in Sodom. The verses in Luke speak of a differentiation in judgment based on the amount of light received: some will receive many stripes and others will receive few.

Those who commit greater sins than others or more sins than others will receive greater punishment in hell (John 19:11). Religious hypocrites, those who profess Christianity but are not real Christians, will be punished more severely than others (Matthew 23:14-15). The Lord said of Judas Iscariot, "It would have been good for that man if he had not been born" (Matthew 26:24). How could any of these things be said to be true if annihilation were what awaited men after death? The presence of different degrees of punishment only makes sense in light of the ability to sensibly feel the torment. Could it be said that it would have been better for Judas if he had never been born if annihilation was all that awaited him? Annihilation is like no punishment at all.

Each time the unbeliever sins he is adding to his torment in hell. The person who sins twice as much as another with similar light will receive twice as much punishment. Every day that sinners continue to live and breathe here on earth without repenting, they are adding to their torments in hell. Romans 2:5 tells us: "But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." The Lord Jesus encouraged the righteous to lay up treasures in heaven rather than on earth. The wicked are increasing their future wrath and torment in hell every day by their continued sinning. They add to their punishment daily. In hell men will wish that they had never been born.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon said: "In hell there is no hope. They have not even the hope of dying--the hope of being annihilated. They are forever--forever--forever lost! On every chain in hell, there is written "forever". In the fires there, blaze out the words, "forever". Above their heads, they read, "forever". Their eyes are galled and their hearts are pained with the thought that it is "forever". Oh, if I could tell you tonight that hell would one day be burned out, and that those who were lost might be saved, there would be a jubilee in hell at the very thought of it. But it cannot be--it is "forever" they are cast into the outer darkness."⁸

Christopher Love uses an illustration to try and help us understand what eternity means: "Suppose all the mountains of the earth were mountains of sand, and many more mountains still added thereto, till they reached up to heaven, and a little bird should once in every thousand years take one (grain of) sand of this mountain, there would be an innumerable company of years pass over before that mass of sand would be consumed and taken away, and yet this time would have an end; and it would be happy for man, if hell were no longer than this time; but this is man's misery in hell, he shall be in no more hope of coming out after he hath been there millions of years, then he was when he was first cast in there; for his torments shall be to eternity, without end, because the God that damns him is eternal."⁹

Earlier we looked at the necessity of hell or why there must be a place like hell. Now we will look at why hell must not only exist, but why it must exist eternally. Why is it necessary that hell be eternal? There are several answers to this which we shall explore briefly.

The first reason we will look at is the one mentioned by Christopher Love in the passage just quoted. The God who damns men is an eternal God. "Ultimately the eternality of hell is based upon the nature of God."¹⁰ Is God's Word eternal? Is God's nature eternal? The Scripture tells us: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). "His righteousness endures forever" (Psalm 111:3). "The Word of the Lord abides forever" (1 Peter 1:24). If God's Word is eternal, if God's righteousness is eternal, if God Himself is eternal, then why shouldn't His wrath be eternal as well? As eternally existent, all of God's attributes are eternal and immutable; therefore, hell, as an expression of God's wrath, must be eternal.

Hell must be eternal because God's justice could never be satisfied by the punishment of sinners no matter how long it lasts. Christ makes this clear when He speaks about settling with your accuser before you get to court, otherwise you shall be cast into prison and "I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite" (Luke 12:59). Man can do nothing to pay for his sins. No amount of punishment in hell, no matter how long, can ever atone for sins. It is impossible; therefore, hell must be eternal.

Thirdly, hell must be eternal because the Scriptures tell us that the worm gnaws the conscience of men in hell never dies. "For their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched" (Isaiah 66:24). If the worm never dies, then those being tormented by the worm shall never die.

Lastly, hell will be eternal because men continue to sin in hell. They increase and compound their guilt there. Hell is a place where tormented men curse God, curse themselves, and scream and wail with blasphemous language at their fellow men around them. Wicked men will increase each other's torments as they accuse, blame, and condemn one another. Men will not repent in hell because the character of sinners does not change. They remain sinners. Men will sin to eternity, therefore, God will punish them eternally.

<http://members.aol.com/wnichint/hell.html>

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/11 21:12

Greg,

The article is helpful as far as seeing another perspective on the issue. But it seems full of weaknesses and flaws. Who is the author?

Perhaps we could use this article as a reference for further discussion, but there is likely a better one somewhere. The author seems to be mainly arguing against the idea of annihilation which is not what I'm mostly thinking about.

I don't want to try and pick the entire article apart in one post, but I will begin where the author did.

Rev. 20:10

"And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented forever and ever."

The author comments:

"This verse clearly gives us the duration of hell. Hell is forever and ever. How could a stronger, more certain expression be used? If the Spirit of God wanted to communicate the eternal nature of hell to men what could communicate it better than the expression 'forever and ever?'"

First of all, this verse describes 3 specific beings who will be tormented in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone "forever and ever"- the devil, the beast, and the false prophet. It does not speak of mankind here. But even if it did, and since the Greek word used here (Aion) is key in this discussion, I will attempt to share what I have learned about it.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit did not necessarily communicate the Lake of Fire with the expression "forever and ever." That expression is an English translation of the Greek. The Greek word here is "Aion" (#165) which is literally translated "age." It is doubled in this verse which I understand is for emphasis. So the literal translation would be something like, "tormented day and night for the ages ages."

I did a brief word study with this word and what I found is quite fascinating. Here's one thing I found. The word is sometimes translated "eternal" as in Ephesians 3:11, 1 Timothy 1:17, and Hebrews 11:3.

Ephesians 3:11

"This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord"

In my NASB Bible there's a reference note which clarifies that the phrase "eternal purpose" is literally "purpose of the ages." The other 2 verses I just referenced are similar in that the literal speaks of "ages" but some translations say "eternal."

So, getting back to Revelation 20:10, I suppose it could be translated "...they will be tormented day and night for the ages" or perhaps "... all the ages."

The thing about ages is that there seems to be "time" before them, an end to them, and perhaps "time" after the m.

1 Corinthians 2:7

"but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined **before the ages** to our glory"

Jude 25

"...to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, **before all time** and now and forever."

It's the same Greek word, Aion, translated "time" and "forever" in the above verse. So a more literal translation might be "...before all the ages, and now, and to all the ages." (I'm not sure if the first usage in this verse is plural or not, perhaps someone could help here.)

1 Corinthians 10:11

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"Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom **the ends of the ages** have come."

So "the ages" have ends? Some translations, such as the KJV I noticed, say "world" instead of "ages" like my NASB. But it's the same word, Aion. (I am also curious whether Aion is in the plural in 1 Cor. 10:11.)

It seems that God has left us in the fog as far as what is before and after the ages. I see it kind of like this:

???????????????????????? (Ages) ?????????????????????????????????

The author states:

"How could a stronger, more certain expression be used?... The Scripture has no higher expression which is used to denote eternity than 'forever and ever.'"

I question these statements. I think there is a much clearer and unquestionable way to speak of eternity that could have been used to describe Hell.

Luke 1:33

"... and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom **will have no end.**"

The Bible could say something like "Hell will have no end." If it did, there would be no ambiguity concerning the eternity of hell- no room to question. But as it is, it seems to me God has left plenty of ambiguity concerning things "beyond" the ages, and what has appeared obvious on the surface (due to human interpretation and especially translations) appears very misty upon closer examination. Perhaps these are things too great for us to understand "in this age."

It's been said, "Most heresies are the result of men trying to carry to logical conclusions that which God has only revealed in part."

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/16 13:03

Quote:
-----The article is helpful as far as seeing another perspective on the issue. But it seems full of weaknesses and flaws. Who is the author?

I am not sure of the author that is why I cited the website where it was obtained from.

Quote:
----- The author seems to be mainly arguing against the idea of annihilation which is not what I'm mostly thinking about.

I do think the argument against annihilation is a good starting place and not to be thrown out for logically if we are not annihilated then we are still living and then it is to be argued if that living is eternal?

Quote:
-----First of all, this verse describes 3 specific beings who will be tormented in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone "forever and ever"- the devil, the beast, and the false prophet. It does not speak of mankind here. But even if it did, and since the Greek word used here (Aion) is key in this discussion, I will attempt to share what I have learned about it.

Yes the scriptures do clearly say that this lake of fire are for the 1. Devil 2. Beast 3. False Prophet. So the unholy trinity have their place apart from the Holy Trinity of God in heaven. But clearly the scriptures also say later on in that chapter:

"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." (Revelation 20:14-15).

So from that portion of scripture we see the numerants of the lake fire increase with 4. Death 5. Hell 6. Whosoever (speaking of any man who is not written in the book of life).

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." (Revelation 2:11)

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Revelation 3:5)

God's will for His church is that they are not hurt by the second death and not have their names blotted out of the book of life. But God stating these statements gives the absolute possibility of it happening. And as we saw before the Second death is when death and hell are cast into the lake of fire.

Quote:
-----The Bible could say something like "Hell will have no end." If it did, there would be no ambiguity concerning the eternity of hell- no room to question. But as it is, it seems to me God has left plenty of ambiguity concerning things "beyond" the ages, and what has appeared obvious on the surface (due to human interpretation and especially translations) appears very misty upon closer examination. Perhaps these are things too great for us to understand "in this age."

The rest of your post Todd is quite fascinating and it's great to see you digging into the scriptures even with your basic understanding of Greek. I took a Greek class this last semester at school and when I came out of it I knew less than when I came in. The Greek language is a very potent and detailed language and to have an intermediate understanding of it takes at least 1-2 years of careful diligent study. I am sure it's very easy for us to make mistakes just being ignorant of how the Greek language works. I found this out when I was translating passages from Colossians on my own (talk about here).

One thing is definitely certain that I think you will agree whole-heartily on is that we have ETERNAL and everlasting life in heaven with God if we are Christians and have our names written in the book of life:

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:15-16).

The word we are thinking on if its everlasting is the word found above in this passage perish. That those who believe not in the Son would perish, and the question is asked is this perishing eternal?

Here is one Scripture that uses the word "eternal" in cognition of the perishing of unbelievers:

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Matthew 25:46)

I am sure there are many other direct references searching out the scriptures to find other scriptures that speak on the issue is usually the best way to get over an hurdle such as the one you came against in Revelation. I would like to hear your further thoughts. And on the Greek word for "ages" I am sure there is someone who can help shed more light on that.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/22 3:56

Todd, I just ran across another verse that implies very clearly there is an "eternal" fire:

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of **eternal fire**." (Jude 6-7).

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/22 6:04

I think that this was precisely Todd's point (Todd correct me if I am wrong). Sodom and Gommorrah suffered an "eternal" fire which obvioulsy still is not burning to this day.

There are a number of ways of looking at this.

- 1) Look at the greek word its usage and etymology and see that it does not need to mean "eternal" in the sense that we generally understand it. it can mean "age lasting" (literaly this is what it means)
- 2)Take it that Jude is using this word as "eternal" - what is he saying; that the fire is still burning? or that it was a fire that came from beyond this temporal realm ie a divine judgment from the Eternal one?
- 3) that Jude is not talking about the fire that destroyed Sodom and Gommora, but rather he is saying that after these peo ple died they entered into an eternal fire.

Many probably read no. 3 into the text immediatly because it fits our paradigm. But I believe that it is an unlikely interpret ation. Sodom and Gomorrah have still a judgment awating them (according to the Lord Jesus). Also the fire that they suf ferd was an example so it does not seem to be somthing hidden.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/22 12:24

Sorry if this seems simplistic, I am going to think through this passage (Jude 6-7):

"And the angels which kept not their first estate" - This speaks of their abode in the heavenlies in the immediate presence of their creator.

"but left their own habitation," - There is a group of angels that have willfully left their habitation in the heavenlies.

"he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day." - God is keeping these angels in isolation, a place of darkness until the judgement of the great day. The great day would speak of the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds. Where all will be raised and judged.

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner," - Like manner would speak of their willful choice to left their estate (proper place with God) and choice to gratify the flesh instead of desiring to please God and do His will.

"giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh," - They give themselves over, not God. Sin is enticing and will lead us away if we allow it.

"are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." - All these things are set forth as an example not just Sodom and Gommorah but v5 people in egypt that went to the wilderness and believed not, v6 angels that lost their estate, v7 sodom and gommorha. And the whole context ties into v4 that there are 'certain men crept in' false teachers that have come into the fellowships. and you will notice that in v8 is the verse that draws a conclusion from the preceding verses with the word 'likewise' and he calls the men that crept in 'filthy dreamers' and speaks further of these men in v10-13 and the conclusion of speaking of these false teachers is that "whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

Quote:

-----Sodom and Gomorrah have still a judgment awating them (according to the Lord Jesus).

We know that after the judgement comes "punishment". This is how it will be for all the aforementioned angels and peopl

e that are "reserved" for judgement.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/7/22 13:54

Quote:

-----I don't see how it speaks about it abiding on him forever if he dies without Christ.

I don't understand. Are you questioning that hell is eternal? Or that it will be pain the whole time?

Quote:

-----I couldn't think of any Scripture's to prove it.

Rev 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Joh 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Muslims are not born again. They do not believe in Christ as their Lord and Savior. They will go to hell if they are not born again.

EDIT: I did not read the rest of the comments before I posted this... sorry.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 14:23

Yes, Taco, I think you are touching on my point. Is Sodom and Gomorrah burning today? It seems clear they are not, and yet they burned with "eternal" fire. Therefore, it seems to me that "eternal" is not how many of us understand it today.

If you look at my post on 7/10 you will notice that I used this verse to help make a point.

In fact, from what I can tell and what I've learned up to this point, I think that most of the translations (at least the ones I've seen) are presumptuous to translate Aionons and Aion as "forver, forever and ever, eternal, everlasting, etc." Because the words seem to speak only of "ages" which, as I discussed in my longer post, seem to have some kind of a beginning and end to them (at least this seems to be a possibility).

So, it seems clear that something that pertains to them is not "eternal" or "forever" as we tend to think of it. I think Taco's translation "age lasting" sounds good.

But what of things beyond the ages?

Really, what I think would be a big help on this thread is someone who understands Greek better.

"Philo?!"

Greg,

I do remember thinking about Revelation 20:14-15, which you brought up. Let's look at it again...

"And death and Hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death, the Lake of Fire. And if anyone's name was not written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the Lake of Fire."

But my question is, for how long do they stay in the Lake of Fire? Perhaps only for a season? I mean, at least Rev. 20:10 gives a somewhat specific time frame for those 3 beings. It says they will be tormented day and night "unto the ages" (I think that's a good literal translation). But in the case of verses 14-15, it doesn't even say this.

Each individual whose name is not written in the Book of Life is thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Yes.

But for how long?

As to gaps that it seems God has left unfilled for us: let's not fill them in with logical conclusions and human reasoning and then establish that understanding as absolute fact in our minds. That is one thing I really want to avoid doing.

I really think at this point we very much could use some Greek expertise. Hopefully someone on this site has some and could be of some help here.

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/22 14:32

Quote:
-----Muslims are not born again. They do not believe in Christ as their Lord and Savior. They will go to hell if they are not born again.

Are new born babies "born again" ? Will they go to hel if they die?

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/22 14:37

Todd, we had a bit of a discussion on this before
(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?modeviewtopic&topic_id5228&forum36&start70&viewmodeflat&order1) here

Louis Abbott qrote an interesting book on the words Aion and aionis available for free
(<http://www.tentmaker.org/books/asw/>) here

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/7/22 14:58

Quote:
-----But my question is, for how long do they stay in the Lake of Fire? Perhaps only for a season? I mean, at least Rev. 20:10 gives a somewhat specific time frame for those 3 beings. It says they will be tormented day and night "unto the ages" (I think that's a good literal translation). But in the case of verses 14-15, it doesn't even say this.

Rev 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever

I dont know what translation you are using but the KJV says forever. I would assume that is a more correct translation.

The Analytical-Literal Translation says this.

And the Devil, the one leading them astray , was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur , where the beast and the false prophet , and they will be tormented day and night into the ages of the ages .

But then again I don't know much about the ALT if its good. Some translations say ages of ages, some say forever and ever. I think I'll stick with the old KJV.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 14:59

Taco!

Wow. This text by G. Campbell Morgan was so confirming for me...

"Let me say to Bible students that we must be very careful how we use the word "eternity." We have fallen into great error in our constant use of that word. There is no word in the whole Book of God corresponding with our "eternal," which, as commonly used among us, means absolutely without end. The strongest Scripture word used with reference to the existence of God, is "unto the ages of the ages," which does not literally mean eternally. Let us remember however that the self-same word, which is thus used in connection with the existence of God, is also applied to the loss of the human soul. Men have divided the Church, separated from each other, and persecuted one another, upon a thought conveyed by an English word which has no equivalent in the Bible."

I found that in the link you gave to an earlier discussion on this topic on the site. Can you give reference to the source of this quotation? I must know the reference before I can fully accept it as G.C. Morgan, who just happens to be one of my favorite old time expositors.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/7/22 15:09

Hmm well... I don't know where or if the bible goes into what happens to new born babies when they die. I do know this that the souls that sins it will die. Of course the scriptures I posted were to ones old enough that they were accountable. I don't have scripture to back it up... just a feeling for the character of God but.. I don't believe babies go to Hell. I assume I would believe the "age of accountability" thought on it. That is to say when they get to an age that they are accountable they need to repent and be born again. I think it is interesting that at the age of 12 Jewish boys were "a son of the commandment" and were obliged to the duties of an adult.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 15:09

PreachParsley,

Have you looked through this thread carefully? I feel like we have gone over this, but let me try and clarify for you.

Rev. 20:10 speaks *exclusively* of 3 specific beings: the devil, the beast, and the false prophet. My question which you responded to with that verse was concerning all those who are not written in the Book of Life.

I also hope you will look deeper into the translations of "Aion" and "Aionios." Could the KJV have translated these words badly or even incorrectly? Could most modern translations have made the same mistake?

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/7/22 15:34

Rev 14:10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

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

So would you also group these with the other 3?

So now we have 4? the devil, the beast, false prophet and their followers?

I'm not a learned scholar by any means. I do not ever want to come off arrogant in any of these discussions. If I am wrong correct me. I just want the truth..

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/22 15:50

Todd, I am quoting from
G. Campbell Morgan, GOD'S METHODS WITH MAN, p.185

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 15:55

PP,

Quote:

"I'm not a learned scholar by any means. I do not ever want to come off arrogant in any of these discussions. If I am wrong correct me. I just want the truth.."

I am right in the same camp with you then.

Please, do you feel like you've gone through this thread carefully? Your responses seem to indicate that you have not. Once you answer this question for me, if you still have the same questions, I will attempt to help clarify further.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 15:56

Taco,

Thanks so much. I plan on purchasing the book soon. I see there's a fairly new edition available on amazon. This is very helpful to me.

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/22 15:56

Quote:

PreachParsly wrote:

Hmm well... I don't know where or if the bible goes into what happens to new born babies when they die. I do know this that the souls that sins it will die. Of course the scriptures I posted were to ones old enough that they were accountable. I don't have scripture to back it up... just a feeling for the character of God but.. I don't believe babies go to Hell. I assume I would believe the "age of accountability" thought on it. That is to say when they get to an age that they are accountable they need to repent and be born again. I think it is interesting that at the age of 12 Jewish boys were "a son of the commandment" and were obliged to the duties of an adult.

The point I am trying to make is that you believe that muslims must be going to hell because they are not born again. The quote above shows me that you allow at least one exception to the rule "you must be born again". Above all you base this on the character of God. Well done, I commend you for it.

Now do the same for the man in a far off land whose neighbours worship idols but whose heart tells him that there is a true God out there somewhere. A muslim comes by and shares with him of the God who created the earth and who asks for his worship and obedience. He responds and becomes a muslim. Will you consign him to an everlasting hell because he never heard the gospel? Surely your knowledge of the character of God will also forbid this.

Re: - posted by taco, on: 2005/7/22 16:00

Quote:

-----Thanks so much. I plan on purchasing the book soon. I see there's a fairly new edition available on amazon. This is very helpful to me.

I should note that I am fairly certain that GCM never espoused the ultimate salvation of all men.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 16:03

Quote:

"I should note that I am fairly certain that GCM never espoused the ultimate salvation of all men."

Yes, I would think he didn't. But this quotation is very helpful nonetheless. Besides, I don't know if I will ever espouse the ultimate salvation of all men. This is the first time I've ever really even focused this much on the topic.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/7/22 16:08

My knowledge of the character of God would tell me that anyone who sins with knowledge is in danger of the second death, which is the lake of fire. Everyman has a conscience. Con-with science-knowledge. Every man has knowledge of right and wrong.

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Rom 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them.

Rom 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Rom 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

If the man was seeking God he would find the God the Father of Jesus Christ not Allah.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/7/22 16:09

I am done with this thread. I think the topic was covered in the thread that has already been linked to.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/22 16:54

Quote:
-----It seems clear they are not, and yet they burned with "eternal" fire. Therefore, it seems to me that "eternal" is not how many of us understand it today.

From my reading of that passage the fire that destroyed sodom and gommorha is not there but rather all 3 examples in verse 5,6 and 7 are examples of those that will suffer eternal fire. So they are not suffering in that fire yet but will be after the judgement.

Also the word "eternal" is from the greek word: aionios
strong's number 166

Authorized Version (KJV) Translation Count — Total: 71
AV - eternal 42, everlasting 25, the world began + 5550 2,
since the world began + 5550 1, for ever 1; 71

Outline of Biblical Usage

- 1) without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be
- 2) without beginning
- 3) without end, never to cease, everlasting

*seems pretty straight forward to me.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/7/22 17:02

Can we also please keep the conversation in this thread solely to the fact of the idea of "eternal" abiding wrath in hell. This is the subject that is in question, the other side issues need to be discussed in another thread. I do feel there needs to be more thought and discussion on the first issue before others can be given fair thought.

There are some great thoughts coming out here and if we keep digging I am sure more will be revealed.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/22 21:23

Greg,

I don't have time at the moment to respond to you about the Jude verse. But concerning Aionios, did you see G. Campbell Morgan's quote? Perhaps not so straightforward after all. Look at the root of the word, not human interpretations of it. I think this is where we need Greek expertise.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/23 3:06

I feel that at this point it is necessary, in order to facilitate this discussion, that we understand the Greek words Aion and Aionios. This has been discussed at some length already in the thread, but it seems that we are not all seeing it.

It seems that these words merely speak of ages, and not "eternity" as it is commonly understood. This seems very clear from looking at the root of these words. Are we all in agreement on this point?

Now about Jude...

Here is another place where I feel we really need some help with the Greek. I think I see how you are reading it Greg, but I don't think that the Greek grammar allows for it. But I could definitely be wrong. Here's how I see it...

Jude 7

"Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, **in undergoing** the punishment of eternal fire."

Or another reading could be "... are exhibited as an example of eternal fire, **in undergoing** punishment."

Either reading reveals an understanding of "eternity" that seems very different from the way this word is commonly understood today.

Let's look at the first reading...

"Sodom and Gomorrah...are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire."

Now are we in agreement that a literal fire came down and burned them up? If this fire that burned up Sodom and Gomorrah was eternal, then how is it that it is not still burning there? If that fire is "never ending, without end, etc." then how can we explain if it is no longer burning there?

What this first reading suggests to me is that the "eternal fire" Jude is talking about here is a type, kind, or quality of fire, and it does not speak of duration.

My NASB reads "*in undergoing* eternal fire." I read this as saying that they underwent (experienced) eternal fire.

Now let's look at the second reading...

"Sodom and Gomorrah... are exhibited as an example of eternal fire, in undergoing punishment."

This reading (which is the side note "or" option in my Bible and is not literal) would seem to be even more in support of the concept of hell's punishment (by fire) not necessarily lasting forever, as we might think of it.

If an example of hell's punishment by eternal fire is shown in Sodom and Gomorrah, then is it not clear that this punishment might only last for a season? It seems clear that Sodom and Gomorrah only experienced it for a season. So then if

that is the example, perhaps others who will one day experience this punishment of eternal fire will only experience it for a season. Right?

I read "in undergoing punishment" as saying that they underwent (experienced) punishment.

Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/29 14:16

About a week ago I found something that Taco referred to- a startling quotation by G. Campbell Morgan. Here was my response:

Quote:
-----I found that in the link you gave to an earlier discussion on this topic on the site. Can you give reference to the source of this quotation? I must know the reference before I can fully accept it as G.C. Morgan, who just happens to be one of my favorite old time expositors.

I wanted to make sure it was him so I bought the book I understood it to be from, "God's Methods with Man." Sure enough, the book got to my house today and I found the quotation. It's even better than I thought.

Let me share it again with even more context. I think this is the perfect quotation for this thread. It's from pages 185-186 of "God's Methods with Man", previously published by Fleming H. Revell Company, 1898, but I am quoting from Wipf and Stock Publishers 2003 edition.

Quote:
-----In passing, and in connection with the great theme which we are only touching upon, let me say to Bible students that we must be very careful how we use the word "eternity." We have fallen into great error in our constant use of that word. There is no word in the whole Book of God corresponding with our "eternal," which, as commonly used among us, means absolutely without end. The strongest Scripture word used with reference to the existence of God, is- "unto the ages of ages," which does not literally mean eternally. Let us, however, remember that the self-same word, which is thus used in connection with the existence of God, is also applied to the loss of the human soul. Men have divided the Church, separated from each other, and persecuted one another, upon a thought conveyed by an English word which has no equivalent in the Bible. But who shall grasp "the ages of ages," or say that when a limit is reached, if limit there be, it is not that other ages upon ages may be born? God is subject to no limitation, and our finite thought must utterly fail to fathom the ages which He inhabits. **We have no right to dogmatize upon anything beyond what is written;** nor should we use a human word to express Divine things in the great future, concerning which we know so little.

I think that's about as clear as it can get, at least concerning this specific aspect of our topic.

So are we all in agreement that "eternal" is not the best translation for Aion and Aionios? In fact, that it is a bad and misleading translation?

I think it is actually presumptuous and incorrect, personally.

Re: - posted by BlazedbyGod, on: 2007/12/12 23:13

Jude 7

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire

It is not talking about Sodom and Gomorrah, literally as in the cities itself, but rather using the names of the cities to make reference to the PEOPLE of the City that were destroyed by the fire from God. One, a city cannot "give ITSELF over to fornication and strange flesh":-is the people of the city that do that

This is proven in two ways-one, was it the city itself that God hated, or the actions of the PEOPLE that lived in the City? The answer to that would be-the people, in which, in destroying the people of course the cities themselves were destroyed also-but it wasn't the cities itself God had an issue with.

Two-the Bible, making reference this time to the actual cities, said this:

2 Peter 2:6 And turning the CITIES of Sodom and Gomorrha INTO ASHES condemned them with an overthrow, making

them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly

This time, the verse is actually speaking about both the people and the actual city, but it has specific direct notation that it is literally referring to the city itself being turned into ashes and even the people that lived there-but that is not where the fire stopped for the human beings, it of course continued in Hell for them, but for the city itself it actually stopped at ashes. In Jude, the verse is making reference to the people that God's eternal fire vengeance was set upon.

This same principle is in Matt 12:21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Is Jesus talking about the actual city repenting, or the people of the city repenting? This is the same tone in Jude 1:7

This is also proven by the statement of Jesus:

Re: - posted by jochbaptist (), on: 2011/11/10 10:35

I started reading this thread, and I was so thankful for the labor of Love that was put into it. Hell and Everlasting Punishment, part 1: ABIDING WRATH

I have a desire to put the Gospel into visual language, and I was so inspired - The abiding wrath of God poured out on every single part of the Universe, except for those hidden in the Ark. I was moved with the fear of God in considering the eternal loss of those outside the Ark, and wondering what I was doing to save them. Then along came Todd and Taco ...

Now we are discussing whether God is Eternal, or just unto the ages of ages ...

Quote: The strongest Scripture word used with reference to the existence of God, is- "unto the ages of ages," which does not literally mean eternally. Let us, however, remember that the self-same word, which is thus used in connection with the existence of God, is also applied to the loss of the human soul.