

FINAL REBELLION, JUDGMENT, ETERNAL STATE

THE FINAL REBELLION

Revelation 20:7-10 ~ When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 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.

- At the end of the Millennium, Satan is released from the abyss and he gathers a large number of people to make war against Christ
- Undoubtedly these will be unbelievers born in the Millennium who, although they adhere outwardly to the principles of Messiah's kingdom, show that they don't know Christ
- This rebellion reveals man's sinful, unregenerate heart (even in a perfect environment) and that, when given the chance to rebel against the Lord God, sinful man will do it every time
- Once again the entire earth ("four corners of the earth") rebels and invades "the beloved city," Jerusalem
- "Gog and Magog" – names of ancient enemies of the Lord; here probably used to refer to those who rebel against Christ at the end of the Millennium
- This assault on Jerusalem will be patterned after the invasion described in Ezekiel 38-39
- This rebellion is short lived and completely unsuccessful
- Those who participate in it are immediately killed by fire that came down from heaven
- Satan is cast into the lake of fire, Satan's final, eternal judgment

RESURRECTION OF THE UNSAVED OF ALL TIME

Revelation 20:5 ~ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.

John 5:26-29 ~ For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a **resurrection of judgment**.

Daniel 12:2 ~ Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

- Scripture says that those who die without Christ immediately go into hell (an intermediate state)
- But a day is coming when their bodies will be raised and they are cast into the lake of fire (the place of eternal condemnation of the wicked)
- The unsaved of all time will be resurrected in new bodies in order to face the Lord Jesus Christ whom they rejected in this life
- Because their deeds are evil and because they rejected Christ, they will be sentenced to eternal death in the lake of fire
- And their bodies will be raised and they will be given new bodies fit especially for experiencing the horrors of hell forever
- While the bodies of resurrected believers are fit to enjoy the blessings of heaven, the bodies of resurrected unbelievers are specifically fit to endure the torment of hell

GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Revelation 20:11-15 ~ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then 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 found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- Christ is described as sitting on the great white throne...earth and heaven fled away from Him
- This describes the sinful universe going out of existence...an event Peter described in 2 Peter 3:10-13
- Jesus also described this moment in Matthew 24:35 ~ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away
- This is the judgment of unbelievers that have died and are being sentenced to eternal punishment
- This is the “day of judgment” often referred to in Scripture

Matthew 10:15 ~ Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

Matthew 12:36 ~ But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment

Acts 17:31 ~ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.

Romans 2:5 ~ 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.

Hebrews 9:27 ~ And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

Jude 6 ~ And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

- The “great white throne” is the throne upon which Christ himself sits
- The dead, all those who died without Christ, are raised so they are “standing before the throne” – as if to be sentenced
- Two categories of books:
 - Book (singular) – book of life – contains names of the redeemed; this book will not contain the name of anyone who will be at this judgment
 - Books (plural) – book of works; contains a record of all the sinful words, thoughts, and deeds done by sinful men; men will be condemned on the basis of these books as their deeds will be compared to God's righteous and holy standard and found wanting; judged “according to their deeds”
- “sea, death, Hades” - All the places that have held the bodies of the unrighteous dead will yield up those bodies to be judged
- “second death”- The first death is spiritual and physical, the second is eternal in the lake of fire, the final, eternal hell
- All those not found in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire, the final, eternal hell
- 3 types of death in Scripture:
 1. Spiritual – separation of person from God; Solution: salvation
 2. Physical – temporary separation of soul from body; Solution: resurrection
 3. Eternal – eternal separation of person from God; Solution: no solution

FINAL STATE OF THE WICKED

The Biblical Teaching About the Final State of the Wicked

The Terms Describing It

1) Eternal fire

Matthew 25:41 ~ Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

- Christ distinguishes the fires of hell from those on earth, all of which die
- Even mighty forest fires, which may burn for weeks, eventually burn out when they consume all their fuel
- Hell fire, however, is indistinguishable because its work is never done

2) Place where the worm never dies (possibly reference to remorse and a gnawing conscience)

Mark 9:47-48 ~ If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.

- Not speaking of literal worms in hell; rather it is drawing a comparison between this life and next
- Maggots feed on their prey until it is consumed, then they die
- The “worms” of hell, however, will never complete their work
- This paints a picture describing the endlessness of sinner’s torment

3) Pit of the abyss

Revelation 9:2, 11 ~ He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit...They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.

4) Outer darkness

Matthew 8:12 ~ but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth

5) Torment

Revelation 14:10-11 ~ he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

6) Eternal punishment

Matthew 25:46 ~ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

7) Wrath of God

Romans 2:5 ~ 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,

8) Second death

Revelation 21:8 ~ But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

9) Eternal destruction away from the face of the Lord

2 Thessalonians 1:9 ~ These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

It is Eternal

Matthew 18:8 ~ If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire.

Matthew 25:41 ~ Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

2 Thessalonians 1:9 ~ These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

Jude 13 ~ wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

Revelation 19:3 ~ And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever."

- "forever and ever" = literally "unto the ages of ages"
- This is the strongest expression of eternity of which Greek is capable
- This is not a momentary torment, but one that continues forever
- Some today find it so difficult to believe that the torments of hell will last forever, they look for ways to get around it

Let me say at the outset that I consider the concept of hell as endless torment in body and mind an outrageous doctrine, a theological and moral enormity, a bad doctrine of the tradition which needs to be changed. How can Christians possibly project a deity of such cruelty and vindictiveness whose ways include inflicting everlasting torture upon his creatures, however sinful they may have been?

Clark Pinnock, quoted in *Hell on Trial*, Robert Peterson, 161

- As hard as it is to accept, this is what God's Word says

Now, because no description can deal adequately with the gravity of God's vengeance against the wicked, their torments and tortures are figuratively expressed to us by physical things, that is, by darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth, unquenchable fire, an undying worm gnawing at the heart. By such expressions the Holy Spirit certainly intended to confound all our senses with dread

John Calvin

The fiery oven is ignited merely by the unbearable appearance of God and endure eternally. For the day of judgment will not last for a moment only but will stand throughout eternity and will thereafter never come to an end. Constantly the damned will be judged, constantly they will suffer pain, and constantly they will be a fiery oven, that is, they will be tortured within by supreme distress and tribulation

Martin Luther

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. What horror would you feel at the entrance of such furnace? 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 think that you had to endure another 14? But what would be the effect on your soul if you knew you must lie there enduring that torment to the full for 24 hours, for a whole year, for 1000 years? Oh then would not your heart sink if you knew that you must bear it forever and ever? That there would be no end? That after millions and 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.

Jonathan Edwards

Probably with Degrees of Punishment

Matthew 11:21-24 ~ Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.”

Matthew 23:13-14 ~ But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. [“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation.]

Luke 12:42-48 ~ And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But if that slave says in his heart, ‘My master will be a long time in coming,’ and begins to beat the slaves, both men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk; the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers. And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, will receive many lashes, but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, will receive but few. From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

2 Peter 2:20-21 ~ For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.

Revelation 20:12-13 ~ And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

What about Annihilationism?

Explanation

- Advocated by Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists
- Says that God is too loving and kind to inflict everlasting misery on His creatures
- Teaches that their judgment will bring about the cessation of their existence
- An attempt to soften the awful thought of eternal torment of the wicked

Emotionally, I find the concept [of eternal conscious torment] intolerable and do not understand how people can live with it without either cauterising their feelings or cracking under the strain. But our emotions are a fluctuating, unreliable guide to truth and must not be exalted to the place of supreme authority in determining it . . . my question must be — and is — not what does my heart tell me, but what does God’s word say?

John Stott

Arguments for Annihilationism

- “To destroy” (Matt 2:13; 10:28) when employed in the active form, points towards extinction
- “Eternal” and “everlasting” do not mean endless, but often mean “in the age to come”
- The main purpose of fire is not to inflict physical pain, but to destroy
- Rev 14:10 refers to the smoke of judgment, rather than to everlasting conscious torment (i.e. the smoke, not the torment, ascends forever)
- Rev 20:10 refers to the devil and his allies, not humans

Arguments Against Annihilationism

- Annihilation is not a punishment at all but something that could be quite desirable to the wicked
- Rich man in Luke 16 experienced the flame of torment – probably same torment in eternal state
- Rev 20:10 says that beast and false prophet are still tormented in lake of fire after 1000 years
- The Greek words “eternal” and “everlasting” do teach endless punishment
 - They are the only words in the Greek language which can express endlessness
 - They mean “everlasting” in other places (John 14:17; Matt 19:29)
- The everlasting punishment of the wicked is not inconsistent with God’s nature or justice, but is rather a revelation of that justice
- The word for “destroy” does not mean annihilation but rather “loss” or “ruin” (Matt 9:17)
- Man is immortal by nature, not by salvation (no such thing as conditional immortality)
- The rest of Scripture supports eternal punishment (Matt 13:42; 25:41, 46; Rev 14:11)

THE ETERNAL STATE

- Once the millennial kingdom is over and the great white throne judgment has occurred and all unbelievers have been cast into the lake of fire, then God will recreate the heavens and earth
- Then the earthly millennial kingdom of Christ is merged with the eternal kingdom of God

1 Corinthians 15:24-26 ~ then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

There will be a New Heavens and Earth

2 Peter 3:7, 10-13 ~ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men... But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

Revelation 20:11 ~ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.

Revelation 21:1-2 ~ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

- The new heavens and earth are not just a renovation of the old heavens and earth, but are completely new
- Beware: The word *new* (*kainos*) denotes something that is fresh or new in quality but not something that is strange or uniquely different. This would suggest that the newly created heavens and earth will strongly resemble the previous ones that were destroyed by fire. Apparently the new earth will resemble the old with the main exception that there are no oceans on the new earth (21:1). Our present oceans are a result of

God's judgment (Genesis 6-8), and there will be no evidence of judgment in the eternal kingdom

- God is going to do in the new heavens and earth what He intended to do in the original creation – have mankind dwell on earth as they lovingly serve and walk with Him

There will be Unhindered Fellowship with God

Revelation 21:3 ~ And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,

Revelation 21:22 ~ I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Revelation 22:4 ~ they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

- Believers will do what they were created to do in the first place: fellowship with God and enjoy Him totally
- There is no temple in the eternal state because the Lord will dwell with His people

A Number of Things Will be Absent

- No sea

Revelation 21:1 ~ and there is no longer *any* sea

- No sorrow, death, or mourning

Revelation 21:4 ~ and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

- No sun or moon because the glory of God and Christ will illumine new heavens and earth

Revelation 21:23 ~ And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

- No night

Revelation 21:25 ~ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

Revelation 22:5 ~ And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

- No gates

Revelation 21:25 ~ In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed;

- No sin

Revelation 21:27 ~ and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 22:3 ~ There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

A New City of Jerusalem

Revelation 21:10-21