

No Immortality for the Wicked

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The Righteous dead raised to Immortality at the return of Christ.

I Corinthians 15:20-24 “But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. 21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, 24 then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father,” NET

I Corinthians 15:51 “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory....” NET

Paul writes about the great day of the resurrection when at the return of Christ the righteous dead will be raised to life from their graves and given immortal imperishable bodies. Paul only mentions the resurrection of Christ himself and those who belong to Christ at his return. No mention is made of the wicked lost. They will not be resurrected until after 1000 years after the return of Christ. They will not be given the gift of immortality but will be raised in their mortal perishable state to face the judgement.

Romans 2:5-8 “But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath for yourselves in the day of wrath, when God’s righteous judgment is revealed! 6 He **will reward each one according to his works**: 7 eternal life to those who by perseverance in good works seek glory and honor and immortality, 8 but wrath and anger to those who live in selfish ambition and do not obey the truth but follow unrighteousness. 9 There will be affliction and distress.” NET

Paul here talks about how the only way to eternal life is through repentance. It is to this group of repentant sinners, who as a result of repentance, persevere in good works. They will be given honor and immortality. The wicked or unrepentant are not mentioned as being given immortality but instead at their resurrection only receive affliction and distress.

Revelation 20:4-6 “Then I saw thrones and seated on them were those who had been given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. These had not worshiped the beast or his image and had refused to receive his mark on their forehead or hand. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were finished.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who takes part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.” NET

There are two resurrections. Every human being will be in either one or the other. The first resurrection occurs at the return of Christ, the second resurrection occurs 1000 years later. There is no mention anywhere in the bible of the unrepentant lost being made immortal.

“Throughout the New Testament, apostles and their co-writers repeatedly affirm that sinners finally will *die, perish, and be destroyed*. Each time traditionalists [who believe in eternal torment] encounter such statements, they reply that these verbs sometimes have figurative or secondary meanings. According to the traditionalist interpretation, *die* only means to *separate*, *perish* and *destroy* mean to *ruin* and nothing more.

However, when the New Testament writers use these words to describe the final destiny of the wicked, they do not speak in a vacuum, but as part of an old and ongoing conversation in which these most significant

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words were regularly understood in their most basic and literal sense.” *Fudge, Edward. “The Fire That Consumes” p213, Copyright 2011 Cascade books. OR 97401. USA*

On the day of Pentecost fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus the apostle Peter is standing before a large crowd of Jews in Jerusalem. He preaches to them concerning the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and has been raised from the dead. Peter says that it was this Jesus who was spoken about by Moses that they were to listen too and do everything he told them. Notice what is said concerning those who refuse to listen to Jesus. Quoting Moses, Peter says:

Acts 3:22-23 “Moses said, ‘THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you. 23 And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’” NASB

A prophet like Moses will be raised up from within Israel. The prophet spoken of was Jesus. The rejectors of Jesus are to be “utterly destroyed”. This expression meant capital punishment to the Israelites. Annihilation and extinction is the destiny of the rejectors of Jesus, not eternal life in a lake of fire somewhere out of sight. The Greek for “soul” is an idiom for the entire person mind and body. In his epistle to the Galatian church Paul writes that false teachers should be “*anathema*”.

Galatians 1:8-9 “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be [Gk :anathema] accursed!” NASB

“let him be [Gk :anathema] condemned to hell!” NET

Anathema: “the word literally means something set up or laid by to be kept, as a votive offering might be hung on a temple wall after being devoted to a god. Because offerings devoted to the true God were commonly burnt in their entirety or otherwise destroyed, the word in biblical usage signifies something, “accursed” or doomed to destruction.”

The Septuagint [Greek Old Testament] had ordinarily used *anathema* as the Greek translation of the Hebrew *herem* the usual term for something “devoted” to God and therefore, under ordinary circumstances, to be totally destroyed. It is used of the Canaanites whom God tells Israel to “totally destroy” and whom they do “completely destroy” (Num 21:2-3; words in quotation marks represent *herem*, Hebrew; or *anathema*, Greek).

When the Canaanite spoils are “set apart for destruction,” the septuagint uses *anathema* (Deut 7:26). The most famous incident involved Achan and Jericho. The city and all its spoils were *anathema- “devoted to destruction”*- and so would be any Israelite who took from the spoils for himself (Josh 6:17-18; 7:12). Achan did just that and paid the precise penalty the word demanded. He was utterly destroyed-in his case stoned to death, burned with fire, and covered with rocks (Josh 7:25-26).

No Israelite doubted that Achan was destroyed because there were physical remains. No one chortled that Achan was not literally *annihilated*. Nor did they think that “destruction” meant he should be fastened in a cage and tortured endlessly. They knew what it meant to be *herem/anathema*, and they carried that out.

This is the words meaning throughout the scriptures. Because Paul refers to a punishment of the age to come, we need not automatically assign *anathema* a meaning it has never had before. The method of God's punishment will surely be different, but the meaning of it will be the same. If an angel from heaven preaches a different gospel, Paul says he comes under this sentence. He is *anathema-herem- devoted to utter destruction.*” *Fudge, Edward. “The Fire That Consumes” 3rd Ed. pp 199-201, Copyright 2011 Cascade books. OR 97401. USA*

The Apostle James writes about the destiny and ultimate end of the unrepentant. He mentions that they are to be destroyed as in a day of slaughter.

James 4:12 “But there is only one who is lawgiver and judge—the one who is able to save and destroy...” NET

James 5:1,5 “Come now, you rich! Weep and cry aloud over the miseries that are coming on you... 5 You have lived indulgently and luxuriously on the earth. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered the righteous person, although he does not resist you. NET

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John 3:16 “For this is the way God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world should be saved through him.” NET

It is only the believers in Jesus who receive eternal life while everyone else will perish.

Matthew 7:13-14 “Enter through the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the way is spacious that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 How narrow is the gate and difficult the way that leads to life, and there are few who find it!” NET

Here Jesus compares life with destruction. There is no thought of the lost spending eternal life in an eternal hell fire.

Matt 7:19 “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” NET

Matt 13:30 “Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I will tell the reapers, “First collect the darnel and tie it in bundles to be burned, but then gather the wheat into my barn.”” NET

Matt 13:40-42 “As the poisonous weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” NET

The duration of the weeping and gnashing of teeth is not mentioned. The mental state of the lost shown here is one of anger and depression. They are suffering in this mental state until they are finally consumed.

John 10:27-28 “My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; no one will snatch them from my hand.” NET

John 15:6 “If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch, and dries up; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and are burned up.” NET

Rom 6:23 “For the payoff of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” NET

Rom 9:22 “But what if God, willing to demonstrate his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath prepared for destruction?” NET

Phil 3:18-19 “For many live, about whom I have often told you, and now, with tears, I tell you that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction...” NET

Heb 10:39 “But we are not among those who shrink back and thus perish, but are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.” NET

2 Peter 3:7-9 “But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, by being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. 8 Now, dear friends, do not let this one thing escape your notice, that a single day is like a thousand years with the Lord and a thousand years are like a single day. 9 The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some regard slowness, but is being patient toward you, because he does not wish for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. NET

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The Old Testament uses some 50 verbs along with their Greek equivalents in the Septuagint [Greek Old Testament] and the New Testament signifying different aspects of destruction when describing the doom of the wicked. Many of them describe absolute cessation of existence. No stronger terms are to be found in any language than those used in the bible to describe the total extinction of being of the wicked. The scope of terms used are -

destroy, end, consume, devour, take away, tread down, burn, burn up, cut off, hew down, cut down, break in pieces, quench, go out, extinguish, slay, break down, overthrow cast down, destroy utterly, sink down in a pit, beat down, melt away, die, mortify, put to death, strike, melt, pluck out, fall, dash in pieces, scatter as dust, pass away, trample under foot, root out, bring to naught.

CHRIST'S PORTRAYAL OF THE DOOM OF THE WICKED.

Jesus says:

The wicked husbandmen are destroyed (Matt 21:41; Luke 20:16)

The rejector is ground to powder, scattered as dust. (Matt 21:44)

The evil servant is cut asunder (Matt 24:51)

The wicked will perish like the Galileans (Luke 13:1-3)

They are slain like those crushed by siloams tower (Luke 13: 4-5)

They are destroyed like the victims of the flood (Luke 17:27)

They are destroyed by fire like the victims of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:29)

They will die as in the fate of Lots wife (Luke 17:32)

The rebellious citizens are slain (Luke 19:14, 27)

Traditionalists believe that the unsaved live forever in an eternally burning hell. They claim that the words used in the bible are not to be taken literally but actually mean the opposite of what they say.

“...the traditionalists claim that all these words have figurative meanings when used in the New Testament about the lost, moved Greek Scholar and New Testament translator R. F. Weymouth to exclaim, “My mind fails to conceive of a grosser misinterpretation of language than when the five or six strongest words which the Greek tongue possesses, signifying 'destroy,' or 'destruction,' are explained to mean maintaining an everlasting but wretched existence. To translate black as white is nothing to this.” Quoted in *Fudge, Edward. “The Fire That Consumes” 3rd Ed. p214, Copyright 2011 Cascade books. OR 97401. USA*

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