

94. The Book of Revelation—20:6

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(9-21-22)

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Revelation 20:6 (NKJV)

⁶ **Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection [not a single event but a category for all true believers who have ever lived upon the earth]. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**

The second death is referring to the final judgment of all unbelievers in the Lake of Fire (hell).

All true *believers* whether they are O.T saints, N.T. saints, Tribulation saints or Millennial Kingdom saints will be part of the first resurrection—and all *unbelievers* will be a part of the second of these two resurrections—the resurrection that Jesus called—the '*resurrection of condemnation*' (John 5:29b).

Those who take part in this final resurrection (at the end of the Millennial Kingdom) will be cast into the Lake of Fire, otherwise known as the '**second death**' or **hell**—

Revelation 21:8 (NLT2)

⁸ "But cowards, unbelievers, the corrupt, murderers, the immoral, those who practice witchcraft, idol worshipers, and all liars—their fate is in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

God has promised that whoever belongs to the first resurrection (O.T. saints, N.T. saints or Tribulation Period or Millennial Kingdom saints)—on these the second death will have no power (i.e., all of these 'first resurrection saints' will never be cast into hell).

What is Hell?

Hell is a place of *perpetual burning*. The Greek word is 'gehenna' which comes from the Hebrew 'ge Hinnom' which means "*the Valley of Hinnom*."

The Valley of Hinnom is a deep, narrow valley directly south of Jerusalem, where the idolatrous Jews offered their children in sacrifice to Molech.

Later on, after this practice was outlawed, this valley became the city dump where the dead bodies of animals, criminals, and all kinds of garbage was dumped and burned by a fire that was never quenched because the refuse never ended (the part not on fire was usually infested with worms).

And so, in the process of time, this place became a fitting image and illustration of the place of *everlasting fire* and destruction known as '**hell**'.

A place where the wretched refuse of defiled humanity who refused to receive the love of the truth (gospel) that they would be saved are 'dumped' and will endure the perpetual fires of judgment forever and ever—

Revelation 14:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night...

Jesus believed that hell was *real* and *eternal*—in fact, He stated three times in Mark 9 that hell was a place where “*the fire is never quenched*” and where the “*worm never dies*”.

Again, Jesus spoke about hell more than anyone else in the New Testament—in fact, the word *gehenna* appears 12 times in the New Testament, and in all but one of these occurrences Jesus spoke it (the other being James 3:6). So, hell is a place of separation from God located in the ‘outer darkness’ (Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30) of the universe.

This is where the ungodly will someday be sent and experience the righteous judgment of God for all the ungodliness and sin they committed throughout the course of their life on the earth.

All sin is considered to be a crime against a holy God and those crimes *must* be paid for. If a person won’t receive payment through the blood of Christ shed on Calvary’s cross for their sins, then—they will have to spend eternity paying for their sins in hell for themselves.

Please understand, people don’t go to hell because of their sins—they go because they *rejected* Jesus as their Savior; just as people don’t get into heaven because of their good deeds—they go to heaven because they *accepted* Jesus as their Savior.

How Could a God of Love Create a Place Like Hell to Send People To?**1. God didn’t create hell for man****Matthew 25:41 (NLT2)**

⁴¹ “Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons.’

2. God doesn’t send anyone to hell—people choose to go there**Romans 2:5, 8 (NLT2)**

⁵ But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed... ⁸ ...he will pour out his anger and wrath on those who live for themselves, who refuse to obey the truth and instead live lives of wickedness.

“Oh, you preachers make me sick!” a fellow said to a witnessing Christian on the train one day. The Christian assured him he was not a preacher. “I don’t care what you are. You Christians are always talking about a man going to hell because Adam sinned.” “No,” the Christian said, “you need not go to hell because Adam sinned. You will go to hell because you refuse the remedy provided for Adam’s sin. Don’t keep complaining about something that has absolutely been taken care of. If you go to hell, you will go over the broken body of Jesus Christ, who died to keep you out.”

Nobody goes to hell by chance—they go to hell by choice!

➤ “That’s ridiculous—nobody would choose to go to hell.” Jesus said, “If you’re not for Me you are against Me.”

3. God is love but He is also a righteous and a just God

Genesis 18:25 (NLT2)

²⁵ Surely you wouldn't do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked...You would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn't do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?"

God has to punish sin or else He would no longer be the *righteous* Judge of the whole earth. The problem today is that people have become so jaded by all the immorality and godlessness going on around them that sin is really no big deal anymore and because of it (and here is where most people make a fatal mistake)—they don't think it's a big deal to God anymore either.

Okay, maybe murder and rape—but certainly not lying, coveting, fornicating, adultery or homosexuality.

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV)

⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

You see, because God doesn't rain fire down from heaven every time someone sins against Him—people have gotten the idea that God really doesn't care how we live down here.

Psalms 7:11-13 (NKJV)

¹¹ God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day. ¹² If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready. ¹³ He also prepares for Himself instruments of death; He makes His arrows into fiery shafts.

Right now God is *restraining* His wrath by His great love and mercy—*"not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* (2 Peter 3:9c) Yet the anger of God against sin is growing day by day—like a volcano that is building up pressure.

One day it is going to erupt and then His wrath against sin will no longer be *restrained*—it will be released (Revelation 6-19)!

Most people comfort themselves with the knowledge that God is love, and surely a God of love won't send anyone to hell except the worst of humanity (the Hitlers, Stalins and other brutal dictators and mass murderers)—*"But certainly, He won't send a 'good' person like me to hell."*

Proverbs 20:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Most men will proclaim each his own goodness...

Romans 3:10-12 (NLT2)

¹⁰ As the Scriptures say, "No one is righteous— not even one. ¹¹ No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God.

¹² All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one."

Romans 3:23 (NKJV)

²³ ...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

What exactly does this mean? What is 'sin' from a biblical point of view?

The word in the Greek literally means to “*miss the mark*”—it was an archery term for hitting the bull’s eye on a target.

Romans 3:23 says that “all have sinned”—or in other words, “*all have missed the mark!*”

➤ Of course, the next question is “*what does the mark or the bull’s eye represent?*”

Paul gives us the answer in Romans 3:23—

Romans 3:23 (NKJV)

²³ ...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

➤ **So, what is the glory of God?**

The glory of God is His sinless perfection! In that regard, every person who has ever lived has fallen short of sinless perfection—except Jesus. Or to put it another way, the sinless perfection that Paul is referring to in Romans 3:23 is—perfectly keeping the law of God.

In the Old Testament God’s law contained 613 commandments—to break anyone of them was to miss the mark and to be guilty of sin. But let’s not deal with all 613, let’s just limit ourselves to the ten we are most familiar with—the Ten Commandments (not the 10 suggestions).

These commandments are like the wooden boards that make up the hull of a ship (the ‘ship’ being your life ‘sailing to heaven’—if that’s the final destination you want to someday reach). It doesn’t matter if most of the boards are there and intact—if only one is missing or broken that ship will not make it to its final destination—it is going to sink!

The same is true for the person who chooses to get to heaven by the law (by keeping the commandments of God) it doesn’t matter if they keep most of them—if *any* commandment is broken even once that person is sunk (condemned).

James 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of [breaking] all.

This is why Paul calls the law a curse—it’s because it makes salvation dependent upon a person keeping *all* of it without fail to get into heaven.

In other words, the law demands moral perfection from a person to gain access into heaven—and remember Jesus said it isn’t just the outward actions of your life that God looks at, it’s also the inward thoughts of your heart (Matthew 5:21-30).

- Yet when I ask people, “*If you were to die tonight would God let you into heaven?*”—they will almost always tell me, “yes”.
- When I ask them to explain why they respond, “*Because I’m a good person. I know I’m not perfect, morally speaking—but I still think I’m good enough to get into heaven*”.

Listen to what God’s Word is saying—If you’re not morally perfect you’re not good enough to get into heaven!

It's all or nothing—*good* (i.e., 'sinlessly perfect') or *guilty*—there is no *"I'm good enough"* or *"I'm better than most so I deserve heaven..."*—it's either sinless perfection or eternal rejection (hell).

Romans 3:23

...for all have sinned [missed the mark] and fall short of the glory of God [sinless perfection],

Romans 6:23

...the wages of sin is death [the 'second death'—i.e., 'in hell forever']...

- You might be thinking to yourself—*"No one can live a life of sinless perfection!"*
- That's not true—One Man did—His name is Jesus!

The Bible teaches that if we put our faith in Him—He will put His righteousness to our account so that we can go to heaven through Him (John 14:6). You see, all this has been the bad news, which has then prepared us to receive the good news (the gospel)—

Romans 6:23 (NKJV)

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 3:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Look, don't count on God's love to save you if you refuse to repent of your sins and get your life right with God by receiving Jesus as your Savior. God's love can't save you from hell—God's love has never saved anyone from hell—all God's love can do is provide a way by which you can be saved—but you have to accept it by faith.

John 3:16-17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish [in hell] but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

God didn't create you for hell—He created you to spend eternity with Him in heaven—but you must decide where you'll spend eternity—the choice is yours!

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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