

THE HELL OF THE BIBLE IS NOT ANNIHILATION

By Robert Murray McCheyne

“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark 9:44,46,48)

Some think that, though they are not saved, they will be annihilated. Oh, it is a lie! I will show you that.

1. It will be no annihilation, when we read of the cries of the damned.

“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.” (Luke 16:24)

Again, look at the words in Matthew 22:13, *“Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

These scriptures plainly show us that it is no annihilation.

2. Hell will be no annihilation, when we consider that there will be different degrees of suffering.

“But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.” (Matthew 11:22)

And it is said the Pharisees would receive *“greater damnation.”* Every man is to be judged according to his works.

3. It will be no annihilation, when we consider the fate of Judas.

“The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.” (Matthew 26:24)

Judas is wishing now that he had never been born. I have no doubt he wished to die, but he will never be able to die.

So it will be with all who shall go to hell — all unworthy communicants. I tell you, if you die Christless, you will wish you had never been born — you will wish you had never seen the green earth or the blue sky.

4. It will be no annihilation, for it is an eternal Hell.

Some weak and foolish men think and please their fancy with the thought that hell will burn out and they will come to some place where they may bathe their weary souls. Ah! You try to make an agreement with Hell; but if ever there comes a time when the flame that torments your soul and body shall burn out, then God would be a liar, for three times He repeats the words of our text and says it shall never be quenched. It is eternal, for it is spoken of in words never used but to denote eternity.

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever 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.”
(Revelation 14:11)

Again, “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 for ever and ever.”
(Revelation 20:10)

Compare this with Revelation 4:9, *“And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.”*

So you see, the torments of the damned are spoken of with the eternity of God. If ever there comes a time when God ceases to live, then they may cease to suffer.

Again, the eternity of Hell and the eternity of Heaven are spoken of in the very same language: *“And there shall be no light there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”* (Revelation 22:5)

The same words used for the eternity of the saints are used for the eternity of the damned.

1. To you who are believers, all this hell that I have described is what you and I justly deserved. We were over the lake of fire, but it was from this that Jesus saved us. He was in prison for you and me. He drank every drop out of the cup of God’s wrath for you and me. He died — the just for the unjust.

O beloved, how should we prize, love, and adore Jesus for what He has done for us! We will never, never know, until safe across Jordan, how our Hell has been suffered for us — how our iniquity has been pardoned.

2. To you who are seeking Christ anxiously, I know some of you are. Dear soul, what mercy that God would awaken you to flee from this fiery furnace! Oh, what a mercy to be awakened to flee! Learn dear soul, just how precious Christ is. He is a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest. All the things in all the world are like a speck of dust, all is loss for Jesus. He is all and all.

He is free to you, beloved: take no rest until you can say, “He is mine!”