

## SECTION V. THE “SECOND DEATH”

### GEHENNA -- HELL -- LAKE OF FIRE

“Gehenna” was the name of the valley just outside the south and east walls of Jerusalem. The word means, “lamentation,” thought to have been derived from the cries of little children who were burned alive in the fiery arms of the calf-headed god, Moloch (Ezek. 23:37, 39; 2Chron. 28:3; Lev. 18:21; 20:2). It was known as the valley of the sons of Hinnom and is often called “topheth” (2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 7:31) which means, “place of fire.” King Joash (2Kings 23:10) abolished the practice of burning children and it was thereafter turned into a garbage dump. Bodies of animals and criminals were sometimes thrown there. There is some indication that certain criminals may even have been thrown into it alive. (Lev. 20:14; 21:9)

In time this came to symbolize the ultimate rejection --a place where the wicked would be cast out and people could go and see the dead bodies from one new moon to another, where their worms do not die and the fire is not quenched (Isaiah 66:24). In the New Testament it is the place where Satan, his angels, and men who follow them will be cast and tormented with no rest day and night for ever and ever. This is certainly not instant annihilation.

The Watchtower has purposely confused the matter by calling “Hell” “a place of rest in peace.”

#### A. NEW TESTAMENT OCCURRENCES OF “GEHENNA”

##### 1. General Scriptures

-Mat. 23:15. Jesus accused the Scribes and Pharisees of making their proselytes “*more the child of Gehenna than yourselves.*”

-Mat. 23:33. Jesus asked how they could, “*escape the damnation of Gehenna?*”

-Mat. 10:28. Jesus said, “*fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [gehenna].*”

-Luke 12: 5. After God has killed he “*has power to cast into Gehenna.*”

Clearly, Gehenna, as used here, is beyond this life, and a place where after death, God may cast a person. It is not a dump outside the earthly city of Jerusalem.

-Matt. 5:22. “*shall be in danger of Gehenna fire*”

-James. 3: 6. The tongue, “*is set on fire of Gehenna*”

Note that while the imagery for the word was derived from the place, the tongue is not set on fire by a garbage dump outside Jerusalem. This is a place after death into which only God has power to cast. (Luke 12:5, cf. Mat. 5:22 )

-Mat. 18:8, 9. “*having two feet to be cast into the eternal fire.... And...two eyes to be cast into Gehenna fire.*”

-Mark 9:43. “*having two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire*”

-Mark 9:45. “*having two feet to be cast into Gehenna*”

-Mark 9:47. “*having two eyes to be cast into Gehenna where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched*”

-Mat. 5:30. “*whole body should be cast into Gehenna*”

-Mat. 5:29. “*whole body should be cast into Gehenna*”

Note that the above passages show that Gehenna is worse than the torment of having an eye gouged out without the aid of modern sedatives.

## **B. PASSAGES NOT USING “GEHENNEH” BUT OBVIOUSLY RELATED**

-Mat. 25:41. “*Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal [\*166 aionios] fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.*”

-Matt. 25:46. “*...and these shall go away into eternal [\*166 aionios] punishment: but the righteous into eternal [\*166 aionios] life.*”

-2Thes. 1:8, 9. “*in flaming fire rendering vengeance to them... who shall suffer punishment, even eternal [\*166 aionios] destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might...*”

-Rev. 14:9-11. “*If any man worships the beast...he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall 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 goeth up for ever [#165 aion] and ever [#165 aion]; and they have no rest day and night...*”

-Rev. 19:2, 3. “*...harlot...And her smoke goeth up for ever [#165 aion] and ever [#165 aion].*”

Here it indicates eternal torment (14:11) of those who make up the “harlot”, or “Babylon”--the city on seven hills, that reigned over the kings of the earth.” This represents people. (17:9, 18).

-Rev. 19:20. “*the beast and false prophet were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone...*”

-Rev. 20:10. *“And the devil...was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they [all of them] shall be tormented day and night for ever [#165 aion] and ever [#165 aion].”*

Note: This scripture shows that “everlasting fire,” “everlasting punishment,” and the “place prepared for the devil and his angels” is in “the lake of fire and brimstone.”

The “beast” (cf. Rev. 13:1-10; 17:) represented an eighth king (or “kingdom” --Dan. 7:23; 2:38-40) --people. The “false prophet” (Rev. 13:11-18) represented a man (2Thes 2). Here again, along with the devil for which eternal fire was originally prepared, people are being tormented. In fact, they are said to have been there from the beginning of the thousand years (Rev. 20:3, 4, 7).

-Rev. 20:14, 15 *“And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire”*

Death and Hades now are cast into the lake of fire. Into this place now go all who belong in them.

-Rev. 21:8 *“But for the fearful, and unbelieving [etc.]...their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.”*  
(Death has to do with the body --James 2:26)

-Rev. 21:2, 10...; 22:14-15. *“...new Jerusalem.... Without are the dogs. [etc.]”*  
(Note: the dogs are outside, not annihilated.)

-Isaiah 66:22-24. *“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith Jehovah. And they shall go forth, and look upon the dead bodies of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”*

Again, this does not present a picture of annihilation but of continuing punishment. It makes no sense to keep their worm alive and the fire burning if they no longer exist. Rather than annihilation we see their dead bodies continuing in the fire.

Also consider Jude 7 “Even as Sodom... set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire.” (cf. 2Pe. 2:6)

Annihilationist claim that “eternal fire” indicates the final end. However, Sodom, who suffered eternal fire, is to be raised in judgment (Mat. 10:15; 11:24; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12)?

In response, some claim this meant only the earthly city, which will never be rebuilt. However, that would mean that any time something was burned up and not replaced it was an eternal fire. That is certainly not born out in scripture.

It makes a lot more sense that the fire continues forever because the wicked continue forever. If eternal fire is how God keeps the unrighteous “under punishment unto the day of judgment” (2Pe. 2:9), as with the angels that sinned (2Pe. 2:4; Jude 6), then the scriptural statements harmonize. Can anyone prove that the souls of the wicked Sodomites are not now being punished?

### C. OTHER PASSAGES THAT INDICATE TORMENT

-Mat. 8:29. Demons asked of Jesus, “*Did you come here to torment us before our appointed time?*”

-Mat. 18:34, 35. The unmerciful servant was “*delivered to the tormentors*” until he should pay what was owing. “*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not...*”

#### OBJECTION:

Some argue that “tormentor” just means “jailer.”

#### ANSWER:

Strong defines it as “#930 basanistes; from #928; a torturer.”

The noun form of this word is used only once but the verb form is used many times and the meaning is clear.

-Matt 8:6. *grievously tormented.*

-Matt 8:29. *come hither to torment us before our time*

-Mark 5:7. *torment me not.*

-Luke 8:28. *torment me not.*

-2Pet 2:8. *seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul*

-Rev 9:5. *should be tormented five months*

-Rev 11:10. *prophets tormented them*

-Rev 12:2. *And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*

-Rev 14:10. *and he shall be tormented*

-Rev 20:10. *tormented day and night*

They were called “tormentors” because they tormented. If they tormented no one they would not be tormentors. This is clearly something other than peaceful oblivion.

-Heb. 10:27-31. “*...judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God...For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth to me, I will*

*recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

Note that this punishment is described as worse than death by stoning. “Devour” may have reference only to that which can be devoured--the body, when the earth is destroyed in fire.

-Luke 13:24-28; Mat. 8:12 “*There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham...in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without.”*

-Mat. 22:13 The man without the wedding garment was cast into the outer darkness and “*there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.*”

-Mat. 25:30. The unprofitable servant was cast out into the outer darkness and, “there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.”

Again, these are not annihilation.

#### **D. OBJECTIONS CONTENDING THAT HELL IS ANNIHILATION.**

OBJECTION: The wicked are “destroyed”

-Matt. 10:28. God can destroy both body and soul in hell.

-Luke 17:27; 2Pe. 3:6. *The flood came and destroyed them all.*

ANSWER:

The Greek word, [#622 apollumi], does not necessarily indicate annihilation. It is often translated, “lost” (around 100 times in the New Testament).

Luke 15:17, 24, 32. The prodigal son was “lost” [#622 apollumi], not annihilated.

The spirits of those who were destroyed in the flood went to “prison” (1Pe. 3:19-20)

-Mat. 9:17; Mark 2:22; Lk. 5:37. If wine is put into old wine skins, the bottles will be marred or ruined [#622 apollumi] –not annihilated.

OBJECTION 2. The fire “consumes” and “burns up” (Luke 3:17)

ANSWER: Lam. 2:3 says, “*he hath **burned up** Jacob like a flaming fire,*” but that did not end their existence. The fire is a figure of eternal fire which wracks eternal destruction.

Of course, at some point the body may be consumed.

OBJECTION 3. They will be “*as if they had not been*” (Obediah 1:16).

ANSWER: This is speaking of the end of “nations,” not of the eternal state of individuals.

OBJECTION 4. “For ever” for the wicked is only an unknown time.

ANSWER: It is unknown but these are the strongest words for eternity. Why use such strong words if it just means “peaceful oblivion?”

## E. EVIDENCE RELATING TO THE “ETERNAL” AND “EVERLASTING” NATURE OF HELL.

### #166 “aionios”

- ✘ from #165; TDNT - 1:208,31; **adjective**
- ✘ Authorized Version [King James] - eternal 42 times, everlasting 25 times, the world began + #5550 2 times, since the world began + #5550 1 time, “for ever” 1 time; 71 time total.
- ✘ 1) without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be
- 2) without beginning
- 3) without end, never to cease, everlasting
- ✘ For Synonyms see entry 5801

### Mat. 18:8

*Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into **everlasting** [#166 aionios] fire. 9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.*

### Matt. 25:

*31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:. . .*  
*41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into **everlasting** [#166 aionios] fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:. . .*  
*46 And these shall go away into **everlasting** [#166 aionios] punishment [#2920 krisis]: but the righteous into life **eternal**.*

Note: “Krisis” is translated “torment” in 1John 4:18. Likewise, this can be translated, “These shall go away into everlasting torment.”

### “Punishment” 2920 krisis

- ✘ perhaps a primitive word; TDNT - 3:941,469; noun feminine
- ✘ AV - judgment 41 times, damnation 3, accusation 2, condemnation 2; 48 times total
- ✘ 1) a separating, sundering, separation
  - 1a) a trial, contest
  - 2) selection
  - 3) judgment
    - 3a) opinion or decision given concerning anything
      - 3a1) especially concerning justice and injustice, right or wrong
      - 3b) sentence of condemnation, - judgment, condemnation and punishment

- 4) the college of judges (a tribunal of seven men in the several cities of Palestine; as distinguished from the Sanhedrin, which had its seat at Jerusalem)
- 5) right, justice

**#165 “aion”**

- ✘ from the same as 104; TDNT - 1:197,31; **noun** masculine
- ✘ AV - **ever** 71 times, **world** 38 times, **never** + #3364 + #1519 + #3588 6 times, **evermore** 4 times, age 2 times, **eternal** 2 times, misc 5 times; 128 times total.
- ✘ 1) for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, **eternity**
- 2) the worlds, universe
- 3) period of time, age

Note: #166 is the adjective form. The adjective expresses the nature of the noun --no known end --from our perspective, without end. The noun, #165 names that period that has no end in view. There could be an end (as of the age) but, from our perspective, there is no end.

Because such words can be used figuratively, the Greeks had a way of indicating eternal or everlasting. They sometimes said, “eis ton...” and used either the noun, “aion” or a compound of two forms, “Into ages of ages.” See below.

**Rev 14: 9** *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any **man** worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the **wrath of God**, which is poured out **undiluted** 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:*

*11 and the smoke of their torment goeth up for **ever** [165 aion], **and ever** [165 aion]; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name.*

**Rev 14:11 For ever and ever**

<b>Greek</b>	eis	aioonas	aioonoon
<b>Translated</b>	unto	ages	of ages
<b>Strong</b>	1519	165	165
<b>Parsing</b>	present	noun	noun
	active	accusative	genative
		masculine	masculine
		plural	plural

Note: Here, people are tormented. It lasts day and night. It is God’s wrath. It will be undiluted. they are tormented with fire and brimstone. The smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever.

OBJECTION: “Only the smoke is forever.”

ANSWER: It is smoke of **TORMENT** that goes up. The picture of smoke of torment going up forever is meaningless unless the torment continues.

**Rev 20:10** *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be **tormented** day and night for **ever** [165 aion] **and ever** [165 aion].*

**Rev 20:10 “and they shall be tormented day and night**

<b>Sound</b>	kai	Basanistheesontai	heemeras	kai	nuktos
<b>Translated</b>	and	they shall be tormented	day	and	night
<b>Strong</b>	2532	928	2250	2532	3571
<b>Parsing</b>	conjunction (superordinating)	Verb 3rd person plural present tense future Indicative	noun genative feminine singular	conj. coordinating	noun genative feminine singular

***for ever and ever”***

<b>eis</b>	tous	aioonas	toon	aioonoon
<b>into</b>	the	ages	of the	ages
<b>1519</b>	3588	165	3588	165
<b>preposition</b>	definite article	noun	definite article	noun
<b>accusative</b>	accusative masculine plural	accusative masculine plural	genative masculine plural	genative masculine plural

Note: Here it plainly says that the beast, devil and false prophet are tormented day and night for ever and ever. The “beast,” in Revelation 17, is interpreted as kings. Here, people are tormented for ever and ever. This is the **strongest possible expression in Greek for eternity.**

This phrase is used 19 times in the New Testament, mostly concerning things relating to God.

Gal. 1:5. *To whom be glory for **ever and ever**. Amen.*

Phil. 4:20. *Now unto God and our Father be glory **for ever and ever**. Amen.*

1Tim. 1:17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for **ever and ever**. Amen.*

2Tim. 4:18. *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for **ever and ever**. Amen.*

Heb. 13:21. *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for **ever and ever**. Amen.*

1Pet. 4:11. *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for **ever and ever**. Amen.*

Rev. 1:18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for **evermore** [165 aion], Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

Rev. 4:9-10. *And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for **ever and ever**, 10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for **ever and ever**, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

Rev. 5:13-14. *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for **ever and ever**. 14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for **ever and ever**.*

Rev. 7:12. *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for **ever and ever**. Amen.*

Rev. 10:6. *And sware by him that liveth for **ever and ever**, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:*

Rev. 11:15. *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for **ever and ever**.*

Rev. 15:7. *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for **ever and ever**.*

Rev. 19:3. *And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for **ever and ever**.*

Rev. 22:5. *And there shall be no night 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**.*

To try to make these uses less than eternal flies in the face of the evidence. Even if it ends at some point in eternity, it is clear that torment for the wicked is presented as continuing beyond any human perception. This renders any objection to the idea of suffering in hell completely moot.